

Prep Time	10 minutes
Cook Time	25 minutes
Total Time	35 minutes
Yield	About 2 cups (4 servings)
Skill Level	Easy
Cuisine	Mexican

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Ingredients

- 1 lb (450 g) ripe Roma tomatoes (about 5-6 tomatoes)
- 2-3 dried guajillo chiles (or 2 ancho chiles for a smokier, milder sauce)
- 1-2 fresh serrano or jalapeño chiles (adjust to taste)

- ½ medium white onion, roughly chopped
 - 2 garlic cloves, unpeeled
 - 1 tbsp vegetable oil
 - ½ tsp ground cumin
 - ¼ tsp dried Mexican oregano
 - ½ tsp salt, or to taste
 - 1 tsp white vinegar or lime juice (optional, to brighten)
 - ¼ cup water or chicken broth (as needed for consistency)
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Instructions

Step 1: Toast the Dried Chiles (3-4 minutes | Medium Heat)

Heat a dry skillet or comal over medium heat (medium intensity). Remove stems and seeds from the guajillo chiles and tear them into flat pieces. Press them onto the hot surface for 20–30 seconds per side—just until fragrant. *Watch carefully: they burn quickly and turn bitter.* Transfer to a bowl and cover with hot water; soak for 10 minutes while you proceed.

Step 2: Char the Vegetables (8-10 minutes | Medium-High Heat)

Set a skillet or comal over medium-high heat (high intensity). Add the tomatoes, serrano chile, onion, and unpeeled garlic cloves. Dry-roast, turning occasionally, until blistered and blackened in spots:

- Tomatoes: 8-10 minutes
- Serranos and onion: 6-8 minutes
- Garlic: 5-6 minutes

Remove each item as it finishes and set aside to cool slightly. Peel the garlic once cool enough to handle.

Step 3: Blend the Sauce (1-2 minutes | High Intensity)

Drain the soaked guajillo chiles, discarding the soaking liquid. Transfer them to a blender along with the roasted tomatoes, serrano, onion, peeled garlic, cumin, oregano, and salt. Add the water or broth. Blend on high speed for 60-90 seconds until completely smooth. If you prefer a silkier texture, strain through a fine-mesh sieve—though rustic texture is traditional.

Step 4: Fry the Sauce (8-10 minutes | Medium-High Heat)

Heat the vegetable oil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat (medium-high intensity). Carefully pour in the blended sauce—it will sputter. Stir constantly for the first minute, then reduce heat to medium (medium intensity) and simmer for 7-8 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the sauce darkens slightly and thickens to a pourable consistency.

Step 5: Finish and Season (1-2 minutes | Low Heat)

Stir in the vinegar or lime juice if using. Taste and adjust salt. If the sauce is too thick, thin with a splash of water. Simmer on low heat (low intensity) for 1-2 minutes more to marry the flavors.

Step 6: Serve

Serve warm. Use immediately over huevos rancheros, or cool completely and refrigerate.

Chef's Notes

- Heat control: For a milder sauce, use only one serrano or remove the seeds. For extra heat, leave the seeds in or add a chile de árbol.
 - Make-ahead: The sauce keeps 5 days refrigerated in an airtight container, or 3 months frozen.
 - Char level: A little blackening is essential for authentic flavor—but scrape off any fully burnt skin from the tomatoes before blending.
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Nutrition (per serving, approx. ½ cup / 4 servings)

	Nutrient	Amount
Calories		85 kcal

	Nutrient	Amount
Total Fat		4 g
Saturated Fat		0.5 g
Carbohydrates		11 g
Fiber		2.5 g
Sugars		6 g
Protein		2 g
Sodium		300 mg
Vitamin C		25% DV
Vitamin A		20% DV
Iron		6% DV