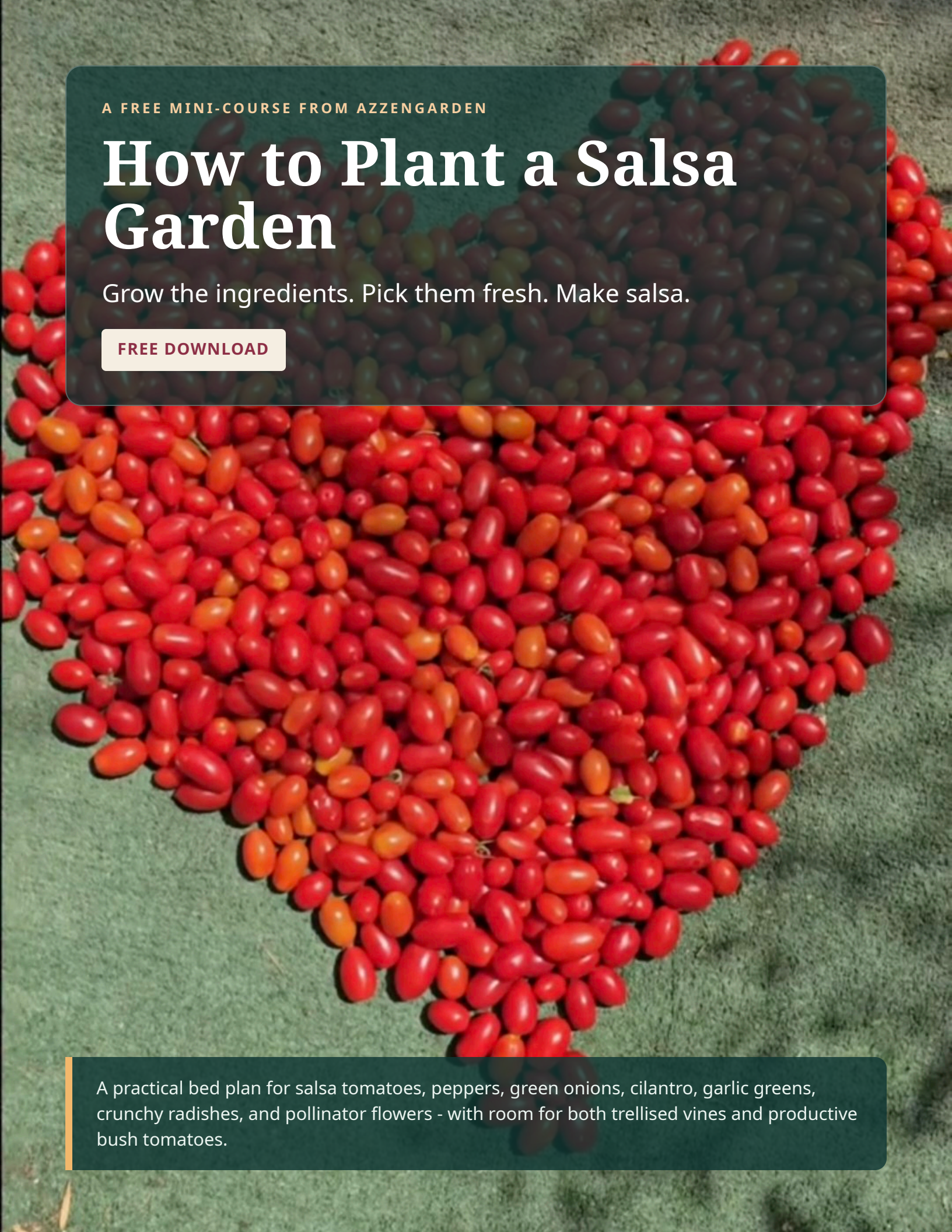


A FREE MINI-COURSE FROM AZZENGARDEN

How to Plant a Salsa Garden

Grow the ingredients. Pick them fresh. Make salsa.

FREE DOWNLOAD

A practical bed plan for salsa tomatoes, peppers, green onions, cilantro, garlic greens, crunchy radishes, and pollinator flowers - with room for both trellised vines and productive bush tomatoes.

One bed can grow the whole bowl

A salsa garden does not have to be big. Give every plant a job, grow up where you can, and use the edges for smaller ingredients and flowers.

Start with Anna's original salsa-garden video: See the square-foot and companion-planting idea that inspired this plan. **Watch "Do you want to grow a salsa garden?"**

Juliette + Roma tomatoes

Juliette is my "best ever" all-time favorite. Roma is the classic salsa tomato: meaty, less watery than many slicers, and easy to chop or roast.

trellis + bush | main harvest

Peppers

Grow jalapeño, chiltepín, and green chile for fresh heat, a powerful kick, and smoky roasted flavor.

jalapeño | chiltepín | green chile

Onions + garlic greens

Tuck them along the bed edge. Snip garlic greens for fresh garlic flavor while the bulbs stay planted.

Cilantro

Sow a small patch at a time. It prefers cooler weather, so keep replacing it instead of expecting one planting to last forever.

Radishes

Slice them thin for peppery crunch. Direct sow along an open edge and harvest young.

quick crop | cool season



Anna's harvest-to-salsa: her Juliette tomatoes becoming fresh salsa.

> "Juliette is the best ever - my all-time favorite."

Pantry finishers: Keep lime and salt in the kitchen. Everything else can come straight from the bed.

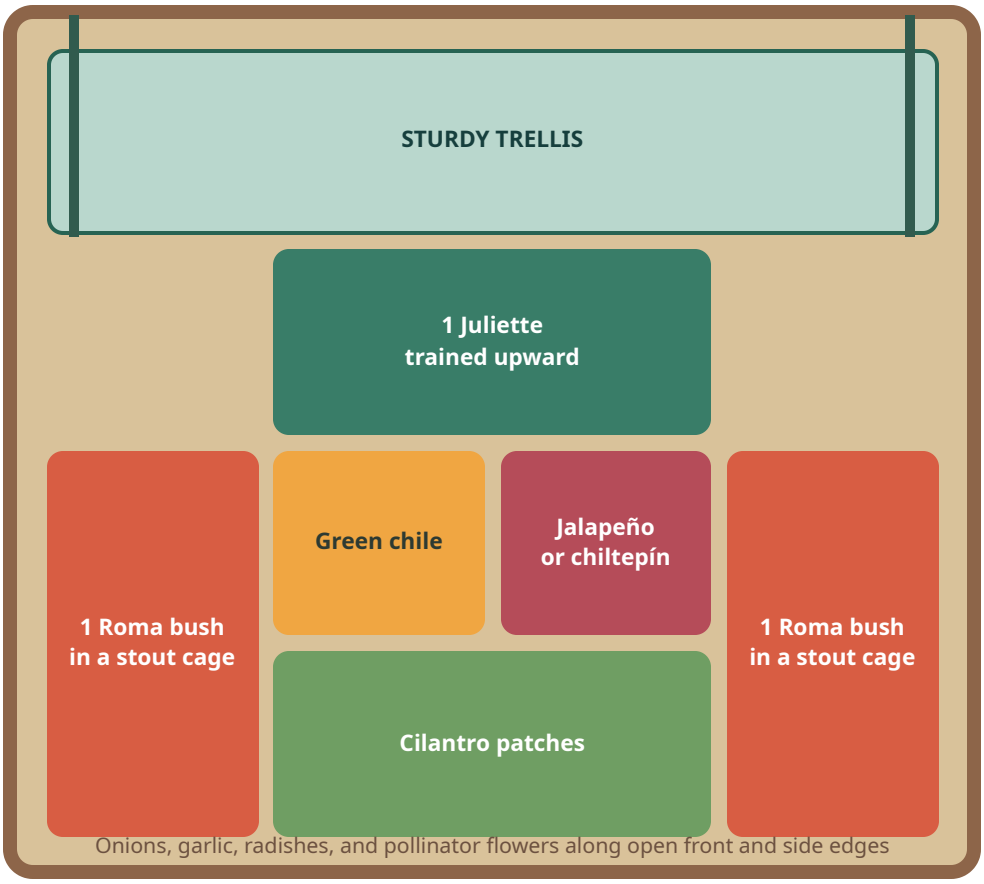
Pollinator flowers belong here too

Tuck compact flowers around open corners and outside edges. They bring color, invite pollinators, and keep the food garden feeling alive. Leave enough space for airflow and harvest access.

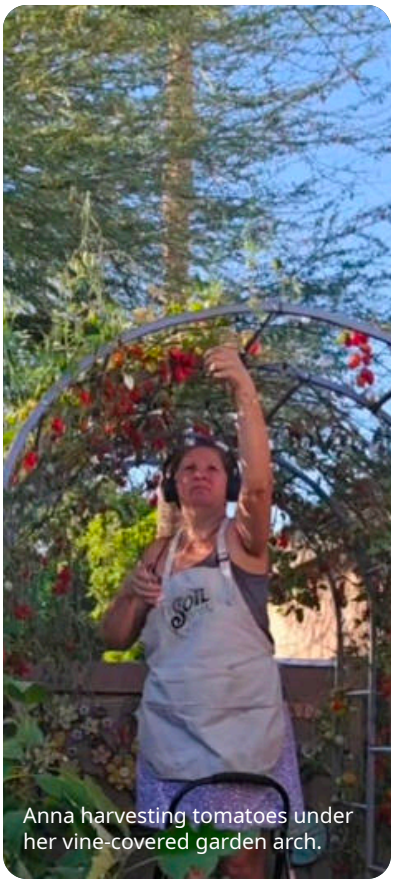
A 4 × 8 bed can use both tomato habits

Put height on the north or back edge, keep bush plants where you can reach them, and let the smallest crops fill the borders.

NORTH / BACK



Watch Anna's salsa garden layout


Anna harvesting tomatoes under her vine-covered garden arch.

Vining tomato goes up · Bush tomatoes spread out · Herbs fill gaps · Flowers line edges

Why it works

- The trellis turns vertical airspace into growing room.
- Determinate plants give a concentrated flush of paste tomatoes.
- Peppers stay in the open center where they are easy to harvest.
- Alliums and radishes use skinny edge spaces that would otherwise be wasted.

Adjust before planting

- Check each plant tag for mature width.
- Leave a clear path around the bed.
- If airflow feels tight, remove one bush tomato or one pepper.
- In very hot climates, place the most sun-sensitive crop where taller plants give late-day relief.

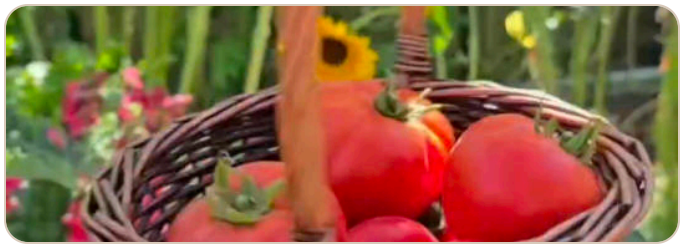
Companion reel: Anna's February 2026 layout uses trellised cucumbers, basil, green onions, cilantro, and pollinator flowers around indeterminate tomatoes. This salsa-focused version keeps the same flower-friendly edge. Spacing stays flexible: plant size, climate, and bed shape decide the final fit.

Put Juliette up; let the Roma bushes load up

Juliette is my top pick - my “best ever” all-time favorite salsa tomato. **Roma is the classic** paste tomato. Together they show both habits: indeterminate vines keep growing and fruiting, while determinate bushes set a more concentrated crop.



Anna's Juliette harvest - freshly washed for the kitchen and ripening on the vine.



Fresh Roma tomatoes picked from Anna's garden.

Juliette: indeterminate / vining

- Place it on the back or north side.
- Use a tall, sturdy trellis or post.
- Tie stems loosely as they grow.
- Guide growth weekly before it tangles.
- Harvest over a longer period.

Roma: determinate / bush

- Use a wide, strong cage even though the plant is shorter.
- Give the plant room to branch.
- Expect much of the crop in one big flush.
- Do not prune heavily; those branches carry the harvest.
- Perfect for a salsa-making weekend.

Plant the support first. Driving posts beside a mature root ball can damage roots. Set the trellis or cage, then plant.
Watch Anna's “Do you trellis your tomatoes?” reel - train vines upward for sun and airflow, choose indeterminate varieties for all-season fruit, and feed every 2-3 weeks.

Planting

- Choose the sunniest part of the bed.
- Transplant when frost danger has passed and nights are reliably warm.
- Plant deeply enough to cover part of the stem, unless the label says otherwise.
- Water the root zone, not the leaves.

Keeping fruit coming

- Water consistently; big swings invite cracked fruit and stress.
- Mulch after the soil warms.
- Anna feeds every 2-3 weeks during active growth; follow your product label and avoid excess nitrogen.
- Pick as the fruit colors and finishes ripening.

My Arizona heat-tolerant picks

Juliette
My top pick already handles heat better than most cherry types.

Phoenix
A red-fruited hybrid selected for setting fruit in high heat.

Solar Fire
A determinate red hybrid developed for hot-weather production.

Green Zebra
A striped green salsa tomato that handles heat and adds bright flavor.

Heat note: Extreme heat can pause fruit set; keep roots evenly moist, maintain airflow, and use seasonal shade. **Companion tomato tip:** Juliette and Roma stay the salsa core. Anna's **yellow pear tomato video** shows another budget-friendly plant that can bear heavily through spring and summer.

Grow Anna's three salsa pepper picks

Jalapeño brings familiar salsa heat, chiltepín delivers a tiny but powerful kick, and green chile adds a roasted, savory base. Grow all three when space allows, or choose the flavor your salsa needs most.

Jalapeño

For classic fresh-salsa heat.

Grow: Plant after the soil warms. Give it full light, airflow, and a small stake or cage before branches get heavy.

Harvest: Pick firm green pods at full size. Leave some to turn red for a riper, slightly sweeter flavor.

Chiltepín

For a bright, concentrated kick.

Grow: Give the branching plant room and protect it from the harshest late-day desert sun when heat is extreme.

Harvest: Pick the tiny pods when they ripen red. Use sparingly - a little goes a long way.

Green chile

For body, smoke, and roasted flavor.

Grow: Allow room for the larger fruit and support loaded branches. Keep moisture steady while pods fill.

Harvest: Pick long, firm chiles while green. Roast, steam, peel, and chop them into salsa.

Planting

- Wait until frost danger has passed, nights are warm, and the soil has warmed.
- Choose strong light without letting tomato foliage smother the plants.
- Set plants at the same depth they grew in their containers.
- Leave enough space for mature branches and airflow.

Care

- Water deeply and consistently at the root zone.
- Mulch after the soil warms to slow moisture loss.
- Stake or cage early, before fruit weighs down branches.
- Feed according to your product label; too much nitrogen can favor leaves over fruit.

From plant to salsa

1. Watch
Check leaves, blossoms, and developing pods every few days.

2. Water
Keep moisture steady during flowering and fruit fill.

3. Pick
Harvest regularly once pods reach the size and color you want.

4. Taste
Add peppers gradually. Heat varies from pod to pod.

Hot-pepper safety: Wear gloves when cutting jalapeños and chiltepíns. Avoid touching your eyes and face, then wash hands, tools, and the cutting board well.

Watch Anna's Green Chile Salsa video: Follow her seed-to-fork harvest and cooking process from the garden to the finished salsa.

Watch “Green Chile Salsa” on TikTok

Use the borders for onions, garlic greens, cilantro, and radishes

Photo space
onions

Photo space
garlic greens

Photo space
cilantro

Onions

- Tuck green onions or bunching onions along an open edge.
- Keep them where taller plants will not bury them.
- Harvest the green tops as needed or pull the whole plant.

Garlic greens

- Plant cloves in the bed border.
- Snip a few green leaves for fresh garlic flavor.
- Leave enough green growth so the plant can keep growing.

Cilantro

- Sow a small patch at a time.
- Use the cooler corners of the season.
- When it bolts, let it flower for pollinators or save coriander seed.

Radishes add crunch Direct sow seed in loose, cool soil; thin seedlings to the spacing on the packet, keep moisture steady, and harvest roots young before heat makes them pithy or extra sharp.

> I like to plant garlic right in the beds and use the greens.

Keep cilantro from disappearing all at once

Week 1
Sow the first small patch.

Week 3
Sow a second patch nearby.

Week 5
Harvest the first patch lightly.

Week 7
Resow as older plants bolt.

Hot-climate reality: Cilantro is the cool-season member of this garden. Tomatoes and peppers may be happiest after cilantro has started to bolt. Grow in succession, harvest what overlaps, and use frozen or purchased cilantro when the seasons do not line up.

Snip without stripping

For green onions, garlic greens, and cilantro, take what the plant can spare. Cut cleanly, leave healthy growth behind, and return again instead of removing every leaf at once.

Water low, support early, and keep picking

The best salsa garden care is not complicated. A quick check several times a week catches problems before they take over.

Every few days

- ✓ Press a finger into the soil and water when the root zone needs it.
- ✓ Water deeply at soil level rather than sprinkling the leaves.
- ✓ Guide vining tomato stems back to the trellis.
- ✓ Look under leaves for pests and eggs.
- ✓ Pick ripe tomatoes and peppers.

Once a week

- ✓ Check ties; loosen any that are biting into stems.
- ✓ Clear dead or diseased leaves from the bed.
- ✓ Resow a pinch of cilantro during its cool season.
- ✓ Check mulch depth and pull it back from stems.
- ✓ Harvest onions and garlic greens for the kitchen.

Read the plants

What you see	What to check first	Next move
Flowers but little fruit	Heat, cold, or watering stress	Keep care steady and wait for better temperatures.
Tomato leaves packed together	Airflow and support	Retie vines; remove only damaged or crowded foliage.
Peppers dropping blossoms	Temperature swings and dry soil	Even out watering and protect from extremes.
Cilantro shooting upward	Warm weather	Harvest now, let it flower, and sow again in cooler weather.
Garlic greens pale or weak	Water, crowding, and nutrition	Correct the simplest cause first; do not strip more leaves.

Do not chase every symptom with fertilizer. Check moisture, weather, roots, crowding, and pests first. Feed only when the plant or soil truly calls for it.

Two simple salsas from the same harvest

FRESH • CHUNKY • BRIGHT

Garden-fresh Roma pico

Ingredients

- 4 ripe Roma tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 small onion, finely diced
- 1 jalapeño, minced, or chiltepín to taste
- 1/3 cup chopped cilantro
- 2 to 3 radishes, thinly sliced or finely diced
- 1 tablespoon sliced garlic greens, or 1 small garlic clove
- Juice of 1 lime
- Salt to taste

1. Combine the tomatoes, onion, pepper, cilantro, radishes, and garlic greens.
2. Add lime and a pinch of salt.
3. Rest 10 to 15 minutes, then taste.
4. Add more pepper, lime, or salt until it is yours.

For less heat, remove the pepper seeds and pale inner ribs.



Finished-dish inspiration: Anna's red chile sauce piled onto a garden-fresh taco or tostada.

ROASTED • SMOKY • BLENDABLE

Roasted Roma salsa

Ingredients

- 6 Roma tomatoes, halved
- 1 to 2 jalapeños, or 1 green chile
- 1/4 onion
- 1 garlic clove
- 1/4 cup cilantro
- Juice of 1 lime
- Salt to taste

1. Broil or dry-roast the tomatoes, peppers, onion, and garlic until softened and lightly charred.
2. Cool slightly, then blend to the texture you like.
3. Pulse in cilantro, lime, and salt.
4. Cool before serving.

Blend briefly for chunky salsa; longer for smooth salsa.

Fresh-salsa rule: These are refrigerator recipes, not shelf-stable canning formulas. Chill leftovers promptly and use them soon. For pantry storage, follow a tested canning recipe exactly; do not change the acid-to-vegetable ratio.

Start with the bed you have

One trellis. Two tomato habits. Six fresh ingredients. A lot of salsa.

Watch Anna's salsa garden layout

Her February 2026 reel shows the space-saving idea in action: indeterminate tomatoes up the back, trellised cucumbers, green onions, basil, cilantro, and pollinator flowers.

Watch the Instagram reel | Watch on TikTok

Your first planting list

- ✓ 1 Juliette tomato for the trellis
- ✓ 1 or 2 Roma tomatoes for sturdy cages
- ✓ Jalapeño, chiltepín, and green chile - choose the number your bed can hold
- ✓ Green onions or bunching onions
- ✓ Garlic cloves for greens
- ✓ Cilantro seed
- ✓ Radish seed
- ✓ Compact pollinator flower seeds or starts
- ✓ A tall trellis and stout cages

Before you plant

- ✓ Put the trellis on the north/back side.
- ✓ Check every plant's mature size.
- ✓ Run or place irrigation before roots fill the bed.
- ✓ Keep a little open space for airflow.
- ✓ Save room at the edge for repeat cilantro sowings and compact flowers.

Garden notes & trusted references

- University of Maryland Extension: Heat-tolerant cultivars - lists Phoenix, Solar Fire, and Roma among heat-tolerant tomato choices.
- University of Minnesota Extension: Trellises and cages - support guidance for both indeterminate and determinate tomatoes.
- University of Minnesota Extension: Three ways to trellis tomatoes - practical support options and sizing.
- Utah State University Extension: Water recommendations for vegetables - context for consistent irrigation.
- National Center for Home Food Preservation: Tomato salsa with paste tomatoes - confirms paste tomatoes suit thick salsa and provides a tested canning formula.

Growing conditions vary. Use local frost dates, heat patterns, and plant labels to adjust timing and spacing.