

# Getting evenly roasted Brussels sprouts is all about space

By SARA MOULTON  
Associated Press

With Passover looming, I thought it might be nice to suggest a side dish — roasted Brussels sprouts — to complement the feast's traditional items.

Brussels sprouts are the tiniest member of the cabbage family. And I'll confess that I used to hate them. In the old days they were not only boiled, but boiled to death, which generated a truly unfortunate aroma. Happily, intrepid chefs in recent years have managed to reinvent (not to say redeem) these little stinkers in any number of ways.

One of my favorite restaurant preparations is roasted Brussels sprouts. This recipe cuts down the time required to prep them as well as the time they need to spend in the oven. The right tool for the job, prep-wise, is a food processor fitted with the slicing disk. Once you've trimmed the bottoms of the sprouts by hand, it takes no time at all to slice them thinly with the processor. Once sliced, the sprouts get tender very quickly in the oven.

How to roast Brussels sprouts? Just as you would any vegetable. But the goal is not simply to cook them, but to brown them, which concentrates their flavor. The oven should be hot, 400 F. The vegetables, well-seasoned, should be spread out in shallow pans. If they are crowded on top of each other, they will steam. Not good. You want them to roast.

To ensure the Brussels sprouts have the desired elbow room, I spread the slices over multiple sheet pans. This does mean switching the placement of the pans in the oven several times during roasting — as well as stirring the sprouts occasionally — but the even browning is worth it.

If you'd rather not have to juggle the sheet pans in the oven at the last minute, you can cook the sprouts an hour or so ahead of time, transfer them all to one sheet pan, then warm them at 350 F for 5 minutes.

Speaking from personal experience, I promise that this recipe will turn Brussels sprouts haters into lovers.

*Sara Moulton was executive chef at Gourmet magazine for nearly 25 years, and spent a decade hosting several Food Network shows. She currently stars in public television's "Sara's Weeknight Meals" and has written three cookbooks, including "Sara Moulton's Everyday Family Dinners."*



AP Photo/Matthew Mead

This Feb. 23 photo shows roasted Brussels sprouts with Matzo Walnut crumbs.



AP Photo/Matthew Mead

This Feb. 23 photo shows one step in the process of making roasted Brussels sprouts with Matzo Walnut crumbs.

## Roasted brussels sprouts with matzo-walnut crumbs

**Start to finish:** 1 hour (35 minutes active)  
**Servings:** 6

- 1 sheet matzo bread
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- Kosher salt and ground black pepper
- 1/3 cup walnuts or pine nuts
- 1 1/2 pounds Brussels sprouts

Heat the oven to 350 F. Coat 2 baking sheets with cooking spray.

Set the matzo on a rimmed baking sheet. Use 1 tablespoon of the olive oil to brush both sides. Season with salt and pepper. Add the nuts to the sheet pan, then set in the oven. As soon as the matzo is golden brown, remove it from the oven. Continue baking the nuts until toasted, 3 to 4 minutes for pine nuts and 6 to 8 minutes for walnuts. Let the matzo and nuts cool.

Set the matzo and nuts in a zip-close plastic bag, then pound gently with a mallet or rolling pin until evenly crushed. Set aside. Increase the oven temperature to 400 F.

Trim off and discard the ends of the Brussels sprouts. Using a food processor fitted with its thinnest slicing blade, slice the sprouts. Spread the sliced sprouts evenly between the 2 prepared baking sheets. Drizzle each pan with 1 1/2 tablespoons of the olive oil, 1/2 teaspoon of salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Toss well, then roast on the oven upper shelf until golden brown, 15 minutes, turning the pans and stirring the sprouts every 5 minutes.

Transfer the roasted sprouts to a bowl. Add the matzo-nut mixture, toss well, then serve right away.

*Nutrition information per serving: 190 calories; 120 calories from fat (63 percent of total calories); 14 g fat (1.5 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 0 mg cholesterol; 15 g carbohydrate; 5 g fiber; 3 g sugar; 5 g protein; 230 mg sodium.*

# Getting to know the darker side of cardamom

By AARTI SEQUEIRA  
Associated Press

If delicate green cardamom pods are the queen of spices, black cardamom might be Maleficent.

Like the Disney character, the spice is shrouded in a black shell, wrinkled and gnarled, intimidating at first glance and even at first sniff. Unlike green cardamom's sweet perfume of flowers, pine and lemon, the scent of black cardamom is intense, rooted in smoke, camphor and resin.

Like Maleficent, who apparently only turned to the dark side once her wings were clipped (if the Angelina Jolie film is to be believed!), I like to think that black cardamom was once a happy flowery little pod before being dried over open flames licking at her husks and turning her dark, funky and smoky.



AP Photo/Matthew Mead

This Feb. 2 photo shows black cardamom orange flourless chocolate cake.

This little missy isn't an inferior version of the queen of spices, as I've heard

some people assert. She's her own personality, thank you very much.

Since black cardamom is such an assertive spice, a little goes a long way. And it works especially well in long-cooking preparations, where the full nuance of the little pod can express itself. In India, it is used to flavor aromatic curries and some versions of a warm spice mix called garam masala. It's also found in Chinese cooking and in one of the most famous dishes of Vietnam, pho.

In your everyday cooking, you could add a pod to your chili, stew or pot roast. Grind up the seeds

and add to a flank steak marinade of cumin, cinnamon, brown sugar and apple cider vinegar. Saute a pod in some ghee or butter before adding rice to make a quick aromatic pilaf.

Or, in a highly unorthodox (but nevertheless tasty!) sweet preparation, pair it with some orange juice, cinnamon and chocolate in this gorgeous flourless chocolate cake, a heady way to end your Passover seder.

*Food Network star Aarti Sequeira is the author of "Aarti Paarti: An American Kitchen with an Indian Soul." She blogs at <http://www.AartiPaarti.com>.*



AP Photo/Matthew Mead

This Feb. 2 photo shows black and green cardamom pods next to some orange slices.

## Black cardamom-orange flourless chocolate cake

**Start to finish:** 1 1/2 hours (30 minutes active), plus cooling

**Servings:** 12

- Coconut oil
- 1 1/4 cups raw whole almonds (with skins)
- 3/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar, divided
- 6 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped
- 4 black cardamom pods
- 7 green cardamom pods
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- Juice and zest of 1 large orange (about 1/2 cup juice and 2 teaspoons zest)
- 6 large eggs, separated
- Kosher salt
- Powdered sugar, to dust

Heat the oven to 350 F. Rub an even coating of coconut oil over the bottom of a 9-inch springform pan. Place the pan on baking sheet and set aside.

In a food processor, combine the almonds and 1/4 cup of the sugar. Process until fine. Add the chocolate, then continue to process until a finely milled powder

forms.

Using a mortar and pestle, pound both varieties of cardamom pods until the husks open. Remove and discard the husks, then pound the seeds to a fine powder. Pour into a small bowl. Whisk in the cinnamon, cocoa powder, and the orange juice and zest until smooth.

In a medium bowl, whisk the egg yolks with 1/2 cup of the sugar until significantly thickened. Stir in the cocoa mixture and the almond-chocolate mixture.

In a large bowl, use an electric mixer to whisk the egg whites and a pinch of salt until soft peaks form. Gradually add the remaining 2 tablespoons of sugar and continue whisking until stiff peaks form.

Working in 3 batches, fold the whites into the yolk mixture. Pour the batter into the prepared springform pan, then place the sheet pan in the middle of the oven. Cook for 40 to 50 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted at the center comes out clean. Cool to room temperature, then run a paring knife around the perimeter of the cake and release the sides of the pan. If desired, dust the cake with powdered sugar, then cut into thin slices and serve.

*Nutrition information per serving: 260 calories; 140 calories from fat (54 percent of total calories); 16 g fat (5 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 110 mg cholesterol; 28 g carbohydrate; 4 g fiber; 21 g sugar; 7 g protein; 55 mg sodium.*

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