



Chestnut Roasting Guide

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For successful fire roasted chestnuts you need 3 basic ingredients; a mature fire, a special pan, and good fresh chestnuts.

Fire:

It is best to cook chestnuts over a “mature” fire that has burned through most of the flames and rendered the wood into hot embers. This way it is easier to control the cooking and the fire is not so hot as to scorch or cook the chestnuts too quickly. It is usually more comfortable too. In many cases the fire will be hot enough to require gloves to be worn to protect the hands from the heat while roasting.

Pan:

The chestnut roasting pan is designed to create maximum flavor, cooking efficiency, comfort and safety. The holes in the bottom allow just the right amount of flames through, the sloped sides help the nuts to move around properly, and the long handle (if you have that model) allows you to keep a safe and comfortable distance from the fire.

Chestnuts:

Check your chestnuts for freshness by looking at the shell. It should be slightly shiny (no discoloration or mold) and still firm when you press into it. Keep chestnuts fresh by refrigerating them until thoroughly chilled and then transferring them to a plastic bag with holes punched into it. Keep refrigerated for up to 3 weeks until ready to use.



Procedure:

1. Prepare the fire as described above. It will take about 45 minutes to reach the mature state.
2. Prepare the chestnuts for roasting using either the Chestnutter, a chestnut knife, or other sharp knife. Follow the directions included with the Chestnutter or place the chestnut on a cutting surface with the rounded side up. Carefully score the top with two cuts, making a small (1/2”) “X” on the top. **Be careful while doing this as the chestnut surface is rounded and very smooth and the knife can easily slip.** Try not to hold the chestnut with your other hand while cutting. Scoring the nuts allows them to escape while roasting and prevents little “explosions” which can be dangerous around an open fire.
3. Place the prepared chestnuts into the pan (about 20-25 at a time). Do not overcrowd the pan. Place the pan about 3-4 inches over the embers and shake gently to both turn and move the chestnuts around in the pan. Continue to cook the chestnuts for 7-10 minutes and check for doneness. Don't worry if the nuts get a little burnt. That is actually part of the cooking process.
4. To check for doneness, remove the pan from the fire (rest it on the hearth or close to the fire), remove one of the chestnuts (carefully, they are very hot), let cool slightly, and peel off the shell and the paper-like skin underneath. The nut should be pale yellow, soft and have the consistency of a firmly cooked potato. If it still has a crunch to it, return to the fire for 3-5 more minutes. Check again for doneness.
5. When done, remove the chestnuts to a plate and follow the above procedure for peeling. If you are not going to eat them all at once, keep them by the fire to stay hot.
6. Throw the shells into the fire or compost them and repeat steps 1-5 until all are eaten.

