



Baby, You So Spicy!

Toasting & Blooming Spices, Seeds and Stuff



Though only 1 of the recipes in this cooking guide calls for toasting seeds or spices (Mexican Mole' sauce), this technique WILL be used in later cookbook volumes. Toasting spices and herbs enhances the flavors of some of my ground meat seasonings, as well as any of my sauces, dips and dressings that call for spices. You can toast whole spices, like fennel, caraway & coriander seeds. You can then use them whole, crush them, or you can buy an inexpensive spice grinder (I got mine for \$8 on amazon) for fresh ground spices.

Aside from whole spices, you can "bloom" ground spices and even fresh herbs, like sprigs of rosemary and thyme. It's virtually the same process, but with ground spices and herbs. Other recipes, later on, will use toasted seeds, shredded coconut and more.

What You'll Need:

- A Pan
- Some Heat
- Seeds, Spices, Nuts, Herbs (*the legal kind, please*) and more
- A Fully Functioning Sniffer

Directions - Whole Spices:

- 1 Preheat a small pan over medium-low heat for around 30 seconds.
- 2 Add the amount of spices that you'll need into the pan. Shake it or stir the spices to prevent burning. Smaller spices and spices with thin skins need just a minute.
- 3 Once the spices become fragrant, remove them from the pan. If you plan to crush or grind your spices, allow them to cool first. Done.

Directions - Ground Spices (blooming):

- 1 Preheat a small pan over medium-low heat for around 30 seconds. For 0 point blooming, spray butter or olive oil cooking spray into the pan. Allow the spray to heat up a little bit, then add your ground spices to it and stir with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, to form a paste. Lower the heat to low, ground spices can burn faster than whole.
- 2 Stir the spices to prevent burning. Once the paste become fragrant, add it to your dish.

Directions - Everything Else:

- 1 Pretty much the same as either of the above methods, just use common sense.
- 2 Use the "whole spice" method for toasting pine nuts, sesame seeds, peppercorns, wandering gnomes that you might find in your travels...

Note:

- You can add fresh sprigs of rosemary, thyme and other herbs to a hot pan to make them more fragrant, prior to adding them into a dish, though it does cause them to wilt slightly.
- Crush toasted seeds by placing them in a ziplock bag, then playing whack-a-mole with a kitchen mallet, a small pot, or a typical receipt from CVS Pharmacy.
- If you don't mind the extra points, you can use butter or oil to bloom your spices, but adjust your recipe's points accordingly.
- You can bloom ground spices without any oil, spray, or liquids. Add the ground spices to a hot pan and stir as you would whole spices. Keep an eye on them though, or they'll burn.