

Harissa Paste

Swick

Makes 1 cups | Active Time: 20 minutes | Total Time: 30 minutes

Step 1: Preparing Your Mise en Place

- 15 dried chiles de arbol
- 2 dried guajillo chiles
- 1 dried ancho chile
- 1 tbsp cumin seeds
- 2 tsp coriander seeds
- 1/2 tsp caraway seeds
- 4 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp hot smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp sweet smoked paprika
- 1 tbsp white wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp lemon zest
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tbsp sun-dried tomatoes
- 1/4 cup olive oil*

For the chile peppers, remove the stems and seeds. If a few seeds remain, don't worry too much as many of them will come out during the soaking of the chilies. Next, place them into a large bowl or pot and fully cover with hot water and then cover and let rehydrate for 20 minutes or so. Once the peppers have are soft and rehydrated, drain well and set aside.

For the cumin, coriander, and caraway seeds, lightly toast them in a hot pan for a few minutes until they become fragrant.

For the paprika, if you do not have one or the other "hot" or "sweet" — simply use all of the one you do have.

Note: If you want to make this oil-free, use water instead of oil.

Step 2: Making the Harissa Paste

To make the paste, first, add the toasted spices to a food processor and blend until you reach a somewhat fine powder. Alternatively, this can be done in a mortar and pestle.

Next, add garlic and salt and blend until fairly smooth. Next, add the paprika, vinegar, lemon juice, and tomato paste and blend again until smooth. Scraping the bottom edges of the food processor as needed.

Next, add sun-dried tomatoes and lemon zest and pulse a few times.

At this point, add the chile peppers and blend until you reach the desired consistency — a somewhat smooth paste is what you are looking for. With that said, the final consistency is up to you. If you like or want a paste with a bit more texture, add the sun-dried tomatoes and lemon zest last and just pulse a few times.

Lastly, with the food processor running, slowly drizzle in the oil. The amount of oil is up to you. Many recipes call for 3 times this amount. Also, note that water can be added instead of oil for an oil-free paste.

Use this harissa paste in whatever recipe you like — one of our favorite ways to use the paste is on things like grilled tofu and/or tempeh and we are also quite obsessed with this Bulgur Salad w/ Spinach, Roasted Tomatoes & Feta (we toss the tomatoes with a bit of the harissa paste before we oven-dry them).

Chef's Notes

This paste will keep for a few weeks in the refrigerator.

We like to make a big batch and freeze it in serving-sized portions — approx. 3 tbsp per serving.

If doing a large batch, you will likely need to purée the rehydrated chiles separately and then combine them with the rest of the mixture otherwise the food processor will get too full and things won't blend properly.