



How to Dry Sauté Suggestions from Chef Chad Sarno Vice President, Plant-Based Education at the Rouxbe Online Culinary School

Chef Sarno explains that a common mistake made by those who have eliminated cooking with oil is sautéing onions by placing them in a pan, adding water to them, and boiling them until there is no water left. That's not sautéing, that's just boiling onions and there is no flavor in boiled onions. Instead, he recommends a dry sauté.

Start by heating a heavy-bottom, stainless steel pan, like an All-Clad pan, until it is very hot. At the Rouxbe Online Culinary School, they teach the water test to determine when the pan is the perfect temperature. When the pan is that hot, Chef Sarno comments, it almost creates a nonstick surface. This video is extremely helpful, just be sure to disregard their mention of oil. Chef Sarno teaches that the same result can be reached cooking without it:

[Rouxbe Online Culinary School Water Test](#)

Once the temperature is perfect, add your chopped onions. There are two things to remember when caramelizing without oil, high heat and rapid motion. As the onions are caramelizing, the brown specks that appear are the sugars of the onion. Once the onions have caramelized, hit the onion with a couple of tablespoons of flavorful liquid, such as wine, vegetable stock, or juice to deglaze the pan. Use a spatula to loosen everything stuck in the pan. You've just created a flavorful start from which you can make a sauce or stir-fry.

When dry sautéing, Chef Sarno suggests focusing on bringing out the natural and heightened flavor of every single ingredient in the dish. If a recipe calls for lemon juice, adding a little more than what is stated in the recipe may make it a little more bright. With spices, consider grinding them fresh. With nuts and seeds, toasting them first will bring out their essential oil. For juices, reducing them will concentrate their flavor. Each enhancement can give you another flavor profile.

Source:

The Ultimate Summit for the Plant-Based Enthusiast held by the University of California - Davis Integrative Medicine Program