

Chinese Chili Oil

<u>Ingredient</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Instruction</u>
Chinese Caiziyou oil	1 ½ cups	similar to sesame oil, but better
star anise	5	
cinnamon stick	1	
bay leaves	2	
Sichuan peppercorns	3 TBLSP	
Sichuan chili flakes	¾ cup	
salt	1 to 2 tsp	

- In a medium saucepan, place ingredients from oil peppercorns, leaving at least two inches of clearance between the oil and the rim of the pot.
- Set the saucepan over medium heat to start, then progressively lower it to medium low or low heat as the oil comes to temperature. The oil should be at about 225-250° F / 110-120° C and causing small bubbles to slowly rise from the aromatics. Use a candy thermometer to test the temperature. If you notice the spices sizzling more vigorously than that or turning dark too quickly, reduce the heat to cool it down. If you are not achieving small bubbles, slowly increase the heat. Hovering around 225° F is the safest way to prevent burning. Infuse the aromatics this way for 1 hour.
- Place the Sichuan chili flakes in a heatproof bowl.
- The oil should be between 225-240° F (110-120° C) when pouring over the chili flakes. You want the oil to be hot enough to toast the spices and release flavor, but not so hot that the spices burn. When in doubt, test the oil on a small bowl of chili flakes before you do the rest.
- Carefully pour the hot oil through a strainer onto the chili flakes. Stir to evenly distribute the heat of the oil. You'll know you've gotten it right when you smell a "popcorn"-like smell that is not at all burnt-smelling.
- Stir in the salt, and allow the chili oil to cool. Store in airtight containers in the refrigerator.

NOTE: The Mala Market sells high quality ingredients, including the oil, for this recipe.