

Catalan Picada

Somewhat similar to Genovese pesto but used differently this sublime condiment from the Cataluña region of Spain can be stirred into soups, stews, braises, and bean dishes just before serving. It adds a very satisfying layer of flavor and slightly thickens whatever it's added to. This is a base recipe that is wonderful as is but can be modified with other seasonings such as hints of cinnamon, lemon zest, marjoram, or even unsweetened cocoa. You can also take this to another level by using Spanish oil made from Arbequina olives and raw Marcona almonds.

Makes about 1 cup

- *1 tablespoon very roughly chopped garlic*
- *1 1/3 cup slivered almonds*
- *1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil*
- *1 1/2 cups lightly packed flat leaf parsley leaves*
- *1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt*

Cook the garlic and almonds with the oil in a high-sided pan over medium-low heat.

Reduce the heat to low when the garlic starts to sizzle.

Stir from time to time and cook until the almonds begin to brown.

Remove the pan from the heat to cool the almonds and garlic in the oil. They will continue to brown.

Chop the parsley in a food processor while the almonds are cooling.

Use a slotted or perforated spoon to transfer the almonds and garlic to the food processor.

Pulse to break down the almonds and combine with the parsley. You may need to scrape the mixture down the side of the bowl with a rubber spatula before the next step.

Add the oil and salt.

Pulse then let the machine run to create a paste consistency.

Keep in an airtight container for up to one week in the refrigerator.

Stir an amount to your liking into soups, stews, braises, or bean dishes just before serving.