



ZABANGUNI'S HARISSA PASTE

MAKES 3 × 150 ML JARS

Zabanguni and I travelled across South Africa in my little blue bakkie, all the way to the great Limpopo River.

- 110 g sundried tomatoes
- 1 cup hot water
- 1 large sweet red pepper, deseeded and chopped into 8 crescents
- ½ cup vegetable oil, plus extra for frying
- 3 × 70 g tins (or 4 × 50 g sachets) tomato paste
- 6 cloves garlic, chopped
- 3 T crushed chilli flakes
- 2 T ground coriander
- 2 t ground cumin
- 1 t whole caraway seeds
- ½ t smoked paprika
- 3 T white wine vinegar
- 2 t salt

NOTES

- ☞ You can replace the sundried tomatoes and vinegar with a 240 g sachet of Ina Paarman's sundried tomatoes in vinaigrette.
- ☞ To make a delicious chunky relish, stir the ingredients together instead of blending them.
- ☞ For an even smokier flavour, and to remove the skin of the pepper, Zaba grills the red pepper over the coals of a fire or on the open flame of a gas hob. Then she puts it in a plastic bag while it's warm and the skin 'sweats' off.
- ☞ This spicy paste adds a tasty 'skop' to any meat or vegetable dish.

- 1 Soak the sundried tomatoes in the cup of hot water.
- 2 Use a medium-sized pot with a lid. Fry the pepper crescents in a little oil over medium heat, stirring as they change colour. Put on the lid and allow them to braise a little longer until they are soft – they will just break with a wooden spoon. If you need to, add a little water to prevent burning.
- 3 Put the peppers in a bowl. Leave the juice in the pot.
- 4 Add the ½ cup oil and tomato paste to the same pot, and stir for about 5 minutes.
- 5 Add the chopped garlic and all the spices. Lower the heat and stir well for about 4 minutes.
- 6 Drain the sundried tomatoes, keeping the flavoured water. Add or remove from the water to get ¾ cup, then add the flavoured water and the sundried tomatoes to the pot, followed by the cooked peppers, the vinegar and the salt.
- 7 Cook for about 5 minutes over gentle heat, stirring occasionally, until all the water has evaporated and you're left with a chunky paste.
- 8 Allow the mixture to cool.
- 9 Blend the ingredients in the pot with a hand blender. Use a spatula to scrape what sticks to the sides of the pot into the mix.
- 10 Bottle in small, sterilised jars and refrigerate.
- 11 The harissa paste lasts up to 3 months in the fridge, and can also be frozen.