

Our State eats

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Betty's Southern Tomato Pudding

10 to 12 medium-size fresh tomatoes

2 cups sugar

**8 slices of crumbled white bread
or 5 crumbled biscuits**

1 tablespoon vanilla

Salt and pepper to taste

1½ sticks softened butter

Coat a rectangular baking dish with nonstick cooking spray and set aside.

Set up a bowl of ice water. Bring a pot of water to a boil.

With the tip of a knife, cut an X in the bottom of each tomato and drop in the boiling water for 1 minutes. Scoop each one out and drop into the ice water to cool. Working over a bowl to catch the juices, pull off the skins and discard.

Slice each tomato in half and use your finger to scoop out and discard the seeds. Chop the tomatoes coarsely and return to the bowl with the juices. Stir in the sugar, vanilla, salt and season generously with black pepper. (Many versions also include a small amount of ground cinnamon or nutmeg.)

Tear the bread into pieces or crumble the biscuits, leaving big chunks. Stir into the tomato mixture. Pour into the prepared baking dish. Cut the butter into bits and dot over the top.

Bake 30 to 40 minutes at 350°, until the top is browned.

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