

The cost varies depending on seasonality and sales - look for your tomatoes around 99 cents a pound (less if you're lucky) and buy your peppers on sale. Red peppers go on sale all the time during the summer and quite often in the winter.

- **Bell Pepper:** There are two types of sales, per pound or per pepper. I usually look for the per pepper pricing; in my area it's generally cheaper – I'll then buy the biggest, most gorgeous ones I can find. The peppers are often bagged and sold by a unit price, too. A really good price in our area is about a seventy cents a pepper for the red, yellow or orange ones, and 50 to 75 cents for the green bell. Cost for 1/2 the red pepper, about 50 cents.
- **Tomatoes, fresh:** These vary in price (and quality) according to season, and a good price here in Minnesota is between 69 and 99 cents a pound. In the winter, I often look for plum tomatoes because they seem to taste better. Don't be swayed by the outside of the tomato - some of the best have imperfections, especially if they're vine ripened. Never refrigerate your tomatoes if you can help it. An old farm wife's trick? Add a sprinkle of salt and sugar if your tomatoes are tasteless. If tomatoes are a great price, I'll sometimes buy some perfectly ripe and others not so ripe and put them in my windowsill to ripen. 3 medium tomatoes, about five to six ounces each: \$1.10
- **Olive Oil:** I have a little strategy for buying [olive oil](#) – using coupons and sales to lower the price, so click on the link. I think it's important to use olive oil as opposed to many others – the health benefits outweigh a bit more extra cost, and it can be had at a very reasonable price. I also like the fact that Olive oil contains no hidden trans fats like Canola or Vegetable oil. Cost for this recipe: 32 cents.
- **Habanero Pepper:** Small, but truly a bargain for the amount of flavor they bring for their size. One is about 4 cents, and I used half - I'll think about what I'll be making when I buy - and pick up a couple more for [jerk chicken](#) so my half doesn't go to waste.
- **Green Onion:** I try to buy on sale for about 50 cents a bunch (usually during Holidays) then put the white tips in a jar of water in a sunny window to regrow. Kids love taking ownership of the project. I only need to replenish every few months. Cost is so minimal that I don't even count it.
- **Red Onion:** The cost for Red Onion is a little higher than a standard onion, but they keep just as long. The same suggestions applies for storage. Keep any that you don't use in the door of your fridge and you'll be less likely to forget it's there; they keep a long time, just trim off the cut edge which has a tendency to dry out. 1/4 cup is about 2 cents.
- **Lime:** In season in the winter months, here - limes are often on sale through out the year 4 to 5 for a dollar. The rind holds as much or more flavor than the juice, so I often grate it off before using and store in a Ziploc in my freezer - the little bit dries up but still holds more flavor than the store bought. If I'm in a pinch and don't have lime, I'll use it instead. Microwave your lime for a bit if it's hard and/or roll it on the counter before you juice it and it will break down easier. Cost 25 cents.
- **Vinegar:** I pick up a jug of white vinegar around Easter – often with a coupon, and often on an unadvertised sale. It keeps forever and is dirt cheap. The better vinegars are often on sale at Easter, and on sale with coupons sporadically through the summer. Cost nominal.

- **Fresh Herbs:** I grow my own in the garden, and also keep a few ones I often use on the back steps in a strawberry pot. When winter comes, I bring indoors. Indoors is not always ideal for herb growing, but since a plant costs about the same as a bunch, there's really no loss, even if it dies off; just snip and dry. Cost: nominal.