

Romesco Sauce

(from Finlayson's Chile Pepper Bible)

- 6 plum or Roma tomatoes (1 lb)
- 6 cloves of garlic, unpeeled
- 1 red bell pepper
- 1/2 T olive oil for brushing
- 1/2 c whole unblanched almonds, lightly toasted
- 2 t sweet paprika or ground ñora pepper
- 1 red finger chile, chopped, or 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
- 1/2 c olive oil
- 2 T red wine vinegar
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 425F.

Place garlic, tomatoes and red pepper on a baking sheet covered with parchment paper and brush veggies with olive oil. Roast for about 15 minutes until garlic and tomatoes are browned and wrinkled. Remove them as they are done. Turn off the heat and leave the pepper in the hot oven for 20 - 30 minutes to finish cooking unsupervised. Or, if you're in a rush, turn and cook the pepper for about 10 more minutes to blacken.

Stem and peel tomatoes and peel garlic when cool enough to handle. Stem and seed red pepper. Place vegetables in food processor and add almonds, paprika and pepper flakes. Process until vegetables are puréed and almonds are finely chopped. Add oil and vinegar and process to blend. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer to a covered bowl, or a few small jars, and refrigerate for 4 hours to 2 days to let flavours marry.

Serve Romesco Sauce with vegetables, fish, seafood, chicken or meat. Tastes wonderful served atop spaghetti squash.

Makes 2 1/2 cups. Serves 10-12. A jar of homemade Romesco Sauce makes a good hostess gift — if you can bear to part with it!

Spaghetti Squash

- 1 spaghetti squash

Preheat oven to 375F.

Use a strong, flexible knife, such as a boning knife, and cut the spaghetti squash in half crosswise, not lengthwise, to get longer strands. Scoop out and discard the seeds. On a parchment covered baking pan, place each half with the cut side down. Roast for 30 minutes, and if desired, close the heat and let it sit in the hot oven as you go about your business for an hour or two. When cooked through, use a fork to scoop out and separate the strands. Serve with Romesco Sauce, garnishing plate with parsley.

Jittery Cook