



Chile Pepper Primer and the Scoville Heat Scale

Compounds called *capsaicans* are what make a pepper taste hot. The Scoville scale measures the heat range that chile peppers contain. But peppers also have other flavor profiles that help you choose which chile you want to use in a recipe.



Bell Pepper

0 (no Capsaicans)

Sweet Peppers are technically a fruit. Bell peppers have a sweet taste and a crisp crunch.



Shishoto

50 - 200

This Asian pepper has a mild bright grassy flavor that has a hint of smoke. About 1 in 10 has a punch of spice.



Cuban

100 - 1000

Sweet but with more flavor than a bell pepper. The thin walls make this pepper perfect for sauteing.



Anaheim

500 - 2500

Sweet, tangy and smoky with a touch of heat that doesn't linger. Canned chiles are often these.



Poblano

1000 - 1500

Rich, earthy flavor with a mild heat. The thick walls give a nice crunch. This pepper is what is used in chile rellenos. When dried they are called ancho.



Jalapeno

2500 - 8,000

Bright and grassy with a kick of heat. When green they can have a slight bitter hint, when red, they have fruity notes.



Fresno

2500 - 10,000

Grassy and bright in taste. It looks and taste like a jalapeno, with a more complex fruity taste and a bit more heat.



Serrano

10,000 - 23,000

Thinner than a jalapeno and much hotter. This pepper's full heat comes after a slight delay. Fresh fruity and bright in flavor.



Habanero

30,000 - 50,000

This unique pepper is probably the hottest pepper commonly available. It tastes fruity, sweet, floral, and bursting with a hot crunch.



Thai

50,000 - 100,000

An umbrella name for peppers that are small and tapering. Similar in taste of the Serrano but without the fruity berry notes. The dried form is what you find in Chinese dishes.