

# McShane's Tomato Parade

We share our favorite heirloom varieties and delicious dishes to

## A Little About Heirloom Tomatoes

Heirloom is a term used to describe any tomato plant that's openly pollinated and has been cultivated for more than 50 years. Seeds from the best plants are saved at the end of the growing season for future use. Years ago these prized seeds became family heirlooms passed on from one generation to the next..

Hybrid tomatoes, which are the ones in which you buy at supermarkets are man made— crosses of different lines bred to achieve certain characteristics like standard size and hardiness. By contrast, most heirloom tomatoes don't grow in uniform shapes or sizes. Heirloom fruit ripen sporadically and they're not as disease resistant or hardy for transport.



The colors of heirloom tomatoes vary from classic ketchup red to orange, gold, taxi yellow, nearly white, pink to purple, and even green when ripe. There are several varieties that are multi colored, like the Mr. Stripy, which we sell here at McShane's. Here are some other ones we carry:

**Brandywine** – The tomato listed as simply "Brandywine" is one of the tomato varieties responsible for the ascendance of the popularity of heirloom varieties due to its excellent flavor.

**Cherokee Purple** – One of the very first known "black", or deep dusky rose colored cultivars that are becoming so popular.

**Green Zebra** – Often called an heirloom, it is not. It is an open-pollinated cultivar bred from four heirloom varieties and released by Tom Wagner of Lancaster, Kansas in 1983.

**Mortgage Lifter** – One of the more famous heirlooms due to its fanciful history, described in great detail in the catalog of the Southern Exposure Seed Exchange company. The enormous pink tomatoes are sweet and tasty.

# McShane's Favorite Tomato Recipes

Here at McShane's we love to cook!

## Heirloom Tomato Salad with Herbs and Capers

Use a combination of your favorite varieties. We like a mix of red Brandywine, Green Zebra, and Persimmon for the beefsteak tomatoes, and Sungold, Yellow Pear, and Green Grape for the cherry tomatoes.

### Ingredients

- \* 2 cups assorted heirloom cherry tomatoes, halved
- \* 1/2 cup (2 ounces) crumbled reduced-fat feta cheese
- \* 1/4 cup thinly sliced fresh basil
- \* 3 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- \* 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
- \* 1 tablespoon drained capers, chopped
- \* 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- \* 1 tablespoon extravirgin olive oil
- \* 2 pounds assorted beefsteak heirloom tomatoes, each cut into 6

wedges

- \* 1/2 teaspoon salt
- \* 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- \* 6 (1/2-ounce) slices sourdough bread, toasted or grilled

### Preparation

1. Combine first 9 ingredients in a bowl. Sprinkle tomato mixture with salt and pepper; toss gently. Serve with bread.



## Green Zebra Tomato and Crab Stacks

Chilled plates add to the appeal of this starter. Serve two stacks over a bed of mixed greens, and top with a little chopped avocado for a refreshing main dish salad.

### Ingredients

- \* 2 1/2 tablespoons white balsamic vinegar
- \* 1 tablespoon minced shallots
- \* 1 tablespoon minced fresh tarragon
- \* 2 teaspoons extravirgin olive oil
- \* 1 pound Dungeness crabmeat
- \* 12 (1/2-inch-thick) slices Green Zebra tomato
- \* 1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt, divided
- \* 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, divided
- \* 6 tarragon sprigs (optional)

### Preparation

1. Combine first 4 ingredients in a bowl, stirring well with a whisk. Add crabmeat; toss gently to coat.

2. Place one tomato slice on each of 6 plates; sprinkle evenly with 1/8 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Divide crab mixture evenly over tomatoes. Arrange remaining tomato slices over crab mixture; sprinkle evenly with remaining 1/8 teaspoon salt and remaining 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Garnish with tarragon springs, if desired.