

# GARDEN & GUN

## Better Burger Toppers

*By Jed Portman*

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In his professional life, chef Tim Byres spends an awful lot of time standing over hot embers. **Smoke**, his five-year-old restaurant in Dallas, takes its name from the smoldering arsenal of cookers out back: a smokehouse, a smoker, and a wood-fueled grill. Even when he's not on the clock he mans the tongs at home and on family camping trips. This is a man who knows how to grill a burger. And the secret to a great one, he says, isn't the cuts of beef involved, or how they're ground. It's a solid roster of quality homemade condiments. Upgrading to a garden-fresh ketchup or a smoky chile mustard is that extra bit of effort that can take a Labor Day spread from run-of-the-mill to something you'll still be remembering when the long holiday weekend is long gone.



## **Red Pepper and Tomato Ketchup**

**From Tim Byres, Smoke, Dallas**

*Makes 3 cups*

“Homemade ketchup is easy, and it makes a huge difference at the picnic table.”

4 Roma tomatoes  
2 red cubanelle peppers  
1 red bell pepper  
3 dried guajillo peppers  
6 cloves garlic  
¼ cup white vinegar  
1 tsp. chile powder  
½ cup brown sugar  
1 tbsp. kosher salt  
Zest and juice of 1 lemon

Roughly chop the tomatoes and peppers into large chunks and add them to a heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium-high heat. Add garlic, vinegar, chile powder, brown sugar, and salt. Stir well. Bring mixture to a simmer, then cover and let stew for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat, let sit 5 minutes, and then transfer to a blender. Add lemon juice and zest and blend on high for 1 minute, or until the mixture is smooth and velvety. Allow ketchup to cool before storing it in an airtight container.

## **Banana Pepper and Yellow Tomato Ketchup**

**From Tim Byres, Smoke, Dallas**

*Makes 3 cups*

“This looks like mustard, but tastes like it just came out of the garden. It’s bright and earthy, with an outstanding banana-yellow color.”

2 lb. yellow heirloom tomatoes  
4 fresh banana peppers, stemmed and seeded  
1 yellow bell pepper, stemmed and seeded  
½ yellow onion  
3 tbsp. minced fresh ginger  
½ cup granulated sugar  
½ cup cider vinegar  
1 tbsp. kosher salt  
¼ tsp. turmeric  
¼ tsp. cayenne

Roughly chop the tomatoes, peppers, and onion into large chunks and add them to a heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the remaining ingredients. Stir well. Bring mixture to a simmer, then cover and let stew for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat, let sit 5 minutes, and then transfer to a blender. Blend on high for 1 minute, or until the mixture is smooth and velvety. Allow ketchup to cool before storing it in an airtight container.

## **Roasted Green Chile and Spicy Honey Mustard**

**From Tim Byres, Smoke, Dallas**

*Makes 2 ½ cups*

“My father used to say that a good spicy mustard should clear your sinuses. I also think a condiment like this should be bright and fresh. Quickly roasting the green chilies and onions over the flames adds some body, smoke, and spice, while the honey, spinach and coriander bring a clean finish. This is a wonderful topping for any sandwich or sausage.”

½ lb shishito peppers  
2 poblano peppers  
2 Anaheim peppers  
1 bunch green onions  
1 tbsp. olive oil  
4 cups baby spinach  
Juice of 3 limes  
8 oz. hot Chinese mustard, or Dijon mustard  
3 tbsp. honey  
2 tsp. ground coriander  
1 ½ tbsp. kosher salt

In a large bowl, toss the green onions and peppers with olive oil. Quickly roast them over a hot wood-fired grill or stove burner on high, turning often until lightly charred, about 5 minutes. Once cooked, return to the bowl and cover with plastic wrap, allowing them to steam for 10 minutes. Remove the skin, seeds, and stems from the poblano and Anaheim peppers, leaving the shishitos whole. Transfer the peppers and onions to the blender along with the spinach and lime juice. Blend on high for one minute, then strain mixture through a fine-mesh strainer into a mixing bowl. Add mustard, honey, coriander, and salt, and whisk to combine. Cool and store in an airtight container.

## **Smoke's Grilling Salt**

**From Tim Byres, Smoke, Dallas**

*Makes 1 ½ cups*

“This is a great all-purpose grilling salt. Since the rock salt and aromatics are loose, each turn of the grinder sprinkles different bits of flavor. I set the mill to a course grind and crank it generously over thick steaks, burgers, chicken, fish, vegetables, and salads.”

½ cup coarse sea salt  
2 tbsp. whole green peppercorns  
1 tbsp. dried thyme  
1 tbsp. dried rosemary  
2 tbsp. dried chopped garlic  
2 tbsp. dried chopped shallot  
1 tsp. whole cumin  
4 dried arbol chiles  
1 bay leaf

Combine all ingredients in a mixing bowl. Stir. Add mixture to a pepper grinder and use as needed. Store any overflow in an airtight container for future use.

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