



# SPICE CLUB: PAPRIKA

## ABOUT

**Paprika's botanical Name:** *Capsicum annum*

**Description:** Paprika is a spice made from the ground dried red peppers including chili peppers. It comes in colors ranging from bright red to dark red to light brown, depending on the type of plant, the climate, and the amount of red pigment in the pepper skin. Paprika peppers may be smoked prior to grinding, giving them a deep earthy flavor.

**Origin:** Paprika originated in central Mexico. It was brought to Spain during the 16th century and became popular throughout Europe. The peppers grow all over the world and is available year-round; but paprika harvesting is a big industry with strict regulations in Spain, Hungary, and Israel.

**Varieties:** The most common varieties of paprika are Spanish paprika and Hungarian paprika. Smoked paprika is also commonly referred to as Spanish paprika. Spanish paprika is smokier and usually not as finely ground as Hungarian paprika, which has a delicate, sweet, and silky texture. It famously lends its flavor to goulash, the Hungarian veal or beef stew made with paprika and sour cream.

**Flavor Profile:** Paprika has a pungent smoky flavor ranging from sweet and mild to hot and spicy. It varies in color from red

Made from bright and sweet red peppers, sweet paprika is used when the recipe calls for "paprika" to add color or a mild peppery flavor to a dish. Hot paprika is made with spicy peppers.

Because paprika's flavors vary so widely, substituting one type of paprika for another in a recipe will affect the overall flavor of the dish.

**Preparations:** Paprika is used as a seasoning ingredient in soups, stews, rice, marinades, and casseroles. It lends rich color to chicken and fish marinades and beef stews. It can be sprinkled on salads, used as a garnish on deviled eggs, or brushed on meats, poultry, and fish. Hungarians sometimes sprinkle the sweetest varieties on desserts. It's a prominent ingredient in Hungarian goulash and Spanish chorizo. When blended with ginger-garlic paste, some hot red pepper flakes, salt, and olive oil, it makes a lovely marinade for barbecued meats and roasts.

Since paprika becomes bitter with age, always purchase small quantities to get the most out of its unique flavor.

**Nutrient Profile:** Paprika is a rich source of carotenoids such as zeaxanthin, which gives paprika its bright red color. Paprika is a good source of vitamin A, vitamin E, and pyridoxine. It also has modest amounts of vitamin K, niacin, riboflavin, pantothenic acid, thiamin, iron, and manganese. The spicier varieties contain capsaicin.

**Facts:** Paprika is the national spice of Hungary. Christopher Columbus first brought red peppers to Spain in 1493, where they found their way across the Mediterranean to eventually be embraced by the Turks of the Ottoman Empire. The Turks introduced the spice to Bulgarians, and when some Bulgarians fled to Hungary for more freedom circa the mid-1500s, they brought paprika peppers with them.

# Garlic Paprika Chicken

## Ingredients

- 12 chicken drumsticks
- ½ cup olive oil
- 8 minced cloves garlic
- 2 tbsp smoked paprika or regular paprika if preferred
- ½ tsp red pepper flakes
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ¼ cup fresh chopped parsley
- 1 tbsp oregano
- Salt to taste



## Directions

- Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.
- In a small skillet heat the olive oil, add the garlic, smoked or regular paprika, red pepper flakes, and the herbs. Cook for about 1 minute over medium heat, do not burn garlic.
- Clean and dry the drumsticks, season with salt and black pepper.
- Pour the olive oil mixture over the chicken and make sure they are coated thoroughly.
- Place the drumsticks in a 9x13 baking dish and bake for 45 minutes or until chicken legs are cooked through.
- Serve with your favorite side dish and/or salad.

# Muhammara: Red Bell Pepper and Walnut Dip with Paprika

## Ingredients

- 1 sweet fresh red bell pepper
- 1 small onion
- 1 lemon juice
- ½ cup of plain, unseasoned breadcrumbs, or Syrian unsweetened tea sticks. Add more to thicken the dip if needed
- ½ cup walnuts or pecan
- 2 tbsp of pomegranate molasses
- 1 tbsp olive oil, + 2 tbsp to garnish
- 2 or 3 tsp paprika
- ½ teaspoon chili powder or cayenne to make it spicy (optional)
- 1 teaspoon salt or as desired
- Parsley and walnut pieces to garnish



## Directions

- In a blender or a food processor, start with onion then red bell pepper pieces and process.
- Add lemon juice and all other ingredients. Process until smooth. If the mixture is runny, add more breadcrumbs and pulse a few more times until combined. The mixture will have thick dipping consistency.
- Adjust salt as needed.
- Serve in a bowl or plate. Drizzle with additional olive oil if desired. Garnish with parsley and walnut pieces.
- Enjoy muhammara warm or chilled as a dip with bread or pita, spread over toast, or serve as a sauce with grilled meat.