

# Vegan Chorizo for Omnivores Recipe

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I wanted to make a vegan chorizo recipe that doesn't just come close to regular chorizo in the flavor department, but outright *nails* it. I wanted a meat-free chorizo with textural contrast up the wazoo, and a chorizo that *changes* texture as you cook it just like its meat-based counterpart. I wanted a chorizo that is tangy, rich, and complex. In short, I wanted nothing less than the best darned meat-free chorizo around. And what I want, I get.



## Why this recipe works:

- A mixture of frozen tofu, tempeh, and dehydrated lentils gives the chorizo a huge level of textural contrast.
- Whole dried chilies form the flavorful base along with charred poblanos and a slew of fresh and dried herbs and spices.
- Unlike most vegan chorizos around, this version behaves exactly like regular chorizo when cooked.

**Note:** The chorizo can be made in advance and stored in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week or frozen for up to 2 months.

**YIELD:** Makes about 1 1/2 pounds

**ACTIVE TIME:** 1 hour

**TOTAL TIME:** 1 hour

## Ingredients

1 (10-ounce) block of extra-firm cottony (non-silken) tofu, drained and cut into 1-inch slices

1 fresh poblano pepper

1 (15-ounce) can black or Puy lentils, drained and rinsed

1 whole sweet dried chilies like Costeño, Guajillo, or Choricero, stems and seeds removed

1 to 2 small hot dried chilies like Arbol or Cascabel, stems and seeds removed (optional)

## Directions

1. Line a large plate with a double layer of paper towels. Place tofu on top in a single layer and transfer to freezer. Freeze for 15 minutes, then remove and let thaw while you prepare the other ingredients.
2. Adjust rack to 4 inches below broiler element and preheat broiler to high. Line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil and place the poblano on top. Broil, turning occasionally, until blackened on all sides, about 6 minutes total. Remove from oven, lift foil and wrap it around the poblano to form a tight seal, transfer to a plate and set aside. Reduce oven temperature to 325°F and leave the door open to allow oven to cool slightly.
3. Line rimmed baking sheet with a fresh piece of foil and spread lentils on top in a single layer. Transfer to oven and cook until mostly dry and crunchy, 20 to 30 minutes.

1 whole rich fruity dried chili like Ancho, Mulatto, Negro, or Pasilla, stems and seeds removed

2 tablespoons raisins

1 whole chipotle chili in adobo sauce with 2 tablespoons sauce from can

2 cups water

6 ounces plain tempeh

1/4 cup vegetable shortening or coconut oil

1 medium onion, diced (about 1 cup)

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 medium cloves garlic, minced (about 2 teaspoons)

2 tablespoons minced fresh oregano leaves

2 teaspoons dried Mexican oregano

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 tablespoon freshly toasted and ground cumin seeds

1 teaspoon freshly toasted and ground coriander seed

3 whole cloves, toasted and ground

1 tablespoon yellow or red miso paste

4. Meanwhile, place dried chilies on a microwave-safe plate and microwave until toasted, about 30 seconds. Transfer to a glass liquid measuring cup. Add raisins, chipotle chilies and their juice, and water. Cover with plastic wrap and microwave until simmering, about 1 1/2 minutes. Remove from microwave and let stand 2 minutes. Transfer to a blender and blend until completely smooth. Set mixture aside.
5. Cut tofu and tempeh into 1-inch pieces. Working in batches, transfer to a food processor and pulse until chopped to the texture of ground meat, about 10 to 12 short pulses. Set aside.
6. When cool enough to handle, carefully unwrap and peel poblano pepper, discarding skins and seeds. finely dice cooked flesh. Melt shortening in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onions and poblanos, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring, until softened, about 4 minutes. Add garlic, fresh and dried oregano, cinnamon, cumin, coriander, cloves, and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add miso paste, soy sauce, red wine vinegar, and chili mixture. Add crumbled tofu and dehydrated lentils. Stir to incorporate and season to taste with salt and pepper. For a moister, saucy texture, add a few tablespoons of water. For a dryer, crumblier, well-browned texture, add 2 tablespoons more oil and continue cooking until most of the excess liquid has evaporated and mixture is dark brown with crisp bits, about 15 minutes. Serve in tacos, burritos, mixed with eggs, on nachos, or in any recipe that calls for fresh Mexican chorizo.

1 tablespoon soy sauce

1/4 cup red wine vinegar

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## **Special Equipment**

food processor, blender