

CHEFS CONFESS THEIR ADDICTION TO TOMATOES...BUT OVER HALF MISTAKENLY CALL THEM VEGETABLES

Submitted by: JellyBean Creative Solutions Limited

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Mutti's Hunt for the UK's Best Tomato Cook Exposes Surprising Chef Secrets, Fruitful Truths, and Common Falsehoods!

- Tomatoes are the top ingredient that chefs say they cannot live without (44%)
- Over half of chefs think tomatoes are vegetables, when in fact they are fruits (55%)
- 51% of chefs correctly recognised the presence of lycopene in tomatoes, known for its considerable health benefits
- The famous San Marzano tomatoes exclusively hail from the Campania region of Italy but 50%¹ of chefs were not aware
- Tomatoes have been grown in Italy for over 500 years
- The top 3 countries perceived by chefs to produce the best quality tomatoes include Italy, USA, and India
- Over half of the chefs surveyed stressed the importance of responsibly and fairly sourced ingredients, with 57% emphasising the need for ingredients from reputable and known brands

Leading Italian tomato brand, Mutti, is delighted to launch its 2023 edition of the Golden Tomato Cook Competition. This extraordinary annual culinary event is aimed at celebrating the tomato and the exceptional quality and taste of its Italian tomato products. To kick off the search for the UK's best tomato cook, Mutti has revealed the fascinating results from its chef survey*, shedding light on their perceptions, and preferences when it comes to tomato-based ingredients. The eye-opening facts not only challenge common beliefs about tomatoes but also highlight the importance of quality, taste, and sustainable practices in the culinary world.

Kirsty Beckman, Brand Manager UK, Mutti says: "This is an exciting time of year for Mutti where we search for our next Golden Tomato Cook and to celebrate this, we thought it was a great opportunity to see what chefs in the UK think about tomatoes. We have unveiled surprising results from the survey, including tomato myths and insightful preferences. We're now calling all tomato enthusiasts to unearth the chef within them and join Mutti's Golden Tomato Cook Competition 2023. We want them to show us their creative flair and craft a spectacular three-course menu featuring our Polpa Finely Chopped Tomatoes, Peeled Tomatoes, Passata, and Double Concentrated Tomato Puree. With esteemed judges and remarkable prizes, this is their chance to shine. Enter now at [cooking competition entry page \(https://mutti-parma.com/en/golden-tomato-cook-2023-entry/\)](https://mutti-parma.com/en/golden-tomato-cook-2023-entry/) and let your passion for great food and cooking take the spotlight!"

Tomatoes are the Indispensable Ingredient

The survey uncovered the essential ingredients that chefs simply cannot live without, and not surprisingly, tomatoes and/or tomato products secured the top spot at 44%. This reaffirms the integral role that Mutti's tomatoes play in elevating dishes to new heights. Salt and/or Pepper, and Olive Oil came second and third respectively.

The Fruit That Masquerades as a Vegetable

Surprisingly, 55% of chefs confessed to mislabelling tomatoes as vegetables, when in fact, they are

fruits. This stunning admission shows that even amongst chefs there is still much to learn and love about tomatoes.

The survey further showcased that while 44% of chefs acknowledged the centuries-old (over 500 years in fact) heritage of Italian tomatoes, only half of them were aware that the famous San Marzano tomatoes exclusively hail from the Campania region, adding a delightful layer of historical context to the chef staple.

Additionally, 51% of chefs correctly recognised the presence of lycopene in tomatoes, known for its considerable health benefits; a powerful antioxidant that can help protect cells from damage. This highlights the importance of not only taste but also the nutritional value of ingredients in modern culinary creations.

Tomato Quality is Key!

When it comes to tomato-based ingredients, the top three factors that matter the most to chefs are quality (42%), product size (36%), and flavour and/or great taste (35%). This indicates that Mutti's commitment to providing premium quality tomatoes is aligned with the priorities of culinary professionals, who value excellence in ingredients above all else.

The Global Tomato Perspective

Another fascinating insight revealed the top countries perceived by chefs to produce the best quality tomatoes include Italy, India, and the USA. Italy's inclusion in the top 3 enhances the Golden Tomato Cook Competition, as Mutti is proud to showcase the unrivalled quality of its tomato products, made using only the highest quality 100% Italian tomatoes, as well as the products' unique flavour profile and taste.

The Conscientious Chef

The survey also delved into the ethical considerations of chefs when selecting ingredients. Over half of the chefs surveyed (51%) stressed the importance of responsibly and fairly sourced ingredients, with 57% emphasising the need for ingredients from reputable and known brands. This aligns with Mutti's commitment to sustainable working practices including protecting the diversity and vitality of our environment to ensure long term sustainability, which we continue to educate on the importance of, for longevity and the best tomato product. Mutti also focuses on long term relationships with their farmers, paying an average 10% higher than the market average to ensure mutually beneficial relationships.

Furthermore, 55% of chefs agreed that ingredients must be of the best quality, something which Mutti has been uncompromising on for more than 120 years. The fact that 54% of chefs emphasised the significance of great taste and/or flavour reaffirms one of the central focuses of the Golden Tomato Cook Competition.

The search of the UK's Golden Tomato Cook is now on

Mutti's 3rd Golden Tomato Cook Competition is here, paying homage to the revered Pomodorino d'oro, where we reward the farmer who supplies the highest quality produce while using sustainable and responsible practices. Mutti's cooking contest celebrates sustainable excellence and invites home cooks to craft the ultimate three-course menu with Mutti Essentials - Polpa Finely Chopped Tomatoes, Peeled Tomatoes, Passata, and Double Concentrated Tomato Puree. Enter with a starter, main, and bonus dish of your choice,

with each recipe highlighting a different Mutti Essential and its unique characteristics. The esteemed judging panel, including top chefs Carlo Casoni, Nigel Barden, Ben Tish, and Gabriella Margiotta, will assess dishes based on taste, presentation, and above all, making tomatoes the hero. Public vote shortlists five menus, and the final three compete in a live cook off at Sauce, by The Langham in London on 19th October 2023. The grand prize is an exclusive foodie trip to Parma, Italy – the home of Mutti, along with mentorship from Chef Ben Tish. 2nd prize is a virtual cooking class with Mutti head chef, Carlo, and 3rd prize is a 3-course meal for 2 at Eataly restaurants. 4th and 5th place winners receive a product hamper from Mutti.

Contestants have until 23:59 on 26th September 2023 to create and submit their menus online, so there is no time to lose, get creating and get your entries in. To enter, visit <https://mutti-parma.com/en/golden-tomato-cook-2023-entry/> where you can also discover recipe inspiration and tips too. Full terms and conditions apply.

*Survey of 204 professional chefs across the UK conducted by CensusWide, between 20th and 24th July 2023. Censuswide abides by and employ members of the Market Research Society which is based on the ESOMAR principles.

Pictures: provided by Mutti include Mutti chef in field, a Mutti tomato being held in chef hand and Kate Alexandra winner of Golden Tomato Cook Competition 2022. Other pictures available upon request.

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Notes to editors

MUTTI SPA - The historic company from Parma is Europe's leading tomato processor. It was 1899 when Marcellino and Callisto Mutti began the first tomato harvest and processing season. Since then, by focusing on the central values of quality and Italian traditions, together with a deep respect for the supply chain, nature and the local area, the Mutti family has devoted itself to processing 100% Italian tomatoes, producing tomato puree, passata and finely chopped and peeled tomatoes that are now enjoyed around the world. Meanwhile, the drive to innovate, an integral part of the company's DNA since it was founded, has led Mutti to gradually expand its range of products with an array of ready-made sauces. Today, bolstered by 120 years of history, the Mutti Group leads the European market of tomato products and operates in 100 countries worldwide, with net revenues of 484 million euro in 2021. In 2021, the Mutti Group's production volumes reached 685,000 tonnes, an increase on the previous year (580,000 tonnes in 2020). Also in 2021 export volumes exceeded the Italian sales volumes following a double-figure growth every year. Gradually expanding over the years to satisfy all tastes, the Group has its original headquarters in Montechiarugolo, Parma. The Fiordagosto di Oliveto Citra (SA) plant, meanwhile, is used to transform the specialties typical of southern Italy, such as the long tomato and the cherry tomato. Finally, in November 2017 Mutti acquired the CO.PAD.OR plant in Collecchio, setting up the new company Pomodoro 43044 Srl which was subsequently incorporated in Mutti SpA from 1 January 2021.

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1 Answered false or and I am unsure combined