

# SALSA:

## Summer's Best Sauce

Salsa is the perfect summer companion. We compared three organic brands based on a serving size of 2 tablespoons. The winner? The Muir Glen for its texture and extra kick.



### ORGANIC SALSA COMPARISON

BRAND	CALORIES (gm)	SODIUM (mg)
Seeds of Change Garlic & Cilantro Mild	15	170
Enrico's Mild & Mellow Organic	10	80
Muir Glen Medium Black Bean & Corn	20	135



## SPEAR THIS: NUTRIENTS!

Asparagus is a tasty vegetable people have been eating for more than 2,000 years. It's low in calories—about 50 per cup—and rich in fiber, vitamins C, B-6, and A, thiamine, and protein, says Jacquelyn Gibson with the University of Florida/Miami-Dade Extension Service. It's also a terrific source of folic acid and iron.

**When shopping at your neighborhood Publix,** look for firm, green spears with tight, crisp tips. Skip the large stalks because they tend to come from older plants and can be tough to chew.

**To store them,** think of asparagus as fresh-cut flowers. You can stand the fresh spears upright in a container with about one half-inch of cold water and put them in the refrigerator. If you need to lay them down, wrap the asparagus in a paper towel, or a clean damp tea towel. Then place the stalks in a plastic bag in the crisper section of their refrigerator for up to three or four days.

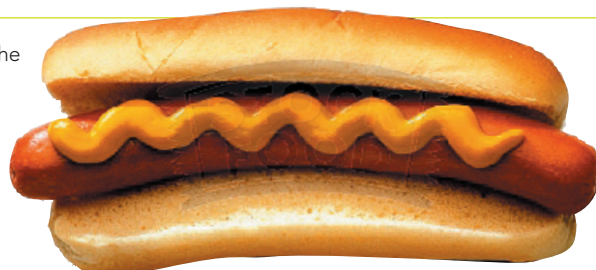
Asparagus—the name is Greek and means sprout or shoot—tastes best when just cooked—crisp, moist, and juicy. Stir-fry, steam, or blanch and eat alone or tossed into salads. For an easy summer dish the whole family will love, lay spears on a cookie sheet, drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with sea salt or kosher salt, and roast for 10 minutes at 450° F.

**TO LEARN MORE:** For more information, visit [www.asparagus.org](http://www.asparagus.org)

## A BETTER DOG FOR YOU

**H**ot dogs are as all-American as apple pie, fireworks, and the Fourth of July. On this day alone, Americans consume 150 million hot dogs—one for every two people. Is it possible to indulge without wreaking havoc on your health? Yes, says Ashley Hofeditz, R.D., a nutritionist in Memphis. It's all about moderation. "As long as you balance your diet with plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, low fat dairy,

whole grains, and lean meats, the occasional full-fat hot dog is no problem," says Hofeditz. Or consider healthier options this holiday—chicken, turkey, soy, or veggie dogs as well as lower sodium, reduced fat, low-fat, and even fat-free. If you're worried about your children's devotion to plain old, regular hot dogs, Hofeditz urges patience: Research shows that in order to get your child to try a new food, you may have to offer it 8 to 10 times.



**TO LEARN MORE:** For great new toppings ideas, click on [www.hot-dog.org](http://www.hot-dog.org). Type in "recipes."

## Grill In the Flavor

Forget high-fat, processed sauces when you grill this summer. Add flavor to your barbecue masterpieces with zero calories:

**Rub fresh or dried herbs**—rosemary, pepper, thyme—into meat. Toss them directly onto coals—rosemary for lamb, thyme for seafood, bay leaves for beef, basil or oregano for poultry. Or rub dried versions onto food before grilling.

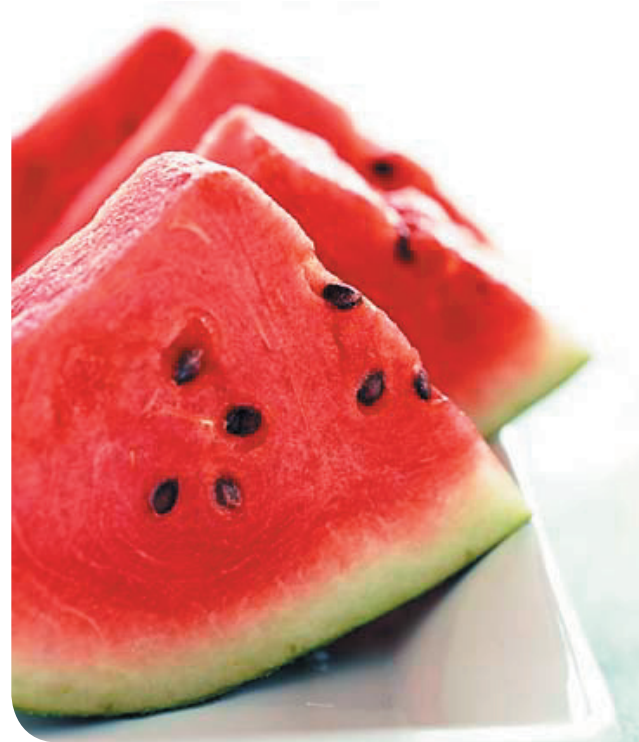
**Sprinkle fresh orange or lemon or lime peels** on charcoal coals or a gas grill grate for a touch of citrus taste.

**Choose a fruit juice—or vinegar—based marinade** in place of a sugary one. Marinate meat in a zipper-lock plastic storage bag, turning the bag several times.

**Toss a handful of mesquite wood chips** onto hot coals for a smoky accent.

**Add few whole, damp, unpeeled garlic cloves onto coals**, just at the end of grilling time, for a spicy taste enhancer.

**TO LEARN MORE:** Read Bobby Flay's *Grilling For Life : 75 Healthier Ideas for Big Flavor from the Fire* (Scribner 2005)



## Wild for watermelon

Summer just isn't summer without watermelon. One of nature's wonder foods, the fruit is loaded with nutrients, says Sharon Blackwell, R.D., with the Jackson Madison County General Hospital in Tennessee. Watermelon has a higher concentration of cancer-fighting lycopene than any other fresh fruit or

vegetable, including tomatoes, she says. A two-cup serving of watermelon also provides 25 percent of the daily requirement of vitamin C and 20 percent of vitamin A, as well as a healthy dose of vitamin B-6 and potassium.

### Did you know?

The USDA grades for watermelon include: US Fancy and US No. 1 and No. 2; standards are based upon the ripeness, uniformity in shape, rind, and flesh quality.

**To find the tastiest watermelon**, start your search with a careful inspection of the rind—it should be shiny, with a creamy-yellow underbelly. A hollow-sounding thump also indicates it's ready to eat. If you are harvesting your own watermelon, Blackwell says the *Old Farmer's Almanac* advises an additional check: If the tendril is half dead, the melon is nearly ripe or ripe. And, always store watermelon in the refrigerator—and enjoy it all summer long.

## Cool Guava

With a smell almost as sweet as its taste—somewhere between a pear and a strawberry—this tropical fruit overflows with vitamin A and pectin, a dietary fiber that lowers blood cholesterol. It also contains more potassium than an orange and has more vitamin C than citrus fruits. For a special summer treat, try this refreshing drink:



### Guava-Mango Freeze Start to Finish: 10 minutes

- 1 12-ounce can guava, or other tropical fruit nectar, chilled
- 3 medium mangoes, peeled, seeded, and chopped
- 1 cup crushed ice
- 1 tablespoon honey

**ONE** Combine all ingredients in a blender container. Cover and blend until smooth. Serve immediately. Makes 6 servings.