

Reasons to Season

Practical Ways to Use Spices and Herbs Everyday

Adding spices and herbs to food – from main dishes, sides and salads to soups, desserts and beverages -- will enhance flavor as well as boost health-promoting antioxidants. Their use also allows you to cut salt, sugar and in some cases, fat, while maintaining interesting flavors.

Get the Most Out of Your Spices and Herbs

- Ground spices release their flavor more quickly than whole spices. Ground thyme or ground cumin can be used in recipes with short cooking times or can be added near the end of cooking for longer cooking recipes. Spices may be ground with a small electric coffee grinder or mortar and pestle.
- Whole spices need a longer time to release their flavor. They work well in longer cooking recipes like soups and stews.
- Robust herbs such as sage, thyme and bay leaves stand up well in long cooking while milder herbs like basil, marjoram and parsley can be added at the last minute for best results.
- Rub leafy herbs in the palm of your hand to release the flavor and aroma.
- To double a recipe, increase spices and herbs by one and one-half, taste and then add more if necessary. In most recipes one and one-half times the seasoning will be sufficient to provide desired flavor.
- Spices such as fennel seed, cumin seed, sesame seed and white peppercorns may be toasted to intensify their flavors. Simply add the spice to a dry, non-stick, heated skillet and heat until aromatic.

Cinnamon

- Perk up morning coffee with ground cinnamon. Sprinkle ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon over ground coffee before brewing.
- Next time you make French toast, pancakes, waffles or muffins, try adding ½ to 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon to the batter.
- Add a sprinkle of ground cinnamon to peanut butter and jelly or peanut butter and banana sandwiches for an unexpected flavor boost.

Ginger

- For a fresh fruit pick-me-up, lightly sprinkle ground ginger on peaches, pears, cantaloupe, pineapple or honeydew melon.
- Add a hint of spice to frozen yogurt. Stir ½ teaspoon ground ginger into a softened pint of frozen vanilla yogurt. Refreeze for 30 minutes before serving.
- Quench your thirst with ginger lemonade. Add ½ teaspoon ground ginger to 1 quart freshly squeezed lemonade.

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Oregano

- For a twist on the typical grilled cheese, prepare sandwich with sliced low fat mozzarella cheese, sliced tomato and ¼ teaspoon oregano leaves.
- Sprinkle sautéed cherry or grape tomatoes with oregano leaves, garlic powder, and pepper to taste.
- Perk up frozen pizza by sprinkling oregano leaves over pizza right from the oven.

Red Pepper

- Sprinkle store-bought or homemade hummus or guacamole with paprika. Or, add a kick by stirring in ¼ teaspoon ground red pepper or crushed red pepper.
- Mix up your own spiced salt by mixing 1 tablespoon sea salt, 2 teaspoons paprika, ½ teaspoon ground cumin and a pinch of ground red pepper. Sprinkle over grilled or roasted meat, fish and poultry.
- Serve bread with olive oil like it's done in an Italian restaurant. Mix ¼ cup olive oil, 1 teaspoon grated Parmesan cheese, ½ teaspoon garlic powder, 1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper and a dash of sea salt to taste in small shallow dish.

Rosemary

- Add ¼ teaspoon each crushed rosemary leaves and garlic powder to hot cooked peas or green beans.
- Stir 1/2 teaspoon each crushed rosemary leaves and garlic powder and ¼ teaspoon black pepper into 4 cups hot cooked mashed potatoes.
- Dress up dinner rolls by brushing tops with olive oil and a sprinkle of crushed rosemary leaves.

Thyme

- Dress up seafood or tuna salad by adding thyme leaves. Serve as a sandwich filling or on a bed of greens.
- Wake up your taste buds with herbed scrambled eggs. Beat 1/8 teaspoon thyme leaves into 2 eggs before scrambling.
- Add hearty flavor to soup. Stir ¼ teaspoon thyme leaves into chicken, beef or vegetable soups.

Yellow Curry

- Turn tomato soup from dull to delicious. Add ½ teaspoon curry powder to 2 cups tomato soup. Sprinkle with chopped cashews.
- For an out of the ordinary side dish that is lightly spiced and sweet, try curried pilaf. Add extra flavor and texture to cooked brown rice by curry powder, toasted sliced almonds, shredded carrots, peas and/or raisins.
- For a new twist to chicken salad, add a dash of curry powder along with nuts, fruit, or chopped apples.
- Lightly dust hot popcorn or snack mixes with curry powder for a new taste sensation.