



Sweet Jalapeño Jam

By Dylan Sabuco

Prep Time 5 / **Cook Time** 10 / **Serves** 6 - 10

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

measure: to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

blend: to stir together two or more ingredients until just combined; blending is a gentler process than mixing.

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

sauté: to cook or brown food in a pan containing a small quantity of butter, oil, or other fat.

Equipment

Ingredients

Sweet Jalapeño Jam

- ☐ 1/2 jalapeño, chopped roughly (if concerned about safety, sub mild poblano pepper)
- ☐ 1/4 C granulated sugar
- ☐ 1/4 tsp salt
- ☐ 1/2 C water
- ☐ 1 tsp cornstarch

Food Allergen Substitutions

Sweet Jalapeño Jam

Instructions

Sweet Jalapeño Jam

chop + measure + boil

Carefully, cut **1/2 jalapeño** in rough pieces. (Remove the seeds and white from the inside of the jalapeño to remove some spiciness.)

Combine the chopped jalapeño, **1/4 cup sugar**, **1/4 teaspoon salt**, **1/2 cup water**, and **1 teaspoon cornstarch** in a small saucepan and simmer for 5 minutes.

blend + cool

Remove all the contents of the saucepan and place them in your blender (or pitcher + immersion blender). Blend until smooth and bright green. Place the blender or pitcher in the refrigerator to cool until ready to serve. This jam is a perfect sweet and spicy spread for Crispy Corn Southern Hush Puppy Fritters (see recipe)!

Featured Ingredient: Jalapeños!

Hi! I'm a Jalapeño!

"My name is Spanish! If you need help pronouncing it, try this: HAH-ah-PAY-nyoh. I'm a type of chili pepper. I have a medium heat, not too mild nor too hot—perfect for many dishes and tastes!"

History & Etymology

Jalapeños (HAHL-ah-PAY-nyohs) are chili peppers with mild hot heat. They can fall between 2,500 to 8,000 Scoville heat units (SHU).

As a comparison, a pimiento is a mild pepper and has 0 to 500 heat units on the Scoville scale, poblanos are somewhat mild with 1,000 to 2,000 SHU, cayenne and tabasco have 30,000 to 50,000 SHU, and a habanero has 100,000 to 350,000 SHU. The scale goes up to more than 2,500,000 SHU! Now, that's hot!

The Aztecs in Mesoamerica ate jalapeños during the 14th to 16th centuries. Bernardino de Sahagún, a Franciscan friar, missionary priest, and ethnographer, wrote about Aztec markets selling fresh jalapeños, chipotles (smoked jalapeños), and mole sauce made from chipotles while studying their culture.

Mexico produces the most jalapeños worldwide. California produces the most in the United States, followed by New Mexico and Texas.

The jalapeño has been the official state pepper of Texas since 1995.

According to Guinness World Records, the record for eating the most jalapeños in one minute was set by Alfredo Hernandez in Chicago on September 17, 2006. He ate 16 jalapeños at the La Costeña Feel the Heat Challenge.

The name "jalapeño" is from the Spanish for "from Xalapa," the capital city of the Mexican state of Veracruz.

Anatomy

The jalapeño plant is from the *Capsicum annuum* species in the Solanaceae or Nightshade family of flowering plants. The plants grow to around 2 1/2 feet tall. They prefer a warm climate.

The jalapeño plant's fruit is a medium-sized, pod-type chili pepper. The plant produces an average of 30 pods. Peppers are picked throughout the growing period of 70 to 80 days.

Jalapeños start green and eventually turn red. They may have different levels of capsaicin, the chemical compound that creates the heat in chili peppers, depending on the climate and the soil in which they are grown.

Sweet hybridized varieties are available that have the flavor of jalapeños without the heat.

How to Pick, Buy & Use

Pick jalapeños when they are still green before turning red, which means they are overripe. They should be between 2 to 4 inches long. Once they turn red, they will be spicier and sweeter.

When choosing fresh jalapeños, look for firm, dark green peppers without wrinkles. If you prefer mild jalapeños, choosing younger, smooth ones without white or brown lines (striations or corking) may give you the best result. More mature peppers have striations, and more lines can mean more heat.

Capsaicin is generally more prevalent in and around the seeds, so remove the seeds and ribs if you want to eliminate much of the heat.

It is a good idea to wear gloves or coat your hands with oil when handling jalapeños. Avoid touching your eyes, and wash your hands thoroughly after working with them.

Fresh jalapeños will last three to five weeks when stored in the refrigerator. Put them in a paper or perforated plastic bag in the crisper drawer.

You can also purchase brined or pickled, whole or sliced jalapeños in cans or jars.

Raw jalapeños can be a fresh ingredient or garnish for salsa, pico de gallo, guacamole, nachos, tacos, enchiladas, salads, and drinks.

Fillings for baked or fried jalapeño poppers or stuffed jalapeños may include cheese (cheddar, cream, Monterey jack), garlic, onions, bacon, salt, and other seasonings.

Nutrition

Raw jalapeños are 92 percent water with negligible fat or protein. They are a rich source of vitamin C, a moderate source of vitamins B6, E, and K, and a good source of potassium.