

of weeks anyway, so it should be no worry in the long run

If you've tasted a chili and suddenly realized that it was a hotter than you'd like, don't reach for water. Water does virtually nothing to abate the hot chili's sting. It is commonly held that dairy products are the best solution. Science backs this up. First of all, the capsaicinoid compounds are not water soluble, but fat soluble. The fat in dairy will help to break to it down. As well, there is a substance in milk called casein. This stuff will actually strip the capsaicin from the nerve receptor. Beer works fine as well. Capsaicin is alcohol soluble. Plus, alcohol can be considered good for deadening pain.

When selecting peppers for heat the rule of thumb is, the smaller the pepper, the hotter it will be. Because it makes sense to select chili peppers by their pungency rather than their species, here is an alternate grouping by heat - sweet peppers to very hot peppers

Sweet Peppers - include the Bell and range from 0 to 1000 Scoville Units (SU)

Mild Peppers - include the Ortega and range from 1000-3000 SU

Medium Peppers - include the jalapeno and range from 3000-6000 SU

Hot Peppers include the Serrano and range from 5000 to 100,000 SU

Very Hot Peppers include Habenero and range from 80,000 to 300,000 SU

The largest and sweetest peppers are the bell peppers, while the smallest and some of the hottest chili peppers are the piquins, measuring in at less than one inch in length! The fruits of these colorful vegetables when immature can be white, yellow, light green or purple. Mature peppers are yellow, orange, red, purple, deep green and nearly black. Sometimes all the colors produced by the particular variety will be on the pepper plant at the same time. Some peppers are long and slender, others long and plump, and others round or heart-shaped. Some of the hottest

are tiny cones and the mildest are large and blocky. Few other groups of plants show as much variety in their fruits as pepper plants.

Chile peppers are cholesterol free, low in sodium and calories, rich in Vitamins A and C, and a good source of folic acid, potassium and Vitamin E. The red or orange pigment is carotene, which is a form of vitamin A, and even the green peppers are very rich in vitamin A, hidden by the green chlorophyll. In addition, chilies have perhaps the highest level of vitamin C per gram of tissue of any plant, including citrus; so peppers were an essential part of the pre-European New World diet for fulfilling vitamin

requirements. Chile peppers may have 100 milligrams of vitamin C and 16,000 units of vitamin A per ounce, three to four times daily dietary requirements! Peppers were used for much of the pioneering research on vitamin C.

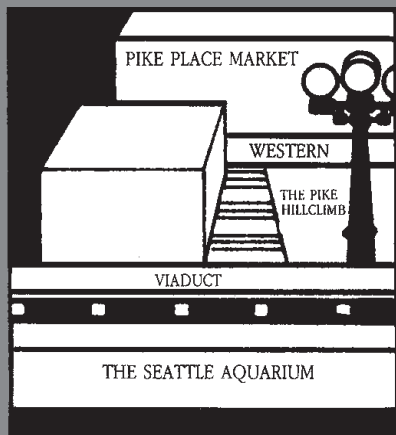
Fresh chilies can be found in the fresh produce areas of grocery stores. When selecting fresh chilies make sure they are firm, smooth and glossy with no signs of splitting. Refrigerate them in a plastic bag for up to 3 days. When handling fresh chilies, it is best to protect your hand with thin rubber gloves and avoid touching your face or eyes. Chiles come in a variety of flavors, shapes

and colors-and names. Although one name can refer to several different chilies and one chili may go by several different names, don't be discouraged. Feel free to ask your grocer about his or her chilies, and refer to these notes on the most common chili varieties:

Anaheim: Also called 'California fresh chili' or 'long green chili', these large chilies come fresh, dried and canned. It's pointed, 6 to 7 inches long, bright green and mild to medium-hot in flavor. Dried Anaheims are

See PEPPERS, Page 14

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