



# June 2026 : Smoked Paprika

**Smoked paprika** is a deep red, finely ground spice made from peppers of the *Capsicum annum* family. It is made by slowly drying the peppers over smoldering oak logs. Over ten to fifteen days, the heat and smoke draw out the peppers' moisture while infusing them with a rich, savory depth. Depending on the types of peppers used, smoked paprika will either be mild and sweet (often labeled as dulce), warm and pungent (agridulce), or hot and spicy (picante).

In Spain, smoked paprika is called pimentón. This spice is a staple in Spanish cuisine, and is a crucial element of traditional dishes like paella and chorizo, where pimentón is added for both flavor and color.

**Culinary Uses:** Smoked paprika is a versatile spice that works well across many cooking methods. It's a natural fit for dry rubs and marinades, adding depth to grilled meats like chicken, beef, pork, and lamb. It can be sprinkled over roasted or sautéed vegetables, or stirred into broths, lentil soups, and stews for a smoky, warming flavor. Smoked paprika also works well in egg dishes like scrambled eggs, omelets, and deviled eggs, and can be blended into sauces, aioli, and dips. In plant-based cooking, it's particularly useful for adding a smoky, savory quality to tofu, mushrooms, and roasted chickpeas.

Heating can enhance paprika's flavor, but be careful because it burns easily. To avoid burning the spice, heat it over low heat, add some olive oil, and limit frying it to less than one minute.

**Health Benefits:** Smoked paprika is not a significant source of nutrients in the amounts typically consumed. Paprika contains capsaicin, a compound found in peppers that has been shown to have a wide range of health benefits. Capsaicin has antioxidant properties, can help reduce the risk of cancer and heart disease, improve immunity, and even alleviate gas. Paprika is also rich in calcium, potassium, and phosphorus, all of which are important for building strong teeth, bones, and muscle.

**Fun Facts:** Pimentón de la Vera is widely considered to be the best variety of smoked paprika. It is only produced in the La Vera region of Spain and is a protected designation of origin - similar to Champagne and prosciutto di Parma.



# QUESO CRUNCH WRAP



**Total Time:** 45 minutes

**Servings:** 4

## Ingredients

### Filling:

- 1 Tbsp. canola or vegetable oil
- 1 lb. ground beef
- ¼ cup coarsely grated yellow onion
- Salt and pepper
- 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. smoked paprika
- 1 tsp. ancho chile powder (or ½ tsp. cayenne pepper)
- ½ tsp. garlic powder

### Assembly:

- ⅔ cup sour cream
- 4 tsp. adobo sauce (from 1 small can chipotles in adobo), or your favorite hot sauce, to taste
- 4 extra-large, burrito-size (10-inch) flour tortillas (see Tip)
- ¾ cup jarred or homemade queso
- 1 heaping cup very thinly sliced iceberg lettuce (cut into short, wispy strands)
- ¾ cup homemade or storebought pico de gallo, drained
- 4 tostada shells
- Canola or vegetable oil, for frying
- Hot sauce, for serving

## Instructions:

1. Prepare your filling: In a large nonstick skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the beef and onion and season aggressively with salt and pepper. Cook until the beef starts to brown, about 5 minutes. Make sure to break it into tiny pieces as it cooks. Stir in the tomato paste, then the cumin, paprika, ancho chile powder and garlic powder. Cook, stirring occasionally, until fragrant and any excess liquid evaporates, about 3 minutes. Transfer the mixture to a medium bowl. Wipe out the skillet with a paper towel.
2. Prepare the spicy sour cream: In a small bowl, mix together the sour cream and adobo sauce; season to taste with salt and pepper.
3. Prepare the assembly line: On a large flat surface, set out the flour tortillas. (You'll need your tortillas to be pliable without tearing, so if need be, you can warm them directly in the skillet over medium heat to soften just until soft and pliable.) Add ½ cup filling to the center of one tortilla, flattening the filling into an even, 4-inch circle just a bit smaller than the width of your tostadas. Spread with 3 tablespoons queso over the filling. Top the mixture with a tostada, pressing it slightly to make sure the meat mixture is evenly distributed. Evenly spread 2 scant tablespoons of the spicy sour cream on top of the tostada. Top evenly with a heaping ¼ cup shredded lettuce, then 3 tablespoons drained pico de gallo.
4. Enclose the filling by folding over one flap of the tortilla "border" to cover the filling, repeating the pleat every inch or two. The tortilla should fully enclose your filling, but an opening smaller than 1 inch at the center is just fine. (You can also use slightly less filling, or add a piece of tortilla to cover the gap; see Tip.)
5. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in the skillet over medium, then carefully add the wrap, setting it seam side down. Cook until golden and crisp, 2 to 3 minutes per side.
6. Serve immediately, with hot sauce and the remaining spicy sour cream, for dipping or slathering as you eat, dousing the wrap bite by bite. Repeat with remaining wraps, adding oil as needed to the pan before searing.

**TIP:** If you can't find 10-inch tortillas, opt for the very largest ones you can find. Ideally, you want the tortilla to fully cover the fillings. If you're having trouble cut (or tear!) 2- or 3-inch pieces from another tortilla and set it on top of your salsa, in the center, before folding over the tortilla to fully enclose.

## COLLARD GREENS AU GRATIN



**Time:** 1 hr 15 minutes

**Servings:** 8

### Ingredients:

- 3 lbs. collard greens, or 2 lbs. pre-chopped collard greens
- Kosher salt
- 2 Tbsp. butter or bacon fat
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 2½ cups half-and-half or heavy cream
- 1 cup grated Parmesan or Gruyère
- 1½ tsp. Cajun seasoning
- 1 tsp. smoked paprika
- Pinch freshly grated nutmeg
- ¼ to 1 cup panko or plain bread crumbs

### Directions:

1. Heat the oven to 400 degrees. Tear the greens from their stems. Take a handful of greens, roll them up lengthwise and slice them into bite-size pieces. Add the sliced greens to an empty, clean sink full of cool water and wash them, removing all grit, sand and debris. Drain sink and rinse greens thoroughly with cold water until water becomes clear.
2. Add greens to a large pot and fill the pot with enough water to cover the greens. Season the water with salt. Bring to a boil, and cook for 15-20 min., until dark green and tender. Drain thoroughly.
3. While the collards are cooking, in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet or other large oven-safe pan, heat the butter over medium until it foams. Add the onion and garlic and adjust the heat to medium-low. Cook, stirring, until softened and golden, about 5 minutes. Sprinkle in flour and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes to cook out the raw flavor without browning the mixture, reducing the heat as necessary.
4. Stir in the half-and-half and ¾ cup of cheese until fully incorporated. Bring to a simmer and then cook, stirring, until thickened, about 10 minutes. Stir in the Cajun seasoning, smoked paprika and nutmeg. Taste and adjust for salt and Cajun seasoning, then remove from the heat.
5. Stir the drained greens thoroughly into the cream mixture and adjust the heat to low. Cover and let simmer until the flavors are melded, 5 minutes more. Taste and readjust seasonings. Sprinkle the top with an even layer of bread crumbs and remaining ¼ cup of cheese.
6. Bake until the top is golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Serve immediately as a side dish or with crackers or tortilla chips as an appetizer.

## PAPRIKA CHICKEN & POTATOES



**Time:** 35 minutes

**Servings:** 4

### Ingredients:

- ½ cup mayonnaise (preferably a sweeter one, like Kewpie)
- 3 tsp. smoked paprika
- 1 ½ lbs. boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 2-inch pieces
- Salt and freshly cracked black pepper
- 1 ½ lbs. baby potatoes, cut lengthwise into ¼-inch-thick slices
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 lime, halved
- 2 Tbsp. chopped parsley leaves and tender stems

### Directions:

1. Heat the oven to 400 degrees.
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine the mayo and 2 tsp. paprika. Scoop out ¼ cup and place into a small bowl. Season the chicken all over with salt and pepper. Add to the large mixing bowl, stir to coat and set aside.
3. Add the sliced potatoes to a large sheet pan, drizzle with 2 Tbsp. of oil and season with salt and the remaining 1 tsp. paprika. Toss to coat and spread in an even layer, setting thicker potato slices near the edges where it is hotter. Place the chicken on top of the potatoes in an even layer.
4. Roast until the chicken is cooked through and potatoes are tender, 20 to 25 minutes.
5. While the chicken is cooking, add the remaining 1 Tbsp. olive oil and squeeze the juice from one lime half into the small bowl with the reserved paprika mayonnaise; stir to combine. Season to taste with salt and more lime juice and set aside in the fridge until ready to serve.
6. Garnish the cooked chicken and potatoes with the parsley and serve with the paprika mayonnaise for dipping.

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## PIMENTON SALT

Use this pimentón salt to rim Bloody Marys, Micheladas, Mezcal Margaritas, etc. This recipe makes enough to rim a dozen glasses

### Ingredients:

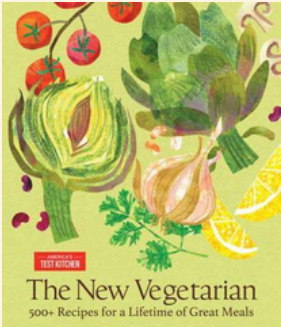
- 1 Tbsp. smoked paprika
- 1 Tbsp. salt
- ½ Tbsp. cayenne pepper

### Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients in a small bowl.
2. Run a lemon or lime around the rim of an empty cocktail glass, then dip the rim in your pimentón salt.

# Check Out These Cookbooks!

These cookbooks all contain recipes with herbs from this month's kit. Did you know that we have over 350 cookbooks in our collection? Explore recipes from many different countries and cuisines!



## ***The New Vegetarian: 500+ Recipes for a Lifetime of Great Meals***

America's Test Kitchen

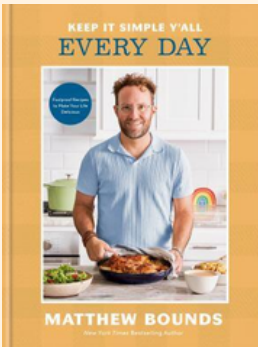
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Ashmore, Kat

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