

Making a Molcajete* food safe

*traditional Mexican mortar and pestle made from volcanic stone used to prepare particularly salsas.

Did you know that sauces taste even better when prepared in a **molcajete** (the word molcajete is derived from the Nahuatl word mollicaxtli molli=salsa and caxitl=bowl, the pestle was called =texolot)? The molcajete releases the essential oils of the ingredients to be processed, which gives your salsa a better flavor and texture. Molcajetes are traditionally made of volcanic stone and it is very important to make them „food safe“ before using them for the first time. To prepare a molcajete for its first use, it must be „cured“ with salt and/or rice. This smoothes the coarse surface and prevents small particles from coming off when preparing food in it. This process takes some time and effort, but only needs to be done once.



1 Salt



2 Rice



Making it food grade

This is how to do it, step by step:

1. Unpack the molcajete. Put a teaspoon of coarse salt in the mortar. Grind the salt with the included grinding stone or pestle until it turns into a fine powder. The salt will turn slightly gray due to the dissolved stone particles.
2. Remove the ground salt and place a teaspoon of uncooked rice in the molcajete and repeat the procedure.
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 until the resulting powder is completely white and free of residues (Fig. 5). From now on your Molcajete will be food grade and can be used for food preparation without any problem.
4. Finally, rinse the molcajete with hot water and dry it thoroughly.



When using a molcajete, remember to cut the ingredients into small pieces and gradually add them to obtain a sauce with a better texture.

It is important to wash the molcajete with hot water as soon as it is no longer in use. If necessary, it can be cleaned with a few drops of dishwashing detergent and a brush. Allow to dry thoroughly before storing. With proper care, a molcajete can be passed down from generation to generation.

Molcajetes are not dishwasher safe!

Recipe for a Salsa Molcajeteada (prepared in molcajete)

Ingredients:

4 tomatoes
4 tomatillos
1/2 white onion
2 serrano or jalapeño peppers
2 cloves of garlic
Chopped fresh cilantro to taste
Salt to taste

Directions:

Roast the tomatoes, tomatillos, chiles, onion and garlic in a skillet, cut into pieces and grind them little by little in the molcajete until the desired consistency is obtained. Season with salt and chopped cilantro..... the sauce is ready!



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