Sauces / Italy

Italian Salsa Verde

A Milanese herb sauce of pounded parsley, anchovy, capers, and garlic loosened with olive oil and red wine vinegar — raw, immediate, and loud enough to cut through the richest braised meats.

Time 15 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 100 parts Flat-leaf parsley, leaves only
- ☐ 40 parts Anchovy fillets in oil, drained
- ☐ 30 parts Capers, rinsed (salt-packed preferred)
- ☐ 15 parts Garlic cloves
- ☐ 30 parts Red wine vinegar
- ☐ 100 parts Extra-virgin olive oil
- ☐ 10 parts Dijon mustard
- ☐ 2 parts Fine sea salt

Let's make it.

01 Place the garlic cloves in a mortar with the salt. Pound in a circular motion, scraping down the walls periodically, until you have a smooth, sticky, slightly translucent paste with no visible garlic chunks remaining. The salt acts as an abrasive — use it generously from the start. This takes about 2 minutes of sustained work. If using a knife instead: mince the garlic fine, then use the flat of the blade to smear it across the board, scraping and repeating until it forms a paste.

02 Add the anchovy fillets to the garlic paste and pound until they completely dissolve into the base — the anchovies should vanish, leaving no visible flesh, only a deeper savory color and scent. Add the capers and pound until they are crushed but retain some rough texture: you want fragments, not obliteration. Add the Dijon mustard and stir it through with the pestle. Taste: it should be intensely savory, salty, and punchy.

03 Stack the parsley leaves and chop them very finely with a sharp chef's knife — do not use a food processor, which bruises the parsley and turns it grey within minutes. Aim for a near-mince. Add the chopped parsley to the mortar paste and fold together with the pestle. Loosen with red wine vinegar and olive oil, adding each in alternating small additions while tasting after each — the oil brings body and rounds the flavors; the vinegar keeps it alive. The final consistency should be spoonable and flowing, not stiff like a paste and not watery like a dressing.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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