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Spice  
Up  
Your  
Life

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## “Spices, the friend of Physicians and the PRIDE of cooks. ” ~Charlemagne

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Abundant anecdotal information documents the historical use of herbs and spices for their health benefits. Early documentation suggests that hunters and gatherers wrapped meat in the leaves of bushes, accidentally discovering that this process enhanced the taste of the meat, as did certain nuts, seeds, berries, and bark. Over the years, spices and herbs were used for medicinal purposes. Spices and herbs were also used as a way to mask unpleasant tastes and odors of food, and later, to keep food fresh. Ancient civilizations did not distinguish between those spices and herbs used for flavoring from those used for medicinal purposes. When leaves, seeds, roots, or gums had a pleasant taste or agreeable odor, it became in demand and gradually became a norm for that culture as a condiment. Spices were also valuable as items of exchange and trade.

~The Book of Spices

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*Spice is life.  
It depends upon what you like... have fun with it.  
Yes, food is serious, but you should have fun with it.  
~ Emeril Lagasse*

### A Few Ideas

- ☆ Add two Tablespoons of potpourri to a large spice shaker and fill with baking soda. You have just created your own carpet freshener for less than fifty cents! Also works great as an air freshener if left open in your bathroom. Change once a month.
- ☆ Save time in the kitchen by creating your own seasoning blends for meat rubs, pie baking, etc. Take a large spice shaker and add all the dry ingredients in the normal proportions times 4 or 5. Next time you're ready to barbeque you have your meat rub ready to go. Just one measuring of spice instead of 4 or 5. Next time you bake pumpkin pie you use one or two teaspoons instead of 4 measures of 4 spices!
- ☆ Keep a Tupperware SPICE Shaker filled with baking soda handy around the house:
  - In the Shower: It will strip away smoke and product build-up in your hair without damage. Rub baking soda in your hair and rinse out before you shampoo. There will be no need to "shampoo, rinse and repeat" which will save you money on your shampoo purchases.  
Shake a bit of baking soda into your regular cleanser and rub in a gentle, circular motion to exfoliate skin on face and body. Smooth, radiant skin without all those chemicals you can't even pronounce!
  - In the Kitchen: Great for deodorizing garbage disposals. Dump ¼ cup of baking soda and 1 cup of white vinegar into your disposal. Allow it to bubble and clean. Also great for bathroom sinks -- and it's environmentally friendly!  
It also acts as a fire extinguisher for grease fires!
  - In the Fridge: Put a spice shaker filled with baking soda in your refrigerator and leave the shaker side open. There is less chance of spilling and it's easy to refill once a month. AND you use less than half of a box at a time! Add cinnamon or dried lemon peel to the baking soda for a fresh scent in your refrigerator.  
Use baking soda and warm water to wipe down the inside of your refrigerator and freezer.
  - In the Shoe Closet: Sprinkle it in shoes to deodorize -- this is great for athletic shoes -- where Febreze won't reach!

Courtesy of your Tupperware Consultant

Guess what? That spice rack in the kitchen window, where the morning sun makes the faceted glass bottles sparkle and throw prisms on the wall, is a deathtrap for your spices. The same goes for that handy rack sitting right above the stove, where you can grab your selected spice in a hurry. The sunlight and heat are an anathema to fresh spices, and will destroy the volatile oils.

Tupperware spice shakers are air-tight (which the screw-top containers the spices come in are not) so they keep air and moisture out of your spices, allowing them to live their longest life. Using them will save space in your cupboard or pantry and will save you quite a bit of money every year!

Spices have a shelf life of 6 months to one year. Those spices that you use only occasionally should be stored in the freezer to preserve and intensify their flavor.

Now that you've discovered the many wonders of spices, your temptation may be to just start throwing them willy-nilly into your recipes. That's perfectly fine, as long as you use some common sense. Say your recipe calls for ½ tsp. of dried oregano. Dried spices are more concentrated than fresh, so you'll need more of the fresh leaves. The rule-of-thumb ratio for conversion from dry to fresh is 1-to-2, or twice the amount of fresh compared to dry.

When cooking, add fresh herbs early on in the cooking process, but hold off on dried herbs until the last 10 minutes of cooking for best flavor.

If you encounter a spice you're unfamiliar with, try mixing a small amount of it with a tablespoon of butter. Let it sit for a couple of hours, then spread the butter on bread or crackers to see if you like it.

Challenge yourself! Look for a spice you've never tried. Buy a small amount and play! The perfect “blank canvas” is scrambled eggs.

If you have an abundance of fresh herbs, try using some of them to make herbed vinegar. Bruise 2 cups of leaves per 4 cups of white wine vinegar and let the leaves steep for two weeks.

To save money, you can take your Tupperware Spice Shakers and have them weighed at the bulk food store, then fill them and have the weight subtracted off when you check out.

Next time you purchase celery, peel off the leaves and dry them. Then crumble them and store them in a large spice shaker.

Here's a list of the most commonly used spices around holiday time, plus some more common ones that you might want definitions for!

**Allspice:** Sold in whole berries or ground, allspice earns its name by having notes of cinnamon, clove and nutmeg along with its own peppery tang. For best results, buy the berries and grind them as needed with mortar and pestle. It's good in cakes, cookies, marinades, chutneys, meat, seafood, poultry, rice and pumpkin pie.

**Anise:** it's faintly licorice flavor makes anise go well with fish, tomato-based sauces, cake, bread and vegetables. The leaves lose their punch quickly and the seeds are similarly fragile, so buy and use as fresh as possible.

**Basil:** Even though there are 40 or so varieties of basil, “sweet/common” basil is what you'll find most often and what you'll need unless the recipe specifies otherwise. Fresh is always best and basil goes with just about anything Italian, Greek or tomato-based.

**Bay leaves:** Bay leaves are your go-to herb for soups, stews and sauces that simmer for a long period. It takes at least an hour for dried leaves to release their full flavor. Break the spines on the leaves to release their oils before putting them in the pot. Be sure to pick them out before serving, as they are quite bitter.

**Caraway Seeds:** Most often used in German, Austrian and other Eastern European cuisines, these seeds go well in baked goods and with vegetables and meats. When used other than in baking, since long cooking turns them bitter, they should be added toward the end of cooking time.

**Chives:** Chives aren't just a garnish. Fresh chives add a light oniony flavor and aroma to any dish. Use finely chopped chives in your homemade garlic butter!

**Cilantro:** Fresh cilantro is great in Tex-Mex and Asian dishes! Chop it up fresh for use in salsa, as a taco topper or a spicy sprinkle on your oven nachos. It flavors rice very well and makes a stir-fry sing.

**Cinnamon:** “Pure” cinnamon is made from the bark of a certain laurel tree. Most of what we get in the United States is mixed with cassia, which has a similar aroma but more bitter flavor. Uses? You don't need me to tell you that!

**Cloves:** Sold ground or whole, cloves are one of the quintessential holiday spices. Baked ham wouldn't be itself without the aroma of whole cloves studded into it. Ground cloves add their notes to everything from egg nog to pumpkin pie.

**Coriander:** Coriander is the seed of the cilantro plant, but the two are NOT interchangeable. Coriander has a vaguely citrusy flavor, and is very popular in Indian cuisine.

**Cumin:** Sold ground, cumin's rich, warm flavor is great for meat rubs and is an important component in Mexican and Indian cooking. It's not pepper-spicy, but can open your sinuses if you get too heavy-handed with it!

### DIY Seasoning Blends

*Sprinkle over freshly popped popcorn, toss with your favorite snack crackers, use as a rub on beef, chicken, or fish, mix with oil and vinegar and use as a marinade, mix with a stick of butter for compound butter, or mix into sour cream for a quick dip.*

Each recipe yields approximately 2 cups.

#### DIY Cinnamon-Vanilla Seasoning

1¼ cups granulated sugar	½ cup ground cinnamon
¼ cup brown sugar	1 tsp. coarse kosher salt
1 vanilla bean, cut in half lengthwise*	

\* You can substitute 3 tbsp. vanilla powder for vanilla bean

Combine ingredients in Counterscaping Dry Container, insert vanilla bean halves, shake to combine and seal.

Store up to 6 months.

#### DIY Cilantro-Mojo Seasoning

Zest of 6 limes	¼ cup dried cilantro leaves
Zest of 2 lemons	2 tbsp. ground thyme
2 tbsp. coarse kosher salt	1 tbsp. ground cumin
3 tbsp. garlic powder	½ tsp. cayenne pepper
3 tbsp. onion powder	1 tsp. ground black pepper
3 tbsp. dried oregano	

In the base of the Power Chef System fitted with the blade attachment, combine zest and salt until well blended.

Let stand 10 minutes.

Add garlic powder, onion powder, oregano, cilantro, thyme, cumin, cayenne and black pepper. Pull cord 10 to 12 times to combine.

Transfer mixture to a Counterscaping Dry Container and seal.

Store up to 3 months.

**Parsley:** Sold primarily as flat-leaf or curly, fresh parsley brings out the flavors of other herbs and serves as a nice garnish. The curly variety has a slightly stronger flavor. Both are chock-full of vitamins and are thus a popular choice for inclusion in vegetable juice blends.

**Rosemary:** Another mint relation, rosemary has a strong, assertive flavor that will quickly take over a dish if not used in moderation. It makes a fantastic aromatic when used in the body cavity of a roasting chicken or turkey, and matches very well with roasted beef. Fresh rosemary comes in spiky sprigs, and may be chopped or used whole.

**Saffron:** Saffron is the single most expensive spice in the world. Each saffron thread is the stigma of a crocus flower, and they can only be gathered by hand. It takes roughly 230,000 strands to make a pound! Purchase in small quantities and use quickly, as it loses its flavor rapidly. Turmeric is an acceptable substitute in a pinch.

**Sage:** Southerners will know sage very well as a flavoring in good pork sausage, and fresh sage will add flavor and aroma to many meat and poultry dishes. It also makes a wonderful addition to herbed butter.

**Tarragon:** A great addition to chicken or eggs. You'll also find tarragon used extensively in French cooking, and it's a vital ingredient in *finest herbes* and many sauces.

**Thyme:** Thyme grows in over 100 different varieties and each type flavors the dishes of the area where it grows distinctively. It is popular in most European and American cooking, and is usually a background flavor, adding quiet notes to soups, sauces, herbed butters and all manner of meat and egg dishes.

**Vanilla:** The importance of using pure vanilla, not imitation or vanilla "extract" cannot be emphasized strongly enough. Vanilla beans are a pricey but excellent source of flavor, and the bean pods, after the "caviar" inside has been scraped out and used, can be put in your sugar canister to make vanilla sugar.

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*Once you get a spice in your home, you have it forever.*

*Women never throw out spices.*

*The Egyptians were buried with their spices.*

*I know which one I'm taking with me when I go.*

*~Erma Bombeck*

**Dill:** Keep fresh dill on hand for use when cooking any variety of potato. It's best when it sings alone, but it does marry well with garlic. Make a foil pouch containing some fingerling or new potatoes, dill, garlic cloves and olive oil and roast at 350° until the potatoes are tender.

**Fennel:** The first thing you'll notice when you bruise some fennel leaves or open a jar of fennel seeds is the aroma of licorice. It's much more pronounced than that of anise. Fennel is great in sauces, soups, vegetables, and fish dishes.

**Garlic:** There is no substitute for fresh garlic. The one exception is using garlic powder for things like popcorn seasonings and rib rubs. For any soup, stew or other stovetop application, use the fresh stuff. Mexican garlic, identified by a purple tinge to the skin, is somewhat sweeter than the pure white variety. You can roast your garlic at home by cutting the top of the head off, just to expose the ends of the individual cloves, and drizzling some olive oil on it. Roast at 350° until tender.

**Ginger:** The flavor difference between fresh and dried or ground ginger is so dramatic that substituting one for the other is not recommended. You can end up with far more (or less) ginger flavor than you wanted, even if you try to work with high/low ratios. That said, fresh ginger is great in everything from Asian cooking to baked goods, and can be stored tightly wrapped in foil in the freezer for several months.

**Mace:** Mace, usually sold ground, is actually the red, decorative outer shell of the nutmeg fruit. Its flavor is interchangeable with nutmeg, and goes well in savory meat dishes, seafood concoctions and baked goods.

**Marjoram:** Sweet marjoram is a favorite ingredient in French cooking, and its aroma becomes more intense when dried. It is a mint relative, and if you grow it at home you'll notice it has a proclivity for leaving its pot and taking over others. If using fresh, add near the end of the cooking time for best flavor.

**Nutmeg:** You can easily identify those of us devoted to freshly ground nutmeg this time of year by our bruised and scraped knuckles, but the flavor is worth the pain! Once you've ground some fresh nutmeg onto baked squash or used it in a pumpkin pie, you'll never want the pre-ground stuff again.

**Oregano:** Oregano is actually a type of marjoram, although it's far more strongly flavored than its sweet cousin. Dried oregano is actually quite good, especially added to soups, pasta sauces and pizza sauce. Avoid the ground, as it doesn't carry the pungence of the leaves. Buy in small quantities, no more than a two month's supply at a time or so.

**Paprika:** There are two main kinds of this powdered red pepper. Spanish is spicier powder, slightly reminiscent of cayenne. Hungarian is sweeter, with a spicy-sugary aroma. Do NOT substitute one for another. If the recipe doesn't specify, use Hungarian. Too much Spanish can render your dish inedibly hot.

### DIY Steak & Chop Seasoning

½ cup black pepper	3 tbsp. caraway seeds
¾ cup dried minced onion	1 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
6 tbsp. garlic powder	¼ cup coarse kosher salt

Combine ingredients in Counterscaping Dry Container, shake to combine and seal.

Store up to 6 months.

### DIY Southwest Chipotle Seasoning

2½ tbsp. smoked paprika	5 tbsp. onion powder
9 tbsp. ground cumin	2½ tbsp. granulated sugar
1 ½ tbsp. garlic powder	4 tbsp. coarse kosher salt
2 ½ tbsp. chipotle powder *	2 ½ tbsp. dried cilantro

Combine ingredients in Counterscaping Dry Container, shake to combine and seal.

Store up to 6 months.

### DIY Italian Herb Seasoning

10 tbsp. dried oregano	4 tbsp. garlic powder
5 tbsp. dried basil	5 tsp. coarse kosher salt
5 tbsp. dried parsley	5 tsp. crushed red pepper
7½ tbsp. onion powder	

Combine ingredients in Counterscaping Dry Container, shake to combine and seal.

Store up to 6 months.

### **Finishing Salts**

*Great for enhancing the flavor of any dish*

Start with 1 Cup of coarse or flaky salt (such as coarse sea salt or Himalayan pink sea salt). Mix in the flavoring of choice listed below. Pulse in a food processor or blender until all ingredients are combined (salt will take on the flavors and colors of the mix-ins). Spread on a baking sheet or shallow baking dish and either leave out in a dry place for about 2 days, or put in an oven at 170° for approximately 2 hours, stirring occasionally, until salt has dried.

Place salts in Tupperware Spice Shakers.

#### **Rosemary-Lemon Salt:**

3 Tbsp Fresh Rosemary Leaves  
Zest from 1 Lemon, Grated

#### **Basil Sea Salt:**

1/4 to 1/3 Cup Fresh Basil Leaves &  
Stems, Chopped

#### **Red Wine Sea Salt**

3 Cups Red Wine reduced to a syrup by  
simmering on stove for approximately  
20 minutes before adding to salt.

#### **Sriracha-Lime Salt:**

1-1/2 to 2 Tbsp Sriracha  
Zest of 1 Lime, Grated

### **Popcorn Seasonings**

*Sprinkle on your popcorn, for a gourmet treat!*

For each flavoring, mix the ingredients listed in a bowl, and then pour in Tupperware Spice Shakers.

#### **Parmesan Nacho:**

1 Cup Grated Parmesan Cheese  
2 Tsp Paprika  
2 Tsp Chili Powder  
1 Tsp Cumin  
½ Tsp Cayenne Pepper  
½ Tsp Black Pepper

#### **Cheesy Garlic:**

5 Tbsp Cheddar Cheese Powder  
1 Tbsp + 1 Tsp Sea Salt  
1 ¼ Tsp Garlic Powder  
¼ Tsp Cayenne Pepper

#### **Mexican Chocolate:**

2 Tbsp Cocoa Powder  
4 Tsp Powdered Sugar  
¼ Tsp Cinnamon  
¼ Tsp Coarse Salt

#### **Smoky Curry:**

1 Tbsp Smoked Paprika  
1 Tbsp Curry Powder  
2 Tbsp Salt  
1 ½ Tsp Cumin  
1 ½ Tsp Cinnamon

### **Everyday Gourmet Seasonings**

*These are Great to have on hand for everyday cooking.*

For each mix, blend all ingredients together and pour into Tupperware Spice Shakers.

#### **Chili Seasoning:**

2 Tbsp Chili Powder  
1 Tsp Cumin  
1 Tsp Coriander  
1 Tsp Unsweetened Cocoa Powder  
½ Tsp Garlic Powder  
¼ Tsp Cayenne Pepper  
½ Tsp Salt  
1 Tsp Regular Paprika  
1 Tsp Smoked Paprika

#### **Taco Seasoning:**

2 Tbsp Chili Powder  
2 Tbsp Ground Cumin  
1 ½ Tsp Onion Powder  
1 ½ Tsp Garlic Powder  
½ Tsp Cayenne Pepper  
½ Tsp Black Pepper  
½ Tsp Salt  
½ Tsp Oregano

#### **Asian Seasoning:**

¼ Cup Onion Powder  
¼ Cup Garlic Powder  
¼ Cup Ground Black Pepper  
2 Tbsp Ground Ginger  
2 Tbsp Red Pepper Flakes

#### **Mocha Spice Steak Rub:**

3 Tbsp Ground Coffee  
1 Tbsp Chili Powder  
2 Tbsp Salt  
1 Tsp Garlic Powder  
1 Tsp Onion Powder  
2 Tbsp Unsweetened Cocoa Powder  
¼ Tsp Ground Cloves

### **Sweet & Dessert Seasoning Blends**

*Enjoy sprinkled over your favorite sweet treats, or mixed in hot drinks.*

For each mix, blend all ingredients together and pour into Tupperware Spice Shakers.

#### **Cinnamon Sugar**

¼ Cup Granulated White Sugar  
1 Tbsp Cinnamon

#### **Pumpkin Pie Spice**

¼ Cup Ground Cinnamon  
2 Tsp Ground Ginger  
2 Tsp Ground Nutmeg  
2 Tsp All Spice  
1 Tsp Ground Cloves

#### **Chai Masala**

1 Cup + 3 Tbsp Finely Ground Black Pepper  
¾ Cup + 1 Tbsp Ginger Powder  
¼ Cup + 2 Tbsp Cinnamon Powder  
¼ Cup + 2 Tbsp Ground Cardamom  
2 Tsp Finely Ground Clove Powder  
2 Tsp Finely Ground Nutmeg Powder

#### **Chocolate-Chile Blend**

½ Cup Unsweetened Cocoa Powder  
½ Cup Powdered Sugar  
1 Tsp Cayenne Pepper