

AFRICAN PEPPER SAUCE

Makes about 2 cups

Pepper sauce is a West African condiment used in many parts of the continent, with plenty of local variations (dried shrimp in Nigeria, smoked fish in Ivory Coast, just to name a few). I make mine by roasting tomatoes, onions, bell peppers, and chiles to concentrate their flavors and natural sugars then whizzing them in the blender. This sauce gets its bold heat and depth from Scotch bonnets (or habaneros) and ginger and works great with everything from roasted vegetables, birds, and fish, like crispy-skin salmon and sweet plantains (page 205).

2 medium tomatoes (about
¾ pound total), cored and
cut into sixths

2 Scotch bonnet or habanero
chiles, stemmed

2-inch knob ginger, peeled and
thinly sliced against the grain

1 medium red bell pepper,
stemmed, seeded, and cut
into 2-inch pieces

1 medium red onion, cut into
eighths

6 large garlic cloves, peeled
1 tablespoon kosher salt
½ cup avocado oil

MAKE THE SAUCE

Preheat the oven to 450°F. Combine all the vegetables and aromatics in a large baking dish or sheet pan (it should fit the vegetables in a crowded, more or less single layer). Season with the salt and evenly drizzle with the oil. Roast until the tomatoes have shriveled slightly, the onion is tender, and everything is browned at the edges, about 25 minutes.

Let the mixture cool slightly, then puree it, including the oil, in a blender until smooth, 1 to 2 minutes. It keeps in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 5 days.

