



HOW TO CRUSH THE FARMERS' MARKET

Shopping at the farmers' market deploys all the senses. Dazzling arrays of produce brim from vendors' tables. Peaches perfume the air. The thunk of a ripe watermelon, the feel of a shiny eggplant, and the flavor of a just-plucked-from-the-vine cherry tomato entice you to buy

as much as you can carry. While it's easy to make a visit to your local one more of a social event than a shopping trip (no judgment!), these expert tips from farmers and market managers at three of the country's top spots will help you navigate it like a pro. **By Debbie Koenig**

Location photography by Cedric Angeles ~ Recipe photography by Jennifer Causey ~ Lettering & art by Heather Hardison



27 Ways to Strategize, Shop & Have Fun



1 Get there early.

Farmers at some markets leave once they sell out.

2 Larger markets may be open all week but more active on certain days.

For instance, Pike Place Farmers Market in Seattle is open daily but has more farmers on Saturdays.

3 Some markets let you plan ahead, with online listings of what's available each day.

TD Saturday Market (yes, some farmers' markets are sponsored like stadiums these days) in Greenville, South Carolina, has a searchable map. "Let's say you're thinking, 'I really need some okra,'" says Tara Eaker, one of the market's administrators. "You can search for okra and it'll pop up all the farmers that have it that week."

5 Find out where the food comes from—

are the vendors from within a certain distance of the market? Producer-only markets are packed with folks who actually grew or made the products they are selling. Find your market's rules on its website or ask at the information stand.

6 BYO bags—it's

good for the environment, and farmers appreciate it. "We spend a lot of money on bags, believe it or not," says Kyle Thom of Wisconsin's Roots Down Community Farm. "I've spent about \$4,000 on packaging this year."



7 Hit the ATM:

Although many vendors accept credit cards, they pay a fee for each transaction, so cash is appreciated.

8 Keep a cooler filled with ice packs in your car,

particularly if you tend to buy more-perishable items like meat, cheese or eggs.

9 Invest in a roller cart

to save your shoulders, especially if you plan on doing most of your shopping there.

4 What else does the market offer?

Make a day of it by checking out a cooking demo and grabbing lunch while taking in some live music. Some even have activities for mini market-goers.

GREENVILLE SC



TD Saturday Market

Main Street, Greenville, SC
Sat. 8 a.m.-noon, May to Oct.

When it comes to picturesque farmers' markets, Greenville's is hard to beat. Every Saturday during the market season, two blocks of tree-canopied Main Street are filled with rows of white tents. Around 75 merchants sell at the market—a mix of farmers, prepared-foods vendors and crafters. Nearly all come from within a 100-mile radius. You'll also find live music, children's activities and the "Booth with a Cause," a weekly spotlight on a local community-minded organization.



Don't forget about this tart! Hold your phone's camera over the smart code to save this recipe to your eatingwell.com favorites.

Tomato Tart

RECIPE BY ROBIN BASHINSKY

ACTIVE: 20 min TOTAL: 1 hr 40 min

EQUIPMENT: 9-inch tart pan with removable bottom, parchment paper, pie weights
Cornmeal gives the crust for this tart great flavor and a pleasant crumbly texture.

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup cornmeal
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2½ tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup reduced-fat plain Greek yogurt, divided
- 1 large egg
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon grated lemon zest

- 1 teaspoon ground pepper, divided
- 1 pound heirloom tomatoes
- ¼ teaspoon flaky sea salt
- Fresh basil leaves for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.

2. Place flour, cornmeal and baking powder in a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Beat on low speed just until combined. Add butter and ½ cup yogurt. Beat until mixed, 2 to 3 minutes. Press the dough into the bottom and up the sides of a 9-inch tart pan with removable bottom. Top with parchment paper and pie weights.

3. Bake the crust for 15 minutes. Remove the parchment and weights, and continue baking until the crust is golden brown and the bottom is set, about 10 minutes more. Let cool completely on a wire rack, about 30 minutes.

4. Mix the remaining ½ cup yogurt, egg, Cheddar, mayonnaise, sugar, lemon zest and ½ teaspoon pepper in a medium bowl until smooth. Spread evenly in the cooled crust. Slice tomatoes ⅜-¹/₈-inch-thick and pat dry with paper towels. Arrange on top of the filling.

5. Bake the tart until the filling is set, 25 to 30 minutes.

6. Turn on the broiler and broil the tart until the top is lightly browned, 2 to 3 minutes. Let cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove the pan sides. Sprinkle the top with salt and the remaining ½ teaspoon pepper. Garnish with basil, if desired. Cut into 6 wedges.

SERVES 6: 1 wedge each
CAL 443 / FAT 27G (SAT 10G) / CHOL 74MG / CARBS 36G / TOTAL SUGARS 5G (ADDED 1G) / PROTEIN 14G / FIBER 3G / SODIUM 515MG / POTASSIUM 275MG.



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10 Bring lidded containers to transfer delicate items like berries into so they don't get smushed.



11 Don't shop hangry—pick up breakfast at one of the market stands. At Greenville's TD Saturday Market, that means getting into line first thing at the Bake Room for one of their amazing croissants.

12 See who's got the most enticing items **on a reconnaissance loop**, then walk around again to buy. That way you won't risk buyer's remorse if you run out of time, money or arms to carry things too soon.

13 Speaking of too-full arms: **break up your shopping at a large market**. Once you've covered one section, take your bounty back to the car, then head out for another round. You won't get weighted down, and you'll keep your produce in better shape.

14 If you're looking for a deal, **don't haggle**—vendors are selling their blood, sweat and tears, not vintage furniture! But you can ask if they have any "seconds": picture-imperfect produce that's great for freezing, canning or otherwise cooking

with. "The going price for tomatoes at the height of summer is between \$2.50 and \$3.50 a pound," says Nathan Vannette of South Carolina's Growing Green Family Farms. "With seconds, you could get good-quality heirlooms as cheap as 75¢ per pound."

15 If a stand is hustling and bustling, remember to respect the farmer's time. When it's your turn, **know what you want and help bag your own items**.

16 On the other hand, if a stand isn't swarmed, **talk to the farmers**. Ask about their produce and their growing practices. You might learn something surprising, like why they aren't certified organic even though they follow the standards, for instance.



17 As long as you're chatting, ask the farmers what they love to grow—you may discover a new favorite. And **tell them what you are looking for** if you don't see it; maybe you'll find it offered next growing season.

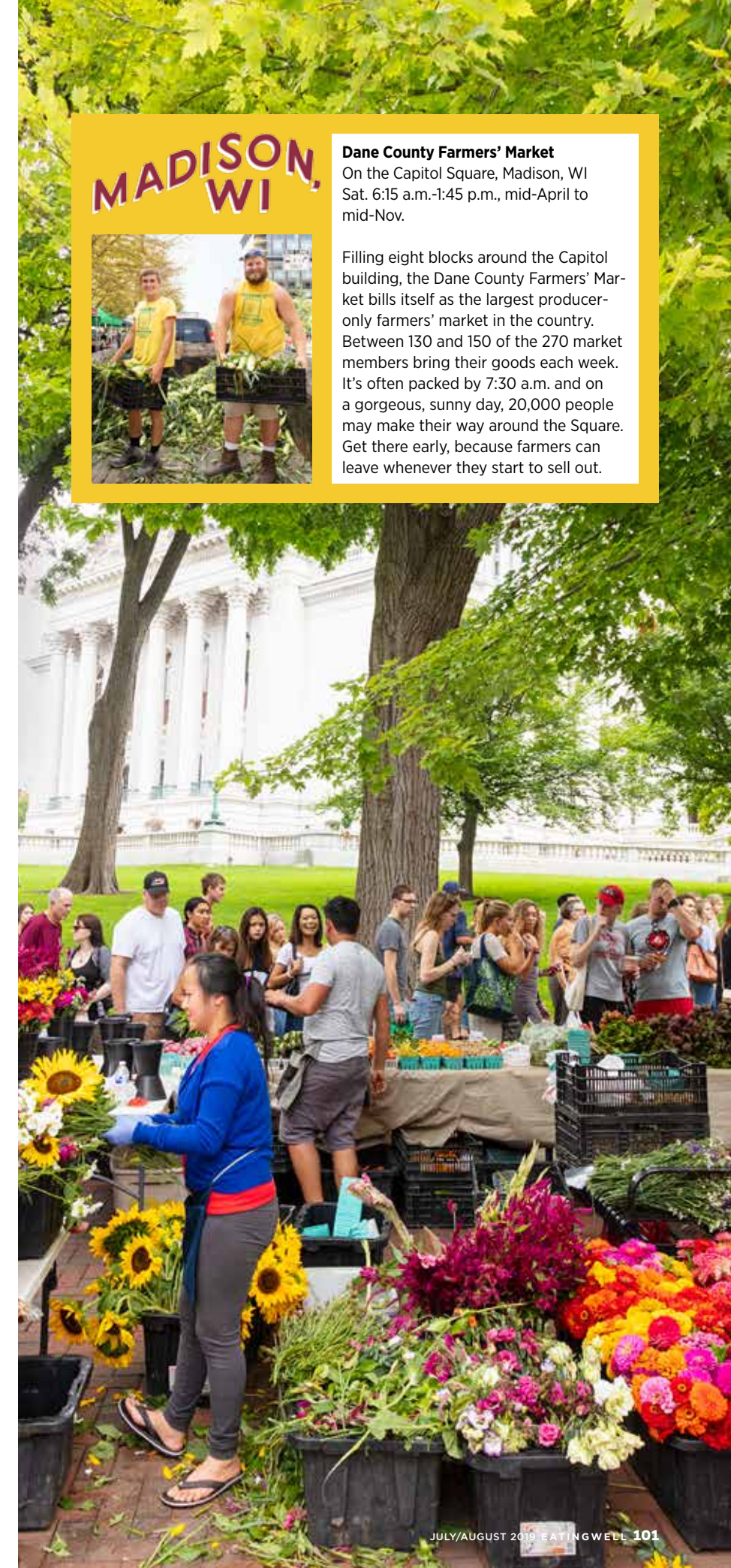
18 Seek out more than just fruits and vegetables. Many farmers bring meat, a variety of dairy products and eggs to market.

MADISON, WI

Dane County Farmers' Market
On the Capitol Square, Madison, WI
Sat. 6:15 a.m.-1:45 p.m., mid-April to mid-Nov.



Filling eight blocks around the Capitol building, the Dane County Farmers' Market bills itself as the largest producer-only farmers' market in the country. Between 130 and 150 of the 270 market members bring their goods each week. It's often packed by 7:30 a.m. and on a gorgeous, sunny day, 20,000 people may make their way around the Square. Get there early, because farmers can leave whenever they start to sell out.





Zucchini Fritters with Dill Yogurt

RECIPE BY ROBIN BASHINSKY

ACTIVE: 35 min TOTAL: 35 min

The key to the best fritters is moisture management. Zucchini is primarily made up of water, so it's a two-step process of salting and squeezing.

- 1½ pounds zucchini, grated
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- ½ cup whole-milk plain Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons sour cream
- 2 tablespoon chopped fresh dill
- 1 tablespoon sherry vinegar
- 1 tablespoon water
- ½ teaspoon grated lemon zest
- ¾ teaspoon ground pepper, divided
- 1 large egg, beaten
- ⅓ cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup cornmeal
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1. Place zucchini in a fine-mesh strainer and toss with ½ teaspoon salt. Let stand for 15 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, whisk yogurt, sour cream, dill, vinegar, water, lemon zest and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper in a small bowl. Set aside.
3. Place the zucchini in a clean dish towel and squeeze until dry. Transfer to a large bowl and stir in egg, flour, cornmeal, ½ teaspoon salt and the remaining ½ teaspoon pepper.
4. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Using 2 tablespoons of the zucchini mixture to make each fritter, drop 6 fritters into the pan and flatten with a spatula into 2-inch disks. Cook until golden brown, about 2 minutes per side. Transfer to a wire rack to cool. Repeat with the remaining zucchini mixture and 1 tablespoon oil. Sprinkle the fritters with the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt. Serve immediately with the reserved sauce.

SERVES 6: 2 fritters & scant 1½ Tbsp. sauce each

CAL 105 / FAT 6G (SAT 1G) / CHOL 26MG / CARBS 10G / TOTAL SUGARS 2G (ADDED 0G) / PROTEIN 4G / FIBER 1G / SODIUM 292MG / POTASSIUM 270MG.

Blistered 3-Bean Salad

RECIPE BY EMILY NABORS HALL

ACTIVE: 15 min TOTAL: 15 min

Haricots verts are thinner than regular green beans, but you can use any bean with an edible pod (ask the farmer!) in their place here.

- 3 tablespoons reduced-sodium tamari
- 1½ tablespoons rice vinegar
- 2 teaspoons honey
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 2 cups trimmed haricots verts
- 2 cups trimmed yellow wax beans
- ½ cup shelled edamame
- 2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon grated garlic
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil
- 2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds

1. Whisk tamari, vinegar, honey and crushed red pepper in a small bowl.
2. Heat canola oil in a large cast-iron skillet over high heat. Add haricots verts, wax beans and edamame; cook, stirring often, until blistered, 4 to 5 minutes. Add ginger and garlic; cook, stirring constantly, for 30 seconds. Add the tamari mixture and cook until the sauce is slightly thickened and the beans are just tender, 1 to 2 minutes.
3. Transfer the beans to a platter. Top with cilantro, sesame oil and sesame seeds.

SERVES 4: ½ cup each

CAL 115 / FAT 6G (SAT 1G) / CHOL 0MG / CARBS 11G / TOTAL SUGARS 6G (ADDED 3G) / PROTEIN 4G / FIBER 4G / SODIUM 374MG / POTASSIUM 269MG.

Corn on the Cob with Pesto Butter

RECIPE BY ROBIN BASHINSKY

ACTIVE: 30 min TOTAL: : 30 min

TO MAKE AHEAD: Refrigerate butter (Step 2) for up to 3 days.

If Mexican street corn took a trip to Genoa, it might come back slathered in pesto butter like these cobs. This Italian flair works because the flavors of basil and Parmesan have a natural affinity with corn. (Photo: page 100.)

- 1 tablespoon butter, softened
- ½ teaspoon grated lemon zest
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper
- ¼ teaspoon grated garlic
- ¼ cup thinly sliced fresh basil, divided
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- 4 ears corn, husked
- 1 tablespoon canola oil

1. Preheat grill to medium-high.
2. Combine butter, lemon zest, salt, pepper, garlic and 2 tablespoons each basil and Parmesan in a mini food processor. Process until smooth. *(Alternatively, mash with a fork in a small bowl.)*
3. Brush corn with oil. Grill the corn, turning occasionally, until slightly charred and tender, 8 to 10 minutes.
4. Spread the butter mixture over the corn and sprinkle with the remaining 2 tablespoons each basil and Parmesan. Serve immediately.

SERVES 4: 1 ear corn & 4 tsp. pesto butter each

CAL 168 / FAT 9G (SAT 3G) / CHOL 12MG / CARBS 20G / TOTAL SUGARS 6G (ADDED 0G) / PROTEIN 5G / FIBER 2G / SODIUM 346MG / POTASSIUM 297MG.

Opposite: Market-goers in Madison clamor for flowers grown by Alice Lynette Jackson and her mother, Alice LaVerne Jackson, at Meadow Acre Farm.

19 Leave the list at home and buy what looks delicious that week instead. Then plan your meals around your purchases when you get home.

20 Seek out fruits and vegetables that you can't find at the grocery store. "I grow a pepper that I introduced to the area, the aji dulce,"

says Chris Sermons of South Carolina's Bio-Way Farm.

21 For tomatoes, use your eyes and your nose. Look for vivid color and sniff for their trademark fragrance. Many heirlooms have cracks, imperfections and variations in color. And treat each tomato gently. They bruise easily, and if you squeeze

one and put it back, that makes it less appealing to the next customer.

22 To pick a perfect peach to eat right now, check the stem end. Ricky Martin of Washington's Martin Family Orchards says, "Peaches are packed on their shoulders [the stem end], and a good way to tell if it's ripe is if you see

some flattening on the top—the weight of the peach pushes it down when it's soft enough."

23 For melons, trust your farmer: most of the indicators of a ripe melon happen in the field, before it's harvested. If you're too shy to ask, our experts did offer suggestions—for cantaloupe and

others melons with a netting pattern, use your nose. If there's a strong scent of melon at the stem end, it's perfect to eat right now. A milder aroma means you've got a day or two. And a faint bouquet with a hint of green means you can leave it on the counter for several days, where it'll continue to ripen. Look for honeydew with

skin that's creamy white verging on yellow. It should feel smooth, almost slippery, and you should be able to detect a sweet scent at the stem end. Give it a gentle shake—if you hear the rattle of loose seeds, it's ripe. With watermelon, the larger and creamier the yellow patch on the bottom, the better it'll taste.

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ABOVE RIGHT: KANTHA QUILT FROM BLOCKSHOPTEXTILES.COM

Pike Place Farmers Market

Pike Place & Pine Street, Seattle, WA
9 a.m.-5 p.m., June to Nov.

Along with the Space Needle, Pike Place Market counts as one of the top tourist attractions in the Northwest. Famous for its fish-throwing vendors, the 9-acre expanse of food-focused shops and restaurants bustles seven days a week, year-round. While Growing Washington is the only permanent farm stall that features local produce all year, farmers set up shop from June to November in temporary digs. Hit it up on Saturday for the best selection.

SEATTLE,
WA



24 Don't open ears of corn then toss them back into the pile.

"It's like opening a bag of chips to see if they're crushed," says Andrea Yoder of Wisconsin's Harmony Valley Farm. "You wouldn't put that back on the shelf, would you?" Look for ears that are close to uniform in diameter from bottom to top. Feel around the tip of the ear—without peeling back the husk. Your fingers will be able to tell if the kernels have filled out all the way to the end. Ask when it was picked and pass on any that is more than 24 hours off the stalk.



25 Intrigued by an unfamiliar item but not sure what to do with it? Ask the farmer—they may share their favorite preparation or have recipe cards you can take home.

26 Think beyond dinner. Prepared goods like jams, jellies and salsas, wine and spirits, soap and even artwork all make great gifts.



27 Grab flowers last and put them on top of your bag so they don't get crushed. Blooms at the farmers' market are likely to be the freshest flowers you'll find, short of picking from your own garden. Some markets might have a single grower, but others have entire flower sections. "Pike Place is perhaps the most amazing flower market of anywhere I've ever seen," says Clayton Burrows of Growing Washington farm.

DEBBIE KOENIG is a food writer and the author of the cookbook *Parents Need to Eat Too: Nap-Friendly Recipes, One-Handed Meals & Time-Saving Kitchen Tricks for New Parents*.



Watermelon Sherbet

RECIPE BY ANNA THEOKTISTO

ACTIVE: 10 min **TOTAL:** 8 hrs 10 min
(including 8 hrs freezing time)

TO MAKE AHEAD: Freeze for up to 1 week.

The only difference between sorbet and sherbet is that the latter has a bit of dairy. In this case, sweetened condensed milk adds sweetness plus a touch of creaminess.

6¼ cups cubed seedless watermelon
1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
½ cup lime juice
¼ teaspoon salt

1. Place watermelon on a large rimmed baking sheet. Freeze until frozen, about 4 hours or overnight.

2. Puree the frozen watermelon, condensed milk, lime juice and salt in a food processor, in batches if necessary, until smooth, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer the mixture to a large sealable container. Cover and freeze until firm, about 4 hours.

SERVES 12: ½ cup each
CAL 132 / FAT 3G (SAT 2G) / CHOL 11MG / CARBS 25G / TOTAL SUGARS 23G (ADDED 18G) / PROTEIN 3G / FIBER 0G / SODIUM 91MG / POTASSIUM 219MG.

Grilled Skirt Steak with Corn-Tomato Relish

RECIPE BY ROBIN BASHINSKY

ACTIVE: 25 min **TOTAL:** : 25 min

Corn, tomato and basil scream summer, but simplicity makes this recipe perfect for the season. Serve with salad greens. (Photo: cover.)

1 pound skirt steak or sirloin steak
¾ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
¾ teaspoon ground pepper, divided
1 ear corn, husked
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
½ cup halved cherry tomatoes
¼ cup thinly sliced red onion
2 tablespoons torn fresh basil
1½ tablespoons rice vinegar
1 serrano chile, seeded and minced

1. Preheat grill to medium-high.

2. Sprinkle steak with ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Brush the steak and corn with 1 tablespoon oil.

3. Oil the grill rack (*see Tip, page 18*). Grill the corn, turning occasionally, until lightly charred and tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Grill the steak, turning occasionally, to desired doneness, 6 to 8 minutes for medium-rare. Transfer the steak to a clean cutting board and let rest for 10 minutes.

4. Cut the kernels from the cob. Combine in a medium bowl with tomatoes, onion, basil, vinegar, chile, the remaining 2 tablespoons oil and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper.

5. Slice the steak thinly against the grain. Serve with the relish.

SERVES 4: 3 oz. steak & ½ cup relish each
CAL 311 / FAT 20G (SAT 5G) / CHOL 74MG / CARBS 7G / TOTAL SUGARS 2G (ADDED 0G) / PROTEIN 25G / FIBER 1G / SODIUM 441MG / POTASSIUM 556MG.

