

Recipes



Chile Pepper, *Capsicum* spp.

Tips:

- Handle hot varieties of chile peppers with caution, using gloves to avoid contact with the eyes and sensitive skin.
- Popular in many different types of cuisines, and the varieties can often be selected based on heat preference. They combine well with many diverse flavors.
- String fresh chile pepper fruits together to hang or dry on a mesh rack. A dehydrator, oven or air fryer can also be used. Use caution when handling.
- Grind or crush dried chile peppers with a mortar and pestle or food processor to make chile powder. Use any variety such as: Aleppo, arbol pepper, cayenne, chipotle or jalapeno. Include the seeds for a spicier chile powder.

Sweet Red Chile Dressing

Sweet and spicy dressing of red chiles, honey, ginger, and garlic – excellent for salads, marinades or grilled meats

3 large dried New Mexico red chiles or ancho chiles

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup water

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup white wine (or rice or cider) vinegar

4-5 tablespoons honey

1 tablespoon fresh ginger, finely chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt

1 large clove garlic, peeled and finely slivered

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup herb of choice (spearmint, lemon balm, basil, mint marigold, lemon thyme, or mixture)

Remove stems and seeds from chiles; rinse and cut into strips. Place chiles and water in a small saucepan; bring to a boil. Remove from heat and cool at least 5 minutes.

Place childe mixture and remaining ingredients in a blender or food processor until smooth. Taste and adjust salt or honey as needed.

Serve on fruit or vegetable salads or use as a marinade for grilled meats and seafood. Keep refrigerated for up to a week. Shake well before using.

Madalene Hill and Gwen Barclay
The Herb Society of America Recipe File, www.

Vegetarian Tortilla Soup

“Tortilla soup has a place, I feel, in practically every collection of Mexican recipes,” says Rick Bayless. This is a vegetarian version of the classic soup, usually made with chicken. Earthy dark pasilla chile flavors the soul-satisfying broth. (Recipe adapted from Rick Bayless.)

- 3 large dried pasilla (negro), ancho or New Mexico chiles (see Note)
- 1 15-ounce can diced tomatoes, preferably fire-roasted
- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons neutral oil, such as canola or avocado, divided
- 1 medium white onion, sliced 1/4 inch thick
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled
- 4 cups vegetable broth or “no-chicken” broth
- 4 cups water
- 1 large sprig epazote (optional; see Note)
- 1 14-ounce package extra-firm tofu
- 4 cups chopped chard, spinach or kale leaves
- 1/4-1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 ripe large avocado, cut into 1/4-inch cubes
- 2 cups roughly broken tortilla chips
- 3/4 cup shredded Mexican melting cheese, such as Chihuahua or asadero, or Monterey Jack or mild Cheddar (optional)
- 1 large lime, cut into 6 wedges

Holding the chiles one at a time with metal tongs, quickly toast them by turning them an inch or two above an open flame for a few seconds until the aroma fills the kitchen. (Alternatively, toast chiles in a dry pan over medium heat, pressing them flat for a few seconds then flipping them over and pressing again.)

When cool enough to handle, stem and seed the chiles, break them into pieces and put them in a blender along with tomatoes and their juice. (A food processor will work, though it won't completely puree the chiles.)

Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and cook, stirring frequently, until golden, 6 to 9 minutes. Scoop up the onion and garlic with a slotted spoon and transfer to the blender with the tomato mixture. Process until smooth.

Return the pot to medium heat. When quite hot, add the puree and stir nearly constantly until thickened to the consistency of tomato paste, about 6 minutes. Add broth, water and epazote (if using). Bring to a boil, then adjust heat to maintain a simmer.

Drain tofu, rinse and pat dry; cut into 1/2- to 3/4-inch cubes. Heat the remaining 2 teaspoons oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the tofu and cook in a single layer, stirring every 2 to 3 minutes, until beginning to brown, 6 to 8 minutes total. Add the tofu to the soup and simmer for 30

Drain tofu, rinse and pat dry; cut into 1/2- to 3/4-inch cubes. Heat the remaining 2 teaspoons oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the tofu and cook in a single layer, stirring every 2 to 3 minutes, until beginning to brown, 6 to 8 minutes total. Add the tofu to the soup and simmer for 30 minutes.

Add chard (or spinach or kale) to the soup and season with salt to taste, depending on the saltiness of the broth. Cook, stirring, until the greens are wilted, about 2 minutes, depending on the type of greens.

Ladle the soup into 8 soup bowls. Divide avocado, tortilla chips and cheese (if using) among the bowls. Serve warm, with lime wedges.

Ingredient Notes: Pasilla chiles, sometimes called negro chiles, are medium-hot dried peppers with a flavor that defines tortilla soup in central Mexico. Find them and other dried chiles in the produce section of large supermarkets or online at melissas.com.

Look for epazote at fresh at farmers' markets, some supermarkets or find it dried at Latin markets or online from melissas.com. Chicken and chicken broth may be substituted.

EatingWell, September 2025
Inspired by Rick Bayless

Spicy Mexican Hot Chocolate

A rich and warming Mexican-style hot chocolate spiced with cayenne, cinnamon, and paprika for a comforting, flavorful beverage.

2 cups milk
2 ounces dark chocolate, finely chopped
1 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper
⅛ teaspoon paprika
2 teaspoons sugar, or to taste
Whipped cream or milk froth, topping

In a small saucepan, heat milk over medium heat until steaming but not boiling. Whisk in chocolate, cocoa powder, cinnamon, cayenne, paprika, and sugar until smooth and melted. Pour into mugs and top with whipped cream or milk froth. Sprinkle lightly with additional cinnamon or cayenne if desired. For extra richness, substitute part of the milk with half and half or use dark Mexican chocolate.

The Herb Society of America Recipe file
www.herbsociety.org