

# BRINGING THE HEAT

THE LAST WORD.

The guys behind the addictive Saint Lucifer Spice share their thoughts on adding it to cantaloupe and ice cream. (Don't judge until you've tried.)

By Mike Madaio

Unassumingly enough, Saint Lucifer Spice was born eight years ago in a Manayunk kitchen where Tom Hewell and Ted Ebert were trying to preserve a stash of habaneros. (Because, really, how many can two guys eat in one sitting?) Those peppers keyed the recipe for the addictive dry rub, which also includes garlic, salt and vinegar. Give it a week and Saint Lucifer ([saintluciferspice.com](http://saintluciferspice.com)) will become your go-to seasoning. Behind some clever branding and savvy social marketing, much of Greater Philly, and well beyond, is now jonesing for its next hit. The sage Kate Moss once said, "Nothing tastes as good as skinny feels." Now, a new dilemma, because pain never tasted as good as this.

## I'm not big on intensely hot food, but I started dousing everything in Saint Lucifer.

**Tom** You control the heat level by how much you add, unlike other sauces or extracts. The garlic, the salt, it gives it more than just heat. We didn't want to be a dare, something where you have to sign a waiver to eat it. We want to be a classic staple, next to salt and pepper and A.1. sauce, something that stands by itself.

## What's your favorite Saint Lucifer combination?

**Tom** I still think back to the original days and pizza and all types of pasta. That's where I find the most enjoyment.

**Ted** We've started sending out recipes every month or so, things that we've developed cooking together, to engage the home cooks that want something different for their holiday party, tailgate party or barbecue, and we've gotten a great response. We'd love to develop a recipe book, maybe include that in our holiday gift box next year.

## Ever tried it in a cocktail?

**Tom** Some of the bars we work with use it in their bloody marys. We also work with Art in the Age [[artintheage.com](http://artintheage.com)], which puts it in some of its signature cocktails. Pairing-wise, there's nothing better than sprinkling some on top of popcorn and grabbing a cold IPA. It's salty and spicy. My beer intake definitely goes up when I'm eating it.

## What's the craziest use you've heard of?

**Ted** Habanero ice cream, definitely.

**Tom** On bananas and cantaloupe.



DOCTORS OF PEPPER:  
TOM HEWELL, LEFT,  
AND TED EBERT.



## What are you guys craving these days?

**Ted** The first thought I have when I wake up is usually what I'm cooking for dinner. Right now, I'm big into Vietnamese food. And I'll find myself in Chinatown a couple times a week exploring new foods. There's nothing I'll turn down. Put any organ meat in front of me. I'll gladly try it and probably like it.

## Is there more spice to come?

**Tom** We do have recipes for a barbecue sauce and infused oils and vinegars, but we decided to focus on one thing and doing it really well. We'd like to do more co-branding. We're collaborating with a beef jerky-maker out of West Chester called Righteous Felon Jerky Cartel [[righteousfelon.com](http://righteousfelon.com)]. We don't need to reinvent the wheel. There are other people making great gourmet balsamic vinegars, popcorn, bacon, etc., and we can partner with them and put out some delicious products.