

Traditional (Red) Harissa Paste

April 12th, 2025

Prep Time: 00:45

Cook Time: 00:00

Harissa is a traditional mild pepper paste, originating from North Africa. While the heat level of Harissa can vary, based on the type (and the amount) of chiles that are used, the chilies to pimento ratio is weak enough that you will likely not end up with an overly "spicy" harissa mix. You can use ancho chiles (dried/smoked poblano peppers) guajillos chiles (dried/smoked mirasol peppers), for a little more heat. Even more heat can be added by using chipotle peppers (dried/smoked jalapeño peppers). And finally, you can add a can of Chipotle Peppers in Adobo sauce, likely available at your local grocer. Additional smokiness can be added with the inclusion of smoked paprika. Similarly, you can add more complex overtones with the inclusion of orange juice and a small handful of dried cranberries. This recipe makes about 24 Ounces.

Ingredients:

- 4 Whole Dried Chiles (see the description above)
- 4 Red Pimentos, oven roasted
- 6 Roma Tomatoes, oven roasted
- 6 Garlic Cloves, minced
- 2 Teaspoon Smoked Sweet Paprika
- 2 Teaspoons Ground Coriander
- 1 Teaspoons Ground Cumin
- 1 Teaspoon Caraway Seeds, roasted and ground
- 1 Ounce Dried Cranberries
- 1/2 Teaspoon Salt
- 1 Large Lemon, juiced
- 1 Tablespoon Orange Juice
- 1 Teaspoon Liquid Smoke
- 2 Tablespoons Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 Can (about 3.5 oz) Chipotle Peppers in Adobo Sauce (optional)
- Additional Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Directions:

Oven roast the Pimentos and the Tomatoes.

Place the Dried Chiles in a medium bowl and cover with hot water.

Cover and set aside for half an hour while the Chiles re-hydrate.

After half an hour, drain the water. Remove the stems and seeds from the Chiles.

In a blender or food processor, add the Chiles, Pimentos, Garlic, Tomatoes, the Cranberries, the Ground Caraway, Coriander, Cumin, Smoked Paprika, Salt, the Lemon Juice, the Orange Juice, the Liquid Smoke, and (optionally) the canned Chipotle Peppers.

Blend into a paste. Stop the blender and scrape down the sides, as needed.

Run the Blender again on a lower speed, and drizzle in the Olive Oil until you reach the desired paste consistency.

Move into a glass jar. Cover with a thin layer of Olive Oil.

Seal airtight and refrigerate up to 8 weeks.

Apply a fresh layer of Olive Oil to cover the contents of the jar after using.