



Why are San Marzano tomatoes so good?

San Marzano tomatoes are the god of the tomato world. Grown in the Sarno Valley, just outside Naples, they take their goodness from the fertile volcanic soils of Mount Vesuvius and the gentle sea breeze of the Gulf of Naples. Sunshine is baked in.

Picked by hand at their perfect ripeness between August and September, San Marzano tomatoes – or Pomodoro S. Marzano dell’Agro Sarnese-Nocerino to give them their full title – are longer and thinner than a run-of-the-mill plum tomato. They have thick deep-red skin that is easy to peel, and, unlike their four- or five-seedpod cousins, they only have two seed pods, so fewer seeds to mess with your sauce.

Why are San Marzano tomatoes good for pizzas?

Meaty, fleshy, tangy and just a little bit sweet, San Marzano tomatoes are widely considered the best pizza sauce makers in the world. They hit the literal sweet spot where delicate acidity and sweetness meet to deliver a divinely tomatoey intensity. That balance creates a taste frame for your pizza’s rich meats and cheeses to shine.

Behind every great pizza, there’s a great San Marzano tomato sauce.

Do all pizzas use San Marzano tomatoes?

Alas, there aren’t enough San Marzano tomatoes to cover all five-billion pizzas sold each year. So no, San Marzano tomatoes don’t grace every pizza. But the Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana, the Association of the True Neapolitan pizza, dictates that an authentic Neapolitan pizza must only use San Marzano tomatoes for its sauce.

Are San Marzano tomatoes only grown in Italy?

No. You can buy San Marzano seeds and grow the godly tomatoes anywhere, but only those grown, picked and tinned in Campania, in the Naples countryside, are allowed to carry the prestigious EU Denominazione d’Origine Protetta (DOP) stamp. The DOP mark sets the tomatoes apart as Italian royalty, proving the growers have followed strict guidelines, even in those idyllic tomato fields.



Where do I buy San Marzano tomatoes?

Pomodoro S. Marzano dell'Agro Sarnese-Nocerino ship worldwide, so you can pick them up in your supermarket shop. In the UK, look for their full name and DOP on the tin – they aren't sold just as 'San Marzano' tomatoes. Also, they are never sold chopped or crushed, only as whole peeled plum tomatoes, sometimes even with a twig of vine.

Tell me a fun fact about tomatoes

The Italian word for tomato, pomodoro, means golden apple, pomo for is apple; d'oro is 'of gold'. But tomatoes are red. Confused? When tomatoes first arrived in Europe from the Andes, they were yellow.

Bonus fun fact: for a very long time, Europeans thought tomatoes were poisonous, but now we know them to be a superfood, loaded with vitamin C and lycopene, which reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease and cancer.

