

AtoZ World Food by World Trade Press

Spices: Paprika

Description

Paprika is a spice made from the ground dried red peppers of the *Capsicum annuum* species. It comes in colors ranging from bright red to light brown. Its name is derived from the Hungarian word *paparka*, which in turn is derived from the Latin word *piper*.



Origin

Paprika originated in central Mexico. It was brought to Spain during the 16th century and became popular throughout Europe.

Varieties

The most common varieties of paprika are Spanish paprika and Hungarian paprika. Spanish paprikas (*pimentons*) range from sweet and mild (*dulce*) to hot and spicy (*picante*). Among the eight grades of Hungarian paprika are rose (*rozsa*), which is pale red and mild, and strong (*eros*), which is light brown and hot.

Flavor Profile

Paprika has a pungent smoky flavor that ranges from sweet and mild to hot and pungent. Paprika peppers may be smoked prior to grinding, giving them a deep earthy flavor. Because paprika's flavors vary so widely, substituting one type of paprika for another in a recipe will affect the overall flavor of the dish.

Nutrient Profile

Paprika is a rich source of carotenoids such as zeaxanthin, which gives paprika its bright red color. Paprika is a good source of vitamin A, vitamin E, and pyridoxine. It also has modest amounts of vitamin K, niacin, riboflavin, pantothenic acid, thiamin, iron, and manganese. The spicier varieties contain capsaicin, the compound that gives peppers their heat.

Preparations

Paprika is used as a seasoning ingredient in soups, stews, marinades, and casseroles. It can be sprinkled on salads, used as a garnish on deviled eggs, or brushed on meats, poultry, and fish. Hungarians sometimes sprinkle the sweetest varieties on desserts. It's a prominent ingredient in Hungarian goulash and Spanish *chorizo*.

Season

Paprika is available year-round. The red peppers used to make paprika ripen in late summer and early fall.

Did You Know?

Paprika took a circuitous route to become the national spice of Hungary. Christopher Columbus first brought red peppers to Spain in 1493, where they found their way across the Mediterranean to eventually be embraced by the Turks of the Ottoman Empire. The Turks introduced the spice to Bulgarians, and when some Bulgarians fled to Hungary for more freedom circa the mid-1500s, they brought paprika peppers with them.

-Elizabeth Freitas for World Trade Press

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Loubia bil Luz

Loubia bil luz is a traditional Algerian side dish sometimes served as a main dish. This simple casserole consists of green beans, almonds or walnuts, and spices. The spices normally include garlic, cumin, paprika, and cloves, while some recipes add cayenne pepper and salt. For the best results, use fresh green beans and fresh garlic.

Recipe Servings: 6

Prep Time: 10
minutes

Cook Time: 45
minutes

Total Time: 55
minutes

Vegetarian

Vegan

Gluten Free

Dairy Free

Kosher

Halal

Ingredients

- 1 lb (450 g) green beans
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) olive or peanut oil
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) almonds or walnuts, slivered
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) cumin
- ⅛ tsp (0.5 ml) paprika
- Pinch of ground cloves
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 2 garlic cloves, mashed
- Salt, to taste

Directions

1. Trim beans and steam for 30–45 minutes until tender but not soft.
2. Transfer the beans to a serving dish.
3. Sauté nuts and spices in the oil for 2 minutes.
4. Pour over beans, toss, and serve.

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Hortobágyi Palacsinta (Meat-Filled Pancakes)

Hortobágyi palacsinta are meat-filled pancakes (palacsinta is Hungarian for pancakes) with a sour cream sauce. The meat—usually veal but sometimes chicken or sausage—is minced and fried with onions and paprika. Some recipes include mushrooms and parsley, and plain palacsinta topped with fruit are a popular dessert. Recipe Serving: Serves 4

Prep Time: 5
minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour 35
minutes

Total Time: 1 hour 40
minutes

Vegetarian

Vegan

Gluten Free

Dairy Free

Kosher

Halal

Ingredients

- 1 lb (40 g) veal or chicken, cubed
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 tsp (5 ml) paprika
- 1 cup (240 ml) sour cream
- 1 tsp (5 ml) flour
- 1 1/4 cups (300 ml) flour
- 1 qt (1 l) milk
- 2 eggs
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) oil
- salt and pepper to taste

Directions

Heat oil in a heavy pan. Add onion and sauté until translucent. Add veal and brown. Season with salt, pepper, and paprika, cover, and cook over low heat until meat is very tender. Remove meat from pan and shred. Whisk flour with 2 tbsp (30 ml) sour cream. Add to pan juices and combine well. Add remaining sour cream. Add just enough sauce to meat to moisten. Set meat and sauce aside. For crepes, whisk together egg, milk, and oil. Add salt and flour and mix gently to make a smooth batter. Lightly grease and heat a large, flat frying pan. Drop a spoonful of the batter in the heated pan, tilting the pan to make a round, thin, pancake. Cook on each side until browned. When all pancakes are cooked, lightly oil a baking pan and preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Spread a bit of meat on each pancake and roll up. Place pancakes in baking pan, and pour sauce over. Bake until just heated through. Serve hot.

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