

SPIRITED CHERRY TOMATOES

It was a cold day in November when Portland tastemaker, Susan Ashton, brought these delicious little jewels to our attention. As colorful and unique as they are, we were tempted to feature them as a clever holiday party idea, but agreed it would be better to wait until we could feature them with locally-grown tomatoes. Mix hues of yellow, orange, and red, by using a combination of cherry and grape tomatoes—whatever's ready for picking--and feel free to experiment with different finishing salts. We've become converts to [The Meadow](#) in North Portland.

Ingredients:

3 pints	Firm, small red and yellow cherry or grape tomatoes
½ cup	New Deal Vodka
3 T	White Wine Vinegar
1 T	Superfine granulated sugar
1 tsp	Finely grated fresh lemon zest
1 ½ T	Coarsely ground black pepper
1 ½ T	Finishing salt, such as <i>Fleur de Sel</i>

Directions:

1. Cut a small X in skin of blossom end of each tomato.
2. Blanch tomatoes, 5 at a time, in a saucepan of boiling water 3 seconds and immediately transfer with a slotted spoon to a bowl of ice and cold water to stop cooking.
3. Drain and peel, transferring to a large shallow dish.
4. Stir together New Deal Vodka, vinegar, sugar, and zest until sugar is dissolved, then pour over tomatoes, gently tossing to coat.
5. Marinate, covered and chilled, at least 30 minutes and up to 1 hour.
6. Stir together salt and pepper and serve with tomatoes for dipping.

