



Horseradish

Whether slathered on a sub sandwich as a condiment, stirred into a cocktail sauce for seafood, or spooned as a dressing over meat or fish, horseradish is the go-to herb for pungent flavor. We eat about 6 million pounds of prepared horseradish annually in the U.S.; that's about 24 million pounds of the root. The International Herb Association celebrated this popular botanical by naming horseradish the Herb of the Year for 2011.

A member of the same family as mustard and radish, the horseradish plant is an herbaceous perennial that grows to about two feet in height. Though its young leaves are edible, it's cultivated for its thick, white, fleshy roots, which look much like parsnips and are harvested after the first frost. The plant prefers cool to moderate climates, full sun and moist (but not wet) soil. Because the crop deteriorates over time, horseradish must be replanted every few years.

When the root is first harvested, it seems rather benign. In fact, before the root is grated or cut, it's not aromatic. Once the skin is broken, though, the volatile oils are released along with the biting heat. (Cutting the root can make you teary-eyed, much like cutting strong onions.) The freshly harvested root is trimmed and scraped clean, and then the inner core (which is hard to grate and not as flavorful as the rest of the root) is usually discarded.

Thanks to its perfect weather (cold winters and long summers) and potash-rich soil, the Collinsville area of Illinois grows 60 percent of the world's supply of horseradish. (The root was first sold as a prepared horseradish in this area in the 1860s.) Wisconsin, New Jersey, California, Virginia, and many countries in Europe also cultivate horseradish today.



Tempeh Temptation

For a full, melded taste, it's important to allow this horseradish sauce to develop in the refrigerator before serving. Try it on veggies, like tomatoes or asparagus, too.

Horseradish Sauce:

- ¼ cup sour cream
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- ½ teaspoon horseradish root powder
- 1 teaspoon white wine vinegar
- pinch sea salt
- ⅛ teaspoon coarse grind black pepper

Tempeh:

- 8 ounces tempeh
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon basil

Combine sour cream, mayonnaise, horseradish root powder, vinegar, salt and pepper. Cover and refrigerate for at least two hours.

Heat olive oil in a large, heavy skillet. Slice tempeh in half. Slice halves in half thicknesses. Lay slices in the hot oil, then sprinkle with garlic, oregano, and basil. Sauté, turning occasionally, until tempeh is nicely browned on both sides.

Serve hot tempeh with cold horseradish sauce.



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Horseradish

Recipe for ...

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Q&A

Why is the root called horseradish?

Well, the “radish” part comes from the Latin for “root,” radix. The horse part is a bit more complicated — and up for debate. One theory is that the German name for the root is meerretich, or sea radish (it grows by the sea). When the English pronounced meer, though, they called it “mare,” or “mareradish” (mare being the horse connection). Another theory is that the name is a reference to an original method of processing the root, which involved having horses stamp the root tender before grating. By the way, one of horseradish’s folk names is “stingnose.” You can probably guess where this name comes from!

Are there non-culinary uses for horseradish?



Fresh horseradish root has a long history as an ingredient in herbal preparations in Western Countries. Its strong, warming and penetrating properties are especially beneficial in

poultices, plasters, liniments and rubs, although fresh horseradish must be handled very carefully, since it can be very irritating to the eyes and nose.

Are horseradish and wasabi the same thing?

No, although wasabi is sometimes called “Japanese horseradish.” Horseradish is a white root, *Armoracia rusticana*. Wasabi is a green root, *Wasabia japonica*, and it’s not quite as biting as horseradish. While both are members of the Brassicaceae (or Cruciferae) family, wasabi is harder to grow and more slow growing than horseradish. In fact, horseradish can be invasive as a garden plant, as its roots quickly spread underground. Wasabi is used extensively in Japanese cooking.

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Cooking with Horseradish



To make a sauce using fresh horseradish root, combine about one part vinegar with two parts grated horseradish root. Fresh horseradish root develops its flavor and aroma only after being exposed to air - as it’s grated or cut. (Be careful handling fresh horseradish; it can be very irritating to the eyes and nose.) Vinegar slows the developing bite of the root; the quicker it’s added, the less potent the sauce. Salt and sweeten (if desired) to taste. Sauces made with horseradish are traditional with roast beef and sausages, but they also partner well with eggs, cheese, chicken, hot ham, seafood, and vegetables.

To make a sauce using horseradish root powder, simply combine the powder with water to desired consistency. (Two parts water to one part horseradish powder is a good place to start.) Allow some time for the flavor to fully develop. You can also sprinkle the powder directly into recipes that contain liquid, such as dressings, dips, and soups.



Here are some easy ways to incorporate horseradish into your dishes. (Add just a pinch for pizzazz or more for a punch.) Keep in mind that when horseradish is cooked, as in casseroles, it becomes milder tasting than when used raw. (It also becomes nuttier tasting when cooked.)

- Add to catsup with a spritz of lemon, for a cocktail sauce (traditional with shrimp, but also great with clams and oysters).
- Use to perk up tartar sauce.
- Stir into mayo dressing to use for making chicken salad, coleslaw, or egg salad.
- Add to deviled eggs recipe.
- Combine with aioli or other condiments for spreading on sandwiches.
- Add to apple pie (horseradish has an affinity for apples) and serve with sharp cheddar cheese.
- Add to applesauce and serve with pork or fish.
- Spread on bruschetta.
- Use for a dipping sauce for crudités. To make dip, combine with mayo, sour cream, yogurt, and/or cream cheese and other seasonings, such as garlic, parsley, salt, pepper, chives, paprika, and a little vinegar or lemon juice.
- Add to mashed potatoes or potato pancakes.