

## PAPAYA TANG

A bleak yet sunny spring in the city had me craving something bright, smooth, and fiery. One quarantine evening in the sauce lab, with a pen and a pad, two things became clear to me:  
The sauce should be orange.

The sauce should be so orange that you might mistake it for a glass of that powdered-uranium breakfast-beverage Tang. Their commercials (<https://youtu.be/j9FLC4HHTIc>) still haunt my dreams.

And then I remembered that there's a summer fruit out there that'd give a habanero-based hot sauce just the "kick in a glass" it needed – in taste and in color – papaya, baby!

Substituting tangerine for the more traditional lime, and making sure my jalapenos were red-as-possible, I happened upon a sauce that dollops perfectly on breakfast, sans the side effects of that namesake product.

*Try it on your morning egg-wich or avo-toast. Mix into a burrito bowl. Swirl into a margarita. Drip upon sliced watermelon.*

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*This recipe makes 40 oz. of hot sauce, or eight standard 5-oz. bottles.  
Take two for yourself and deliver the other six to your friends' stoops.*

## INGREDIENTS

Three-quarters of a proper ripe papaya – scooped, peeled, and cubed  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup fresh pineapple – cubed  
4 yellow habanero peppers  
5 red jalapeno peppers  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  yellow onion  
4 oz. fresh-squeezed tangerine juice (orange as substitute option)  
6 oz. white wine vinegar  
salt to taste  
cilantro (optional) – preferably homegrown  
dash of agave, mescal, or both (also optional)

## DIRECTIONS

- I. Heat oven to 450 and roast those peppers, onion, and pineapple for 25 minutes. Then turn it up to a broil for 5-10 minutes; check on the peppers, roll them around as needed, and remove when they feel soft and blistered.
- II. Let peppers cool a bit. Remove stems carefully (gloves suggested). The seeds should pull out, too; taste a seed to determine spice levels. The more seeds you keep in there, the spicier it'll be. Dealer's choice!
- III. Toss the roasted delights and the rest of the ingredients into the best blender you can find. Pulse until smooth. Sauce thickness will vary based on ripeness of fruits. You may add a dash of water or another ounce of vinegar as needed.
- IV. Funnel your creation into bottles. Label these with something fun or funny, and store in the fridge for up to a year.

## THREE-ALARM CIDER

Remember that Simpsons episode where Homer wanders into the desert in a Scoville-induced hallucination at the Springfield Chili Cook-Off? After coating his throat in wax to handle Chief Wiggum's mystery seven-alarm peppers, and thus maintaining his status as Chili Champ?

That's not the spice we're going for here – but do know this sauce will get you sweating, because it packs plenty of heat per drop, relying upon the deep smoky flavor of dried chile de árbol and a trio of brighter red chiles. The apple cider base will bring out new and deeper flavors after a few days in the fridge.

*Use as a marinade for your grill-worthy meats. Drop a spoonful into a simmering pot of beans. Stir into cocktail sauce. Or dash a dash to crank up the spice of that bloody mary.*

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*This recipe makes 24 oz. of hot sauce, or six 4-oz. jars of heat.*

## INGREDIENTS

2 handfuls of dried chile de árbol (reconstituted in warm water)  
6 red jalapeno or red chili  
4 Italian long-hot peppers  
2 red bell peppers  
2 carrots  
full head of garlic  
10 oz. apple cider vinegar  
generous helping of salt

## DIRECTIONS

- I. Soak your árbol in warm water for about an hour. Stir occasionally. Drain the water. Feel free to save a bit for a spicy cocktail, or an ounce or two to add at Step IV below. Set aside the chiles.
- II. Heat oven to 450 and roast the three types of fresh peppers (red, bell, and long hot) along with the carrots for 25 minutes. Then turn it up to a broil for 5-10 minutes; check on the peppers, roll them around as needed, and remove when they feel soft and blistered.
- III. Let peppers cool. Remove stems carefully (gloves suggested). The seeds should pull out, too, but save most of these for the sauce.
- IV. Toss the roasted delights and the rest of the ingredients into the best blender you can find. Pulse until it gets smooth-ish. You may add a splash of water or another ounce of vinegar as needed.
- V. Funnel your creation into cute jars that will mask the intensity within. Label jars with something intimidating and/or encouraging, and store in the fridge for up to a year.