

# Sauce Au Poivre



[https://youtu.be/dM3X\\_8IA8dM](https://youtu.be/dM3X_8IA8dM)

Serves 2–4

Best served with ribeye, filet mignon, or New York strip steak.

## Ingredients

Steak of your choice

1 tablespoon (9 g) whole black peppercorns, coarsely crushed

2 tablespoons (28 g) unsalted butter

1 tablespoon (15 ml) neutral oil

1/2 shallot, very finely minced

1/4 cup (63 ml) cognac

1/2 cup (125 ml) good-quality beef stock (preferably homemade or low sodium)

1/2 cup (125 ml) heavy cream

Salt, to taste

## **Prep Work**

Add the peppercorns directly into the hot pan and toast them gently for about 30–45 seconds. This helps release their oils and intensifies their flavor without burning them.

Lightly crush the whole black peppercorns using a mortar and pestle or the bottom of a heavy pan. The peppercorns should remain coarse to give the sauce its signature texture and bold pepper flavor.

Finely mince the shallot so it softens quickly and melts smoothly into the sauce.

If preparing steaks alongside the sauce, cook the steaks first and reserve the pan drippings and browned bits (fond). Sauce Au Poivre traditionally builds its flavor from these drippings.

Measure all ingredients ahead of time because the sauce comes together quickly once cooking begins.

## **To Make the Sauce**

Cook the steak to your liking. Don't clean the pan. Place the skillet over medium heat and add the neutral oil along with 1 tablespoon (14 g) of the butter if needed.

Once the pan is hot, add the minced shallot and cook for 1–2 minutes, stirring frequently, until softened and fragrant. The shallots should become translucent but not browned.

Add the peppercorns, give it a quick stir.

Before adding the cognac, turn the burner completely off. Remove the pan from the burner and make sure there is nothing directly above, around, or near the pan that could catch flame. Alcohol can ignite unexpectedly when added to a hot pan.

Carefully pour the cognac into the skillet. Light with an extended lighter. When the fire goes out use a spoon or spatula to scrape the bottom of the pan, releasing all of the flavorful browned bits into the liquid.

If you prefer not to ignite the alcohol, leave the burner off initially, then let the residual heat burn off the alcohol. Return the pan to low or medium-low heat. Allow the cognac to gently simmer and reduce naturally in the pan for 1–2 minutes until slightly thickened and the harsh alcohol aroma softens. This slower reduction method safely develops flavor without open flame.

For a non-alcohol alternative, substitute the cognac with additional beef stock plus 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce. This helps recreate some of the depth and complexity normally provided by cognac.

Pour in the beef stock and stir well to combine. Bring the sauce to a gentle simmer and allow it to reduce for 2–3 minutes to concentrate the flavor.

Reduce the heat to medium and slowly stir in the heavy cream. Cook the sauce over medium heat at a light simmer for another 2–3 minutes until slightly thickened and silky smooth. Avoid boiling aggressively, as high heat can cause the cream to separate.

Add the remaining tablespoon (14 g) of butter and stir with a spoon or spatula until fully melted and glossy.

Taste the sauce and season lightly with salt if needed. Depending on the saltiness of the stock and steak drippings, additional salt may not be necessary.

### **To Serve**

Spoon the Sauce Au Poivre generously over freshly cooked steak while hot. Or, pour it into a dipping cup and have it on the side.

This classic French peppercorn sauce pairs especially well with ribeye, filet mignon, New York strip steak, French fries, roasted potatoes, or crusty bread.

Serve immediately for the best texture and flavor.

### **Tips & Substitutions**

Coarsely crushed peppercorns create the traditional bold texture and flavor associated with authentic Sauce Au Poivre.

Green peppercorns produce a milder, slightly herbal flavor, while black peppercorns create a stronger pepper bite.

Homemade beef stock creates the richest flavor, but low-sodium store-bought stock works well too.

Brandy can be substituted for cognac if desired.

For a non-alcohol alternative, substitute the cognac with additional beef stock plus 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce.

For a thicker sauce, simmer slightly longer. For a thinner consistency, add a splash of beef stock or cream.

If preparing the sauce without steak drippings, slightly increase the butter for added richness.

Avoid boiling the cream aggressively after adding it to maintain a smooth, velvety texture.