

Fluvanna County Public Library

Spice of the Month Club

Sazon

Flavor Profile: Spice without heat

A staple of many cuisines, including Puerto Rican, Dominican and Mexican cooking, sazón is a blend of spices, and when translated from Spanish, it means simply "seasoning." But there's an inherent complexity to sazón, with its unique blend having evolved across cultures and adapted to local palates and tastes.

Sazon is a savory, flavorful spice blend of Mexico, Spain and popular in Cuba. Sazon has a strong spice flavor, but without the heat. Sazon is used to braise meats and poultry, shrimp, scallops, octopus, calamari, and other seafood. Blends of cumin, turmeric, garlic, coriander and paprika provide the robust flavors of several Latin regions.

Sazon seasoning is used to smoke, pan-fry, dredge, grill, or marinate steak, chicken, fish, soups/stews, tacos, rice, Ropa Vieja, Beans, and/or vegetables. If you make home-made chips or "Takis," you may find Sazon with a hint of lime the perfect party snack. If you like the Sazon seasoning but want to amp up the heat, just add a bit of cayenne or even powdered ghost pepper!

Sazon, a staple in Puerto Rican and other Caribbean dishes, has a mild, smooth flavor that has subtle garlic and onion notes with herby undertones and is a perfect way to add flavor to a dish without adding heat. Sprinkle it in Hispanic dishes like rice, beans, fajitas, tacos, burritos and enchiladas. We also add it to Latin American soups and stews, grilled beef, chicken and pork, and steamed vegetables like broccoli, green beans and baked potatoes.

Health Benefits of Sazon Seasoning

While Sazon seasoning is primarily used for its flavor, it also contains ingredients that offer a variety of health benefits. When used in moderation, it can contribute to your overall well-being.

- Rich in Antioxidants
- Supports Digestion
- Anti-inflammatory Properties
- Rich in Vitamins and Minerals

Library Resources

Chicano Eats by Esteban Castillo – 641.5972 CAS

Gaby's Latin American Kitchen by Gaby Melian – J 641.2 MEL

Gran Cocina Latina by Maricel Presilla – 641.5972 PRE

The Latin American kitchen by Elisabeth Luard – 641.598 LUA

Mexican Today by Pati Jinich – 641.5972 JIN

Sazón Seasoning (1/2 cup)

- 1 Tbsp. cumin seeds
- 1 Tbsp. coriander seeds
- 2 Tbsp. achiote (annatto) seeds
- 1 Tbsp. garlic powder
- 1 Tbsp. onion powder
- 2 Tbsp. salt
- ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper



1. Grind cumin, coriander, and achiote seeds:
 - You can grind the spices using an electric spice grinder, blender, food processor, coffee grinder, or mortar and pestle.
 - If using an electric spice grinder or coffee grinder: Fill the spice grinder with cumin seeds, coriander seeds, and achiote seeds (be careful to not overfill past the max amount indicated). Process for 10-25 seconds, until your spices resemble a fine powder, with little to no large chunks.
 - If using a mortar and pestle: Add the cumin seeds, coriander seeds, and achiote seeds to the mortar. Crush the spices with firm pressure and continue grinding until you reach the desired texture.
2. Make the spice mix:
 - In a medium bowl, combine the ground cumin, ground coriander, ground achiote, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, and black pepper.
3. Sift spices:
 - Using a fine mesh sieve, sift spices over a large bowl to extract any large particles or spice husks that didn't get fully processed.
4. Store sazón: Funnel sazón into a container and cover tightly. Store sazón in a cool, dark place at room temperature in an airtight container for up to one year.

<https://www.simplyrecipes.com/homemade-sazon-spice-mix-recipe-5225550>

Huevos Pericos (Columbian scrambled eggs) 1 serving

- 4 eggs
- ¼ tsp. sazón
- ½ Roma tomato, diced
- 1 scallion, finely sliced
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil, or butter
- Salt to taste

1. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat.
2. In a bowl, whisk the eggs and sazón for 1-2 minutes.
3. Add the tomatoes and scallions, season with salt and cook for 1 minute.
4. Add the eggs to the skillet and allow them to cook for a few seconds without stirring. Use a rubber spatula to scrape the bottom and sides of the skillet producing curds of scrambled eggs.
5. Stir and fold the eggs every few seconds. I cooked them for 2-3 minutes.
6. Season with salt right before serving and enjoy!



<https://www.cookedbyjulie.com/huevos-pericos/>

Sazon-Roasted Cauliflower (6 servings)

- 2-pound head cauliflower, trimmed
- ¼ cup tahini
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. sugar or honey
- 4 tsp. Sazón Spice Blend
- 1½ tsp. Chile Lime Sea Salt
- 2 tsp. extra virgin olive oil, plus more for brushing
- ¼ cup parmesan cheese, grated or shredded fine
- Garnish lemon wedges and sliced green onions



1. Heat oven to 475°F with a rack in the middle position. Line a broiler-safe rimmed baking sheet with foil and lightly brush with oil. Place cauliflower in the center, then draw up the edges of the foil; drizzle 2 tablespoons water onto the cauliflower, then enclose the head, folding and crimping the edges of the foil to seal. Bake until a skewer inserted into the cauliflower meets no resistance, about 35 to 45 minutes. Remove from oven; carefully open the top of foil but leave it in place; set aside.
2. While cauliflower cools, prepare the topping. In a small bowl, stir remaining ingredients together to form a thick-but-spreadable paste.
3. Heat the broiler. Spread the tahini mixture onto the entire surface of the cauliflower (will still be warm), then broil until deeply browned, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to a serving platter; garnish with sliced green onions and serve with lemon wedges.

<https://www.spiceandtea.com/blogs/recipes-side-dishes/sazon-roasted-cauliflower?srltid=AfmBOophatXeF3ft-0WMgAl30-rjZpQt2jO4-FyRN4vRkKRsrscxRz>

Crock Pot Sazon Pork Chops with Peppers, Olives and Potato (4 servings)

- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 4 center cut bone-in pork chops, trimmed of excess fat (with bone about 32 oz)
- 1 ½ tsp. sazón, I used my homemade recipe
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- kosher salt and black pepper to taste, to taste
- 2 Tbsp. all purpose unbleached flour, for gluten free use sweet rice flour
- 8 oz. yukon gold potato, peeled and diced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 (8 oz.) can tomato sauce
- ¼ cup alcaparrado, or green pimento olives
- ¼ cup plus 1 Tbsp. fresh chopped cilantro
- 2 dried bay leaves

1. Rub the pork chops with crushed garlic, then add sazón, cumin, 1/4 tsp kosher salt and black pepper.
2. Sprinkle the flour over the chops and add to the slow cooker.
3. Top with the potatoes and peppers.



4. Pour the tomato sauce and 1/4 cup water over the pork.
5. Add the garlic, alcapparado (or olives), 1/4 cup cilantro and bay leaves.
6. Cook until the potatoes are tender, for me that was on LOW 8 hours.
7. Transfer the pork chops to a platter and remove the bay leaves.
8. Add the remaining fresh cilantro to the sauce and stir.
9. To serve place 1 chop on each plate with 3/4 cups sauce and vegetables.

<https://www.skinnytaste.com/crock-pot-sazon-pork-chops-with-peppers/>

Sazon Grilled Chicken Thighs (4 servings)

- 1 ½ pounds boneless skinless chicken thighs
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. cumin
- 1 tsp. ground coriander
- 1 tsp. ground turmeric
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. oregano
- Optional: ¼ tsp. cayenne (only if you like a little heat)
- ½ tsp. salt
- Freshly ground black pepper



1. First, marinate your chicken: in a large bowl add chicken, olive oil, cumin, coriander, turmeric, garlic powder, oregano, cayenne, salt and pepper. Toss together to coat the chicken and allow it to marinate for 30 minutes-1 hour, or up to 24 hours.
2. Preheat your grill to 400 degrees F. Place the chicken directly on the grill. Grill chicken thighs for 6-8 minutes per side or until fully cooked and the meat thermometer reads 165 degrees F.
3. Transfer cooked chicken to a plate and cover with foil to keep warm, then chop into bite sized pieces. Use in salads, tacos, bowls and more.

<https://www.ambitiouskitchen.com/sazon-grilled-chicken-thighs/>

Easy Russet Oven Fries with My Sazón Seasoning (4 servings)

- 2 large russet potatoes, about 1 pound
- 2 ½ tsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tsp. Sazón Seasoning, more for sprinkling
- ¼ tsp. sea salt

1. Wash and scrub, then dry potatoes well. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Cut into batonnettes - Slice into 1/3" slabs, then cut into 1/3" x 4" lengths. Mostly, leave the size consistent.
3. Add to a large bowl to fit. Add 2 teaspoons EVOO, mix in with your hands.
4. Sprinkle in 2 teaspoons of salt free Sazón Seasonings and mix to incorporate evenly.
5. Brush a rimmed baking sheet (do not line) with 1/2 teaspoon olive oil.
6. Add the potatoes, spacing them so they do not touch each other.
7. Roast in the oven until the undersides are good & golden; about 14 minutes. Turn each over with a metal spatula and cook for an additional 6 minutes until golden all over.
8. Out of oven sprinkle with sea salt and a few pinches of more Sazón Seasoning (if you like.)



9. Optional Topping:

10. Out of the oven - toss immediately with finely shredded Parmesan Reggiano (2 tablespoons) and coarsely chopped Parsley (1 tablespoon.)

<https://azestforlife.com/recipe/easy-russet-oven-fries-with-my-sazon-seasoning/>

Sopa de Salchichon (Puerto Rican Salami Soup) 6 servings

- 1 salchichon, hard salami
- 1 potato, peeled and cubed
- 8 cups water
- 4 garlic cloves, finely minced
- 1 small onion, diced
- ¼ cup sofrito
- ¼ cup tomato sauce
- ¼ lb. spaghetti
- 2 enveloped sazón OR about 2 ½ tsp.
- 2 tsp. adobo seasoning
- 2 Tbsp. fresh cilantro , optional
- ½ cup olives
- 3 ears corn, chopped in half
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste



1. Add the olive oil to a large soup pot and heat over medium-high heat. Add the sliced salchichon and onions, cook for 4-5 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook until fragrant, which should take 10 seconds.
2. Stir in the sofrito, tomato sauce, adobo, and sazón. Cook for 1 minute. Add the rest of the ingredients except for the cilantro and spaghetti. Bring to a boil.
3. Once it comes to a boil, reduce the heat to medium and add the spaghetti. Cook until the spaghetti and the potatoes are fully cooked through.
4. Season with salt and pepper and garnish with fresh cilantro. Enjoy with a squeeze of fresh lime if desired.

<https://www.cookedbyjulie.com/sopa-de-salchichon/>

Arroz Con Gandules (Puerto Rican Rice and Pigeon Peas)

- 4 slices bacon or ham, optional
- 2 Tbsp. oil, vegetable oil, olive oil, or achiote oil
- 1 cup canned gandules, or frozen, drained from the water (pinto, pink or red beans can also be used)
- ¾ cup tomato sauce
- ½ cup green olives
- ¼ cup sofrito, thawed if using store bought frozen sofrito
- 1 ½ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. adobo seasoning
- ½ packet Sazon con culantro y achiote, or homemade sazón seasoning (¾ tsp.)
- ½ tsp. ground black pepper



- ¼ tsp. ground cumin
 - 3 ½ cups water
 - 3 cups arroz Rico, medium grain white rice, rinsed
1. Heat a large heavy bottomed pot like a dutch oven, or a caldero if you have one, over medium heat. If using ham or bacon, slowly cook the meat until crispy, remove meat from pot and set aside leaving the drippings. If not using meat, add oil before continuing with the next step.
 2. Add the gandules, tomato sauce, green olives, sofrito, salt, adobo seasoning, sazón, ground black pepper and ground cumin. Stir to fully combine.
 3. Once the mixture becomes fragrant, pour in the water and bring it to a boil over high heat. Bring the mixture to a boil and then add the rice. Stir until rice is submerged and pigeon peas are distributed evenly.
 4. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover, and cook for about 25 minutes. You can add your ham or bacon back in now if you want, or wait to add it in again before serving. Traditionally the rice would be covered with a banana or plantain leaf. However, a tight fitting pot lid will work just fine!
 5. About half way through cooking, remove the lid and stir by folding rice from the bottom up, but do not disturb the rice at the bottom of pan. (This is a very touchy subject – some Puerto Ricans insist that you don't stir the rice while cooking to get the best pegao, crispy rice bottom. However, I find stirring it once cooks everything more evenly. Whatever you do, make sure you only stir it once or the rice will become sticky/mushy.)
 6. After simmering for 25 minutes, remove the arroz con gandules from the heat and let it sit for an additional 10 minutes before serving. This is called letting the rice "steam". The rice is done once all the liquid is absorbed.
 7. After letting the rice rest for about a half hour, remove the lid. Fluff and stir the rice, then serve warm!

<https://thenovicechefblog.com/arroz-con-gandules-puerto-rican-rice-with-pigeon-peas/>

Carne Guisada (Puerto Rican Beef Stew) 8 servings

For the Meat

- 2 pounds stew meat, cubed
- 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. oregano
- 1 tsp. cumin
- 1 tsp. salt

For the Stew

- 3 Tbsp. oil
- 3 garlic cloves, smashed
- 6 Tbsp. sofrito
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 1 cup diced carrots
- ½ small bunch cilantro, chopped
- ¼ cup olives
- 1 packet Sazon Goya OR 1 ¼ tsp. sazón seasoning
- 1 Tbsp. adobo seasoning



- 1 tsp. powdered beef bouillon
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 cups water
- 3 large potatoes, peeled and diced

1. Place the meat in a large bowl and add the flour, oregano, cumin, salt, and pepper and toss to coat.
2. Heat the oil in a deep heavy bottomed pan. Brown the meat on all sides, then remove it from the pan. Set aside.
3. Add the garlic, sofrito, tomato sauce, and carrots. Sauté for 2 minutes, then add the beef, cilantro, olives, Sazon Goya seasoning, adobo seasoning, beef bouillon, and bay leaves. Stir in the water, then bring to a low simmer.
4. Cook for an hour. Then add the potatoes and continue cooking for another 20 to 30 minutes, until the potatoes are tender and the beef is fork tender.
5. Serve immediately with a side of rice, if desired.

<https://thenovicechefblog.com/carne-guisada-puerto-rican-beef-stew/>

Ropa Vieja Slow Cooker (Cuban Shredded Beef) 5-6 servings

- ¼ cup vegetable oil or more
- 2- 2 1/2 pounds beef flank steak, skirt or roast
- salt, pepper, cumin and Sazon (adjust to taste)
- 1 large bay leaf
- 1 Large Onion, sliced
- 4-5 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 bell peppers (red, green), seeded and sliced into strips
- 2 tomatoes sliced into strips
- 1 can (8 ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1 thyme spring
- 1 tsp. smoked paprika
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1-2 cup beef broth
- 1-2 packet Sazon (1 ¼ tsp sazón per packet)
- 2-3 Tbsp. parsley/cilantro
- salt and pepper to taste



1. Trim beef of any excess fat, then season salt, pepper, cumin and sazón. Adjust to taste.
2. Heat about 2 tablespoon oil in skillet on medium, place beef in a single layer and sear meat on both sides until brown. About 3-4 minutes each side. Throw in bay leaves after browning on one side
3. Add remaining oil to the skillet over medium high heat. Then add onions, garlic, bell peppers, tomatoes, tomato sauce, thyme, paprika, cumin, and sazón. Cook for about 3-5 minutes. Add broth. Turn off heat and add 3/4 of the sauce to the slow cooker.
4. Slow cook, until beef is tender, about 3 1/2--4 hours on High or 7 -8 hours on low, and can be easily shredded using two forks. Remove beef and set aside.
5. Add 1-2 cups of the sauce from the crockpot to the remaining sauce. Cook for about 2 minutes or more. Add more seasoning (sazón) if need. Throw in parsley. Adjust seasoning

6. Finally, add shredded beef and stir for a minute. Serve with rice, beans, and tostones.

<https://www.africanbites.com/ropa-viego/>

Puerto Rican Shrimp Tacos

- 1 lb. raw shrimp – cut into pieces
- 1 packet of Sazon (1 ¼ tsp. per packet)
- 1 or 2 garlic cloves – chopped
- ½ an onion – chopped
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- salt/ pepper to your taste
- 6–8 small tortillas (corn or flour)
- Lime wedges
- Optional Toppings: shredded lettuce and carrots, purple cabbage, cheese and/or avocado



Cilantro Lime Sauce

- 1/4 cup oil
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup chopped green onions
- 1/2 cup cilantro leaves
- 1 garlic clove
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- juice of 2 limes
- 1/2 cup sour cream or plain yogurt

1. Pat the shrimp dry, dice into pieces and place in a bowl. Sprinkle with the Sazon spice packet and a drizzle of olive oil. Toss to combine and set to the side while you continue to prep.
2. In a medium deep skillet heat some olive oil. Once hot, add onion, salt, pepper and sauté until tender, about 5 min. Add garlic and sauté another minute. Drain tomatoes and add to the skillet and season with a little more salt and pepper. Cook on medium-low for about 10 minutes. After 10 mins of cooking add the diced shrimp and stir to combine. Remove from heat after 5 minutes. Shrimp cook very fast, be careful not to overcook it.
3. Prep your toppings. Slice cabbage, and avocados if using.
4. Warm the tortillas. You can wrap them in a damp paper towel and heat in the microwave for a few seconds or place in a hot, dry skillet until tortillas start to brown.
5. Assemble the tacos, I like to put the lettuce, cabbage, etc. on the bottom and shrimp on the top.
6. Serve with extra limes on the side.

Cilantro Dressing

1. Add all of the ingredients into a food processor or blender (or place in a deep bowl and use an emulsion blender) and mix until smooth. If it's a little too thick add a little more lime juice or olive oil until it reaches a pourable consistency.

<https://desociointhekitchen.com/puerto-rican-shrimp-tacos/>