

ANOTHER
HERB HERBERT
FACT SHEET

SPECIAL INTEREST HERBS

GOURMET VEGETABLES

SERRANO CHILLI

Capsicum chinense



DESCRIPTION

Heat rating 7

Most chillies are green in color while they are still growing in their unripened state. When they ripen and reach their full maturity, almost all of them turn to shades of red, orange, yellow or brown. The fruit of this variety is usually dark green when young and red when ripe. Mexican Chilli grown commercially near sea level to high in the central plateau. H 3ft/1m W 12-18in /30-45cm.



PROPERTIES

Taste is usually very hot, especially if the seeds are left in. Fresh chillies are rich in Vitamins A and C. The degree of hotness depends on the presence of capsaicin, which varies according to variety and is affected by the climate. Hot weather conditions produce hotter chillies.



USES

Used in many dishes both green and fully ripened. In those cases, a color may be tacked onto the name just for purposes of description and not to denote a different specie, for instance Green Chilli or Red Chilli. In general, the redder the chilli the riper it is. When harvesting, superior fruits are those dry, firm and heavy for their size. The skin should be shiny, smooth and unblemished and the chile should have a fresh clean smell. Wash the chillies to remove dirt or other residue, dry them, wrap them in paper towels and store them in the crisper section of your refrigerator, where they should be kept for up to two to three weeks. Do not store them in plastic bags as moisture will accumulate and hasten the spoiling process and do not leave them out in the open or they will shrivel and rapidly lose flavor and texture. It is common in many cuisines, to roast or grill fresh chillies and peel them for further use. The skin left on can cause a bitter flavor. Roasting on an oven rack, open gas flame or on the grill makes it easier to remove their skin. An alternative to roasting is dipping the chillies in hot oil for about 11 minutes. Sometimes the roasted flavor is not desired in some dishes, such as seafood dishes.



CULTIVATION

Grow with Parsley. Chilli peppers like the same conditions

as tomatoes, full sun and a well drained soil with added animal manure. Plants are frost tender so in cold regions they are grown as annuals. A late cold snap will set plants back and they will often be slow to recover. In the tropics they can be grown for use in hot Asian and South American dishes. When dried and powdered they can be used for seasoning, cooking, or as a pepper substitute. Not difficult to grow in a greenhouse in cool climate, and produces a prolific crop on tall, much-branched and distinctly hairy plants.



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