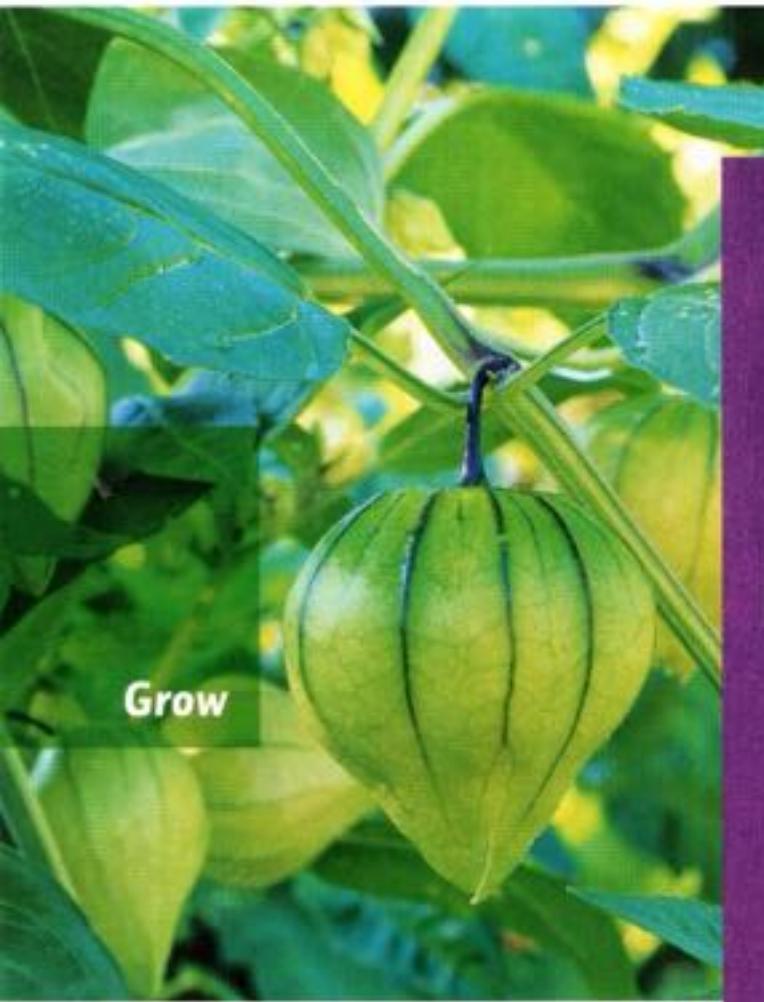


Tomatillo two-step

Bring a little Mexico to your kitchen garden BY JULIE CHAI AND AMY MACHNAK

Grow



Plant

Set out nursery seedlings (or grow your own; seeds available from Botanical Interests, botanicalinterests.com) in rich, well-draining soil, 2 to 3 feet apart, in full sun about a month after frost has passed.

Raise

Stake plants as you would tomatoes—they'll eventually reach about 4 feet tall and wide. Keep soil moist until fruit develops, then let soil dry out between waterings.

Reap

Harvest tomatillos when they're green and walnut-size; they'll have a lemony tartness that mellows nicely in cooking. Remove the papery outer husks when you're ready to use the fruit, and rinse off the sticky residue.

Guacamole

Broil halved tomatillos, turning often, until starting to blacken; let cool. Mix them in a bowl with chopped onion, jalapeño chile, and cilantro. Add fresh lime juice and cubed avocados; mash mixture with a fork to combine.

Marinade

Mix puréed broiled tomatillos with fresh lime juice, chopped serrano chile, and a pinch of salt. Add a little olive oil and use to marinate fish, shrimp, or chicken before grilling.

Tomatillo chicken soup

Slice tomatillos and boil until tender. Purée, then combine with chicken broth, shredded chicken, jalapeño chile, and canned hominy. Serve with sour cream, tortilla chips, and cilantro. ■

Eat



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