

Hot Pepper Showdown: Eating the Naga Viper

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Short Title:

The world's reported hottest pepper, and other Scoville triumphs.

Description of article:

The Daily Meal looks at videos of people eating the Naga Viper and other hot pepper eating contests.

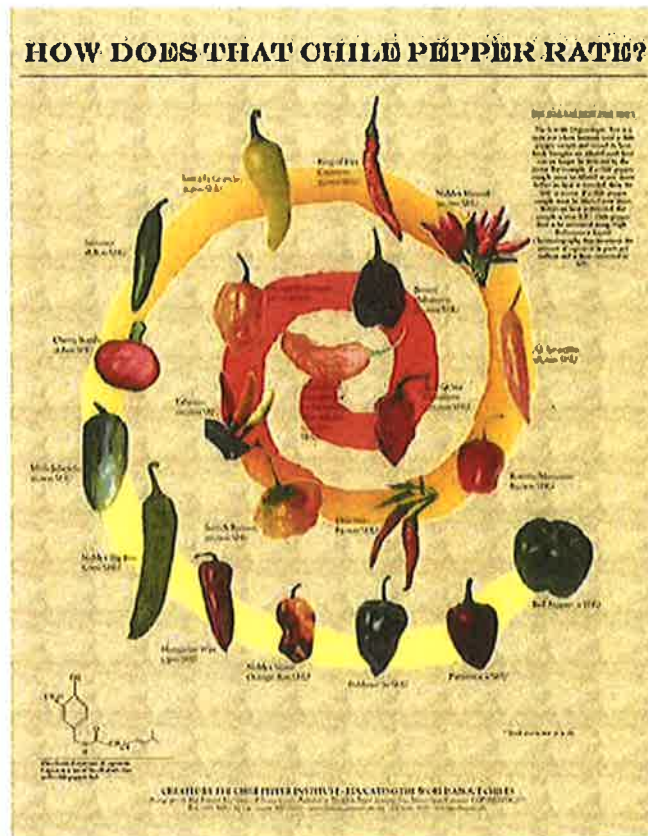
Tags for article:

Chili Pepper
Naga Viper Pepper
video
world records

What is it about us as a species that we strive to create hotter chile peppers. Glory? Challenge? The need to experience extremes of pleasure and pain? While not yet universally confirmed ⁽¹⁰⁾ as the world's hottest pepper, researchers at Warwick University ⁽¹¹⁾ testing the recently-revealed **Naga Viper** found it to measure 1,359,000 on the Scoville scale, 357,696 SHU (Scoville Heat Units) higher than the Bhut Jolokia (1,001,304 SHU).

"The hottest pepper I see as kind of the same thing as growing the biggest pumpkin," noted Regents Professor Paul Bosland, Director of the Chile Pepper Institute at New Mexico State University ⁽¹²⁾. The earliest the Institute would be able to give *their* official declaration would be the summer of 2011 after growing the Naga Viper and the Bhut Jolokia side-by-side in replicated trials.

Mirroring the compulsion to create are two corresponding curiosities. The first, the need to conquer that new creation, in this case, to experience the blistering hellfire 1.4 million SHU brings. "It's kind of like the movie where people do stupid things, Jackass" noted Prof. Bosland. "You know, 'I'm going to go do something that's not the smartest thing to do and then I'm going to post it.'"



So can you hurt yourself eating a pepper this hot? "Chiles, the really hot ones, can blister your mouth and your throat," said Prof. Bosland, who also noted that one of the things that shouldn't be lost in this pursuit of heat, is flavor. "The heat of course is fun and news-grabbing, but the flavors of the chiles are what sustains interest. There's an analogy to drinking. There will always be people trying to see who can drink the most booze, but really if you're drinking wines you want to learn all the different flavors. Chiles are the same way."

Of course, our other need is to observe these efforts, whether they involve intrepid spirit, or pure stupidity. So it is that we'll go high-brow and low-brow. In the spirit of experimenting with the nuances of flavor and heat in cooking, there are three featured recipes from Prof. Bosland and the Chile Pepper Institute.

[Click here for Chileman's Rellenos recipe.](#) [13]

[Click here for NuMex Jalmundo Western-Styled Stuffed Jalapeño recipe.](#) [14]

[Click here for Bhut Jolokia 'Chileman Brownies' recipe.](#) [15]

Then, for your viewing pleasure, we've collected videos of people eating the purported new hottest pepper in the world, and other Scoville triumphs. Running commentary, heavy breathing, tears, strange faces — it's a strange mix of Dear Diary, competitive eating, and whispered golf narration play-by-play. Call it crazy, masochistic, or hot pepper porn, these clips are some of the best hot pepper eating videos around.

Move Over Bhut Jolokia, Introducing the Naga Viper

Watch one pepper samplings by [Leo and friends](#) [16] and they'll likely become your new favorite YouTube guys. In this dried Naga Viper tasting they note the increased difficulty dried pepper bits create in moving the heat along. They've also done [Bhut Jolokia](#) [17] and [hot sauce tastings](#) [18]. But Leo and Co. aren't the only intrepid Naga Viper pepper eaters. "[Darth Naga](#) [19]" got some Vipers from Gerald Fowler, owner of the [Chilli Pepper Company](#) [19], who invented the pepper. Unfortunately, *that* contest goes to the Naga.