

History about Spice

Capsicum annuum peppers are native to Central and South America and have been cultivated by indigenous peoples for over 7,000 years. Cayenne peppers originated in French Guiana, north of Brazil, and are named after the native Tupi word for the chile. The peppers were discovered by Spanish explorers in the 15th century and were brought back to Europe with Christopher Columbus when he returned from his voyage to the Americas. The seed's long viability quickly spread throughout the tropics and subtropics by Spanish and Portuguese explorers. The spice was introduced to England from India, and by the 1500s, Cayenne pepper was highly prized globally, rivaling the peppercorn. Today, Cayenne pepper powder is widespread throughout the Americas and Europe, especially in Spanish, Portuguese, and Mediterranean cuisines. Cayenne peppers are primarily grown in India, East Africa, Mexico, and the United States, however, most of the Cayenne powder supply for the United States is imported from India and Africa. Cayenne pepper can be found in the spice aisle of most grocery stores and specialty markets with a focus on Latin cuisines.

Sources



All recipes are from books available for check out at Town Hall Library

- [Cowboy Barbecue: Fire & Smoke from the original Texas Vaqueros](#)
 - 641.76 DAV
- [Martha Stewart's Cookie Perfection](#)
 - 641.8654 STE
- Specialty Produce

https://specialtyproduce.com/produce/Cayenne_Pepper_Powder_6127.php

- The Little Green Shoot

<https://thelittlegreenshoot.com/how-to-make-cayenne-pepper-powder/>

Information

"Spice up Your Life" is a monthly "Take & Make Spice Club Kit" featuring a variety of unique spices, herbs, or blends.

Kits Include

- Information on the featured spice.
- Two recipes (1 baking & 1 cooking).
- A small packet of featured spice-enough for **both of the recipes**.

Share your experience with us

Once you have created your culinary masterpieces at home, we'd love you to share photos with us.

Send to reference@townhall.lib.wi.us and you might be featured on the Town Hall Library Website

One-Per-Household

Take & Make Spice Club Kit are free, but supplies are limited. Please, take one kit per household.



Take & Make Spice Club Kit



Spice Up Your Life



February Ground Cayenne Pepper

Mexican Chocolate Biscotti



Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup unsweetened Dutch-process cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon coarse salt
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 3 ounces bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
- 7 1/2 ounces milk chocolate, melted

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa powder, **cayenne**, cinnamon, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Using an electric mixer on medium, beat in eggs and vanilla until combined. Add chopped chocolate and beat until combined.
- Divide dough in half and transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet. Form each half into a 22-inch-wide, 3/4-inch-tall log. Bake, rotating sheet halfway through, until dough is firm but gives slightly when pressed 20 to 25 minutes. Transfer the sheet to a wire rack to cool, for 20 minutes.
- With a serrated knife, cut logs into 1/4-inch slices on the diagonal and arrange, cut side down, on parchment-lined baking sheets. Bake, rotating sheets and flipping biscotti halfway through, until biscotti are crisp, about 15 minutes. Transfer sheets to wire racks to cool.
- 4. Dip ends of biscotti in melted chocolate. Transfer to parchment-lined sheets and let set slightly, about 10 minutes. Sprinkle with cayenne, if desired. Refrigerate until set, about 10 minutes. (Store in an airtight container at room temperature, for up to 2 days, or freeze for up to 3 months.)

Vaquero Chili Con Carne



Ingredients

- 5 pounds coarsely ground chuck
- 1 cup chili powder
- 3 bay leaves
- 2 1/4 teaspoons minced garlic
- 2 1/4 teaspoons salt
- 2 1/4 teaspoons ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
- **1 teaspoon cayenne pepper**
- 3/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 cup chopped canned tomatoes
- 1/2 cup canned tomato sauce
- 1/4 cup beef broth
- 2 cups cooked pinto beans
- (optional)
- Chopped onion and grated
- Cheddar for serving
- Corn Bread for serving

How to Make Cayenne Pepper Powder

This is really just a few steps! After your peppers are dry, they come together really quickly.

1. Dry peppers with whichever method you choose from above (dehydrator, oven, or air).
2. Using gloves, remove stems and seeds. Usually, after you remove the stems, most of the seeds will sprinkle out easily. You don't need to get all of them. The more you leave, the spicier your powder will be.
3. Place peppers in a blender or spice grinder and pulverize. You want the powder to be very dry and very fine, so it stores well.
4. Once your powder is ground, store it in a glass jar, in a cool dry place, for up to a year.

Vaquero Chili Con Carne



Directions

- Put the meat in a large stockpot or, preferably, a large Dutch oven. Fill with water until it just covers the meat, then bring to a simmer. Simmer over medium heat until the meat is gray, not pink, and firm, 25 to 30 minutes. Pouring over a colander, drain the water from the stockpot.
(This step also removes excess fat.)
- Season the meat in the stockpot with chili powder, bay leaves, garlic, salt, black pepper, onion powder, cumin, **cayenne**, and oregano.
- Stir in the canned tomatoes, tomato sauce, and beef broth. Add water to cover to a depth of 2 inches above the meat. Stir all the ingredients.
- Cook, uncovered, over medium heat, at a simmer, not a boil, until the beef is tender, 45 minutes to an hour. Stir in the pinto beans, if using.
- Top with chopped onion and grated Cheddar, and serve accompanied with cornbread, if desired.

Fun Fact

A pepper is a berry, not a vegetable. So, it's Berry Spice!

