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Where you can find a pick-your-own farm near you!

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How to Make and Can Your Own Home-made Hot Sauce (Tomato Hot Sauce, Like Tabasco Sauce)

Making and canning your own tomato hot sauce, similar to Tabasco sauce, Ring of Fire, Louisiana hot sauce, etc. is quite easy. And you can make it as hot as you like, even add some other spice. It will be better it will taste in the winter, with the flavor of home grown tomatoes! Just scroll down this page to see how to do it, in easy steps and completely illustrated.

Ingredients

Yield: About 7 to 8 half-pint jars

- 8 cups (64 ounces) diced tomatoes, (don't drain them, save the juice)
- Serrano peppers - enough to yield about 1½ cups seeded, chopped (you can also use habanero, jalapeno or even hot chili peppers, in the same quantities)
- 4 cups distilled white vinegar (5% acidity)
- 2 teaspoons canning salt
- 2 tablespoons whole mixed pickling spices (Publix, Kroger and other grocery stores often carry them, next to the pectin and canning jars)
- Cheesecloth (6" by 6") or a spice bag
- Optional: 1 clove garlic, peeled and finely chopped

Equipment

- Water bath canner
- Large pot

Step 1 - Selecting the tomatoes

It's fun to go pick your own and you can obviously get better quality tomatoes!

Wash, remove stems, and trim off bruised or discolored portions of the tomatoes. You can also use canned, diced tomatoes.

Bulk? A bushel of tomatoes weighs 53 pounds.

At right is a picture of tomatoes from my garden - they are so much better than anything from the grocery store. And if you don't have enough, a pick-you-own farm is the place to go! At right are 4 common varieties that will work:



Top left: Beefsteak	Top right: Lemon Boy, yellow
Bottom left: Roma, paste-type	Bottom right: Better Boy

The picture at right shows the best variety of tomato to use: Roma; also called paste tomatoes. They have fewer sides, thicker, meatier walls, and less water. And that means thicker sauce in less cooking time!

Also, you don't want mushy, bruised or rotten tomatoes!

Caution: Do not can tomatoes from dead or frost-killed vines. Green tomatoes are more acidic than ripened fruit and can be canned safely, also.



Step 2 - Wash the jars and lids



Now's a good time to get the jars ready, so you won't be rushed later. The dishwasher is fine for the jars; especially if it has a "sterilize" cycle, the water bath processing will sterilize them as well as the contents! If you don't have a dishwasher with a sterilize cycle, you can wash the containers in hot, soapy water and rinse, then sterilize the jars by boiling them 10 minutes, and keep the jars in hot water until they are used.

NOTE: If unsterilized jars are used, the product should be processed for 5 more minutes. However, since this additional processing can result in a poor set (runny jam), it's better to sterilize the jars.

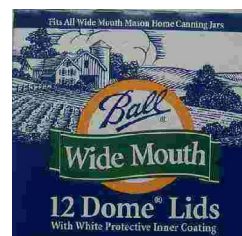
Put the lids into a pan of hot, but not quite boiling water (that's what the manufacturer's recommend) for 5 minutes, and use the magnetic "lid lifter wand" to pull them out. Leave the jars in the dishwasher on "heated dry" until you are ready to use them. Keeping them hot will prevent the jars from breaking when you fill them with the hot jam.



Lids: put the lids into a pan of hot water for at least several minutes; to soften up the gummed surface and clean the lids.

Need lids, rings and replacement jars?

[Get them all here, delivered direct to your home, at the best prices on the internet!](#)



Step 3 - Chop the tomatoes

Chop up the tomatoes (I go to 1/2 inch cubes). You could use a chopper or food processor. You don't need to remove the skins because the food mill (later) will remove the skins and seeds)



Step 4 - Chop the hot peppers

You want to produce 1½ cups of seeded, finely chopped Serrano peppers. You can use other similar hot peppers. You may want to use a chopper, food processor or blender. Caution: Wear plastic or rubber gloves when handling, cutting and seeding hot peppers or wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before touching your face or eyes.

Step 5 - Prepare the pickling space bag

Place mixed pickling spices in a spice bag and tie the ends firmly.



Step 6 - Bring all ingredients to a boil

Mix all ingredients together in a Dutch oven or large saucepot. Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally. Simmer another 20 minutes, until the tomatoes are soft.

Step 7 - Run the mix through a food mill

Press mixture through a food mill. This purees the mix and separates skins, seeds, stems and other hard bits. You can also use other mill/sieve combinations like the Villaware.



ASIDE: Here's the Foley food mill (below) .They cost about \$25.

You can also use other mill/sieve combinations like the Villaware (below)

Step 8 - Heat the strained liquid

Return the strained liquid to the stockpot, heat to boiling and then boil for another 15 minutes.



Step 9 - Fill the jars



Fill hot sauce into clean, hot half-pint jars, leaving ¼-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace if needed. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean paper towel; apply two-piece metal canning lids.

Step 10 - Process in a water bath canner

Process in a boiling water canner according to the recommendations in the table below. (You can also use a pressure canner, if you prefer - but follow the manual in the pressure canner for the time)



Recommended process time for Easy Hot Sauce in a boiling water canner.

Hot pack	Process Time at Altitudes of		
Jar Size	0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Half-pints (8 oz) or smaller	10 min	15 min	20 min

Step 11 - Cool and store

http://www.PickYourOwn.org/tomato_hot_sauce.htm

Let cool, undisturbed, 12-24 hours and check for seals. Hot sauce improves with age (up to about 6 months to a year). Wait at least one week prior to using it. The longer the sauce ages, the more complex the flavor will become. Properly packed hot sauce will last about 1 year, if kept in a cool, dark area.