

Scratch Made Seasonings and Sauces

Why make your own seasoning mix or sauce when you can buy just about any themed seasoning mix or sauce off the shelf or on the internet? Because most of those convenient seasoning mixes and sauces have MSG (monosodium glutamate) or soy and almost all have preservatives. Plus, you may not get the exact flavor profile you are looking for. Plus, if you make your own, you can adjust the heat to your own taste. Lots of pluses.

Scratch-Made Caribbean Seasoning

Ingredients

2-1/4 tsp brown sugar
2-1/4 tsp paprika
3/4 tsp ground cinnamon
3/4 tsp salt
1/2 tsp ground ginger
1/4 tsp allspice
1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
1/4 tsp freshly ground nutmeg
1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper

Even though you only need two tablespoons of this for the recipe in this book, it's easier to make if you use these proportions. Store the leftover mix in an air tight container and label with the name, "Caribbean," and date. It will last about six months.

Scratch-Made Taco Seasoning

Ingredients

1 TBS chili powder
1/4 tsp garlic powder
1/4 tsp onion powder
1/4 tsp crushed red chili peppers
1/4 tsp dried oregano leaves
1/2 tsp paprika
1-1/2 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp salt

Throw all ingredients together in a small bowl and mix well. If you find that it's too (spicy) hot, reduce the amount of chili powder to 2 teaspoons.

Linda's Herb Seasoning

Ingredients

1-1/2 tsp onion powder
1-1/2 tsp garlic powder
1-1/2 tsp dried parsley flakes
1/2 tsp dried basil leaves
1/2 tsp dried thyme leaves
1/2 tsp dried oregano leaves
1/2 tsp white pepper

Throw all ingredients together in a small bowl and mix well.

Chipotle Cream Sauce

Ingredients

1 cup Straus European Style plain whole milk yogurt
1 chipotle pepper in adobo sauce
1 tsp adobo sauce (from chipotle in adobo sauce can)
1 clove garlic, cut fine brunoise
1/4 cup mayonnaise
2 tsp Nellie and Joe's Key West lime juice
1/4 tsp salt (to taste)

Put all the ingredients in a blender or food processor. Pulse the blender just enough to pulverize the chipotle pepper and make the mix a uniform color. Don't over-blend. The longer it's run in the blender, the runnier the final sauce will be. Pour through a fine mesh strainer into a 2-quart bowl to remove seeds and bits of pepper skin. Taste and add salt, if necessary. Serve in a 12-ounce plastic squeeze bottle. Refrigerate at least an hour to thicken. If you live in Northern California, Straus European Style yogurt is readily available at the grocery store. If not, you can substitute any European style yogurt or Mexican crema. Using one chipotle pepper results in a spicy but not hot sauce. You can increase the heat of the sauce by adding more chipotle peppers, one-half pepper at a time.



True Ranch Dressing

Steve Henson's original (more or less) Hidden Valley Ranch dressing recipe

Ingredients

1 cup mayonnaise (made with olive oil or canola oil)
3/4 cup buttermilk
1/4 cup sour cream
1 tsp dried parsley
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp black pepper
1/4 tsp onion powder
1/4 tsp garlic powder

Put all the ingredients in a 4-quart mixing bowl and whisk the dressing until thoroughly blended. Transfer to an air-tight container and refrigerate overnight before serving. It should last up to a week. *Do not* make this in a blender. The harsh action of the blade will break down the mayonnaise and create a thin, watery juice rather than a thick creamy dressing.

