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| 1 lb. scrod cut into dime-sized pieces | 1 T. salt |
| 1 medium-sized red or yellow onion, diced | Juice of seven limes |
| ½ head garlic, peeled and crushed | 1-3 Jalapenos, depending on your tolerance |
| | 1 handful fresh chopped coriander |

In a CERAMIC baking dish, mix the first five ingredients and refrigerate. The acids from the limes "cook" the fish. (These same acids will react with metal, so always use ceramic cookware.) After one hour, clean and stem Jalapenos, then manually mash and shred them directly into the seviche. Then serve cold on a bed of lettuce with hot corn on the cob. Serves three.

HOMEMADE TACO SAUCE

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| 1 head garlic, peeled, crushed and finely diced | ion, finely diced, may be substituted |
| 2-5 Jalapeno, Long Hot or Serrano peppers, finely diced | ¾ c. thick-style spaghetti sauce |
| 1½ bunches of scallions, finely diced (use white, firm part only); 1 medium yellow on- | 1 large, very ripe tomato, diced (16-oz.) can of stewed tomatoes, drained |
| | Garlic powder to taste |
| | Salt to taste (optional) |

In a large ceramic or wooden mixing bowl, add the first five ingredients. Mash the drained stewed tomatoes and add to sauce. Stir well. Season to taste. Refrigerate for 15 minutes, then serve over tacos, as a dip for nacho chips, or add to omelettes and gazpacho soups. Yields about 3 cups.

When buying fresh chiles, avoid those that appear shriveled, discolored or bruised. The intensity of hot peppers often varies from batch to batch. In general: green is hotter than red, small is hotter than large, and if you are in doubt, sample one from the stack. Break it open, sniff and take a small bite from the end opposite the stem.

The oils from chiles may burn the skin, so wash fingers thoroughly with salted water after handling. If you have sensitive skin, wear rubber gloves. When preparing a hot pepper, always wash and stem it. The seeds hold most of the sting and should be used or discarded depending on your tolerance. To tame an extra-ornery chile, core, seed and soak it in a solution of 1 tablespoon salt and 1 quart water for half an hour.

Sooner or later it happens to everyone — the mouth foams, the eyes bulge, and the sweat pours — you have just witnessed a seasoning overdose. Surrender Kumar, manager of the House of spices, recommends buttermilk as the best antidote. Other best remedies include bananas and anything with lots of sugar, such as soda or candy.

green Long Hot and the milder Hungarian Wax peppers are shipped from either local or New Jersey farms. A Jalapeno crop from Michigan also appears at this time. Domestic hot peppers cost from 50 cents to 99 cents per pound.

November through March — As the northern harvest thins, Jalapenos from Florida and Serranos from Mexico become available at local supermarkets. Paul Lally, a Produce Manager for Purity Supreme, expects the Mexican crops to be available this week. Cultivated in warmer climates, these peppers tend to be hotter than northern varieties. Average price — \$1.69 per pound.

For the hottest fresh chiles, however, visit an Oriental, Indian or Spanish market. Available much of the year, these peppers are imported and range from pencil-thin Serranos at \$4 per pound to .22-caliber bullet-shaped Vietnamese peppers at \$8 per pound. Lien Nhu's Asian Market stocks a pepper so hot that a matchhead-sized bite will send tears to the average eyes.

Though more expensive than domestic varieties, imported chiles are very hot and pack more punch for your peso.



HOT pepper can be the centerpiece of a chicken-vegetable dish.

A-a-h! Hot peppers cure what ails you and food

By RAND B. ROSS

IT WAS A miracle of primitive medicine. An aphrodisiac that also cured indigestion, toothaches, bad luck and bad children. Though based more on folklore than fact, the hot pepper or chile was the panacea of 800 B.C. man.

Introduced to the white man by Columbus, hot peppers rate among the most popular seasonings in the world today. Residents of hot humid climates eat spicy foods to promote perspiration and cool the body; the Hunans of China like chiles because they stimulate the appetite. Ulices Vargas, Manager of the Glenville Spanish Market in Allston, recommends a hot pepper Seviche for hangovers — this fiery remedy is guaranteed to take the hair off the dog that bit you.

Among other benefits, chiles are high in vitamins A and C. Indian, Szechuan, Hunan, Cajun and Mexican foods all depend on hot peppers for their bold flavors. Many an American dish could be improved by adding fresh chiles or a shot of hot pepper sauce.

The hot pepper season runs from September through March. The following schedule shows product availability:

August through October — Green Cherry Hot, red and