

Hot Slaw

Recipe from Star Vue Drive-In Theater

Adapted by Emily Cochrane and Cathy Lo

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Total Time 25 minutes

Prep Time 10 minutes

Cook Time 15 minutes

Rating ★★☆☆☆ (43)



Ryan Liebe for The New York Times

With a heat that comes from spice, not temperature, this crunchy cabbage slaw is all but guaranteed to be at any barbecue, potluck or Fourth of July meal in Cleveland, Tennessee. But it didn't get much attention statewide until 2024, when lawmakers agreed to make hot slaw the state's first official food and crown this eastern Tennessee city the hot slaw capital. While there are many tightly guarded variations, hot slaw in Cleveland is widely viewed as beginning at the Star Vue Drive-In Theater's concession stand. This recipe is adapted from a version held onto by Brad H. Benton, whose father owned the 1950s-era theater. Serve it on a hot dog or with [pulled pork](#) or barbecue — or just grab a heaping spoonful. —**Emily Cochrane and Cathy Lo**

INGREDIENTS

Yield: About 8 cups slaw

1 medium head green cabbage (about 2½ pounds), cored and coarsely chopped

1 large yellow onion (about 9 ounces), finely chopped (about 2 cups)

1 cup jarred pickled hot jalapeño slices, finely chopped, plus ¼ cup jalapeño brine (more to taste)

1¼ cups yellow mustard

½ cup mayonnaise

1 teaspoon sugar (optional)

Salt and pepper

PREPARATION

Step 1

Set up a food processor with the knife blade attachment. Working in batches, pulse the cabbage until finely chopped. You should have about 10 cups.

Step 2

Transfer the cabbage to a very large bowl, along with the onion and jalapeño and mix well. Add the mustard, mayonnaise, ¼ cup jalapeño brine and sugar, if using. Mix well, then taste and add salt, pepper and additional brine as desired. Serve right away or chill to serve cold. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.