

LET'S GET STARTED

Our food choices are shaped by the land where we live and by our family heritage. The familiar foods we eat map who we are and where we come from. It is rewarding to consider the geographic, historic and cultural conditions that have influenced what we eat and how we obtain, prepare, and serve food. Here you will learn about flavor profiles across world cuisines and delve into spices. Enjoy a few recipes from different parts of the world, and consider starting some food traditions in your family as well!

Flavors Around the World

As Americans, we have access to many cuisines from around the world. Some of the more common types are listed below with an emphasis on healthful food.

LATIN AMERICA

REGIONAL FOODS & FLAVORS:

- Bananas
- Papaya
- Tomatoes
- Beans
- Avocados
- Brown rice
- Quinoa
- Corn tortillas
- Poultry

- Cumin
- Cinnamon
- Cilantro
- Citrus fruits
- Squash

FAMILIAR FOODS:

- Tacos
- Beans and rice
- Tamales
- Salsa
- Guacamole



FUN FACT: *The word “tortilla” has various definitions in different Latin American cuisines. Although we are familiar with the thin corn or flour tortillas of Mexican cuisine, the word in other regions can refer to thicker, fried cakes made from potatoes or yucca, while in Spain, a “tortilla” is actually an omelet.*

EAST ASIA

REGIONAL FOODS & FLAVORS:

- Fish
- Edamame
- Cabbage
- Scallions
- Chili peppers
- Tofu
- Coconut
- Tea
- Rice Vinegar
- Ginger
- Turmeric
- Saffron
- Lemongrass
- Coriander

FAMILIAR FOODS:

- Noodle soups
- Stir-fry
- Rice bowls
- Sushi
- Kimchi



FUN FACT: *Many foods that we think of as Asian cuisine in the United States (General Tso’s Chicken, Chop Suey, Cashew Chicken, Crab Rangoon, fortune cookies, and more) were, in fact, developed by Asian immigrants in the United States to appeal to American tastes.*

INDIAN

REGIONAL FOODS & FLAVORS:

- Lentils
- Chickpeas
- Millet
- Potatoes
- Cauliflower
- Pomegranates
- Mangoes
- Raisins/dates
- Yogurt
- Curry
- Cardamom
- Coriander
- Nutmeg
- Allspice
- Garam masala

FUN FACT:

India has the lowest rates of meat consumption in the world. Although only about 20% of the country is strictly vegetarian, the general population eats less meat than in most parts of the world—consuming a diet rich in legumes, grains, and vegetables instead.

FAMILIAR FOODS:

- Chicken curry
- Lentil or chickpea stew
- Chai tea



AFRICA

REGIONAL FOODS & FLAVORS:

- Sweet potatoes
- Black eyed peas
- Greens
- Okra
- Onions
- Peanuts
- Sweet peppers
- Plantains
- Paprika
- Garlic
- Hot chilies
- Ginger
- Coriander
- Turmeric
- Cinnamon

FAMILIAR FOODS:

- Flat bread
- Kebabs
- Gumbo
- Meat & veggie stews with rice



FUN FACT: *African cuisine is extremely diverse partially due to influences from colonizers from many regions of the world. Flavors emerging from Middle Eastern, Mediterranean, European, and Indian cuisines are all apparent in different parts of the continent.*

MEDITERRANEAN

REGIONAL FOODS & FLAVORS:

- Red peppers
- Tomatoes
- Eggplant
- Carrots
- Celery
- Olives
- Garlic
- Whole grains
- Seafood
- Grapes
- Red wine
- Oregano
- Basil
- Rosemary
- Thyme
- Parsley




















FAMILIAR FOODS:

- Vegetable soups
- Greek Salad
- Hummus
- Pasta
- Falafel

FUN FACT: *The diet common to the Mediterranean region, which incorporates plenty of vegetables, whole grains, antioxidant-rich foods, and healthy fats, has been shown to reduce risk of heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and Alzheimer's.*

COOKSMARTS GUIDE TO FLAVORING WITH SPICES

Learn how to spice up your meals and add flavor to your foods with this comprehensive spice chart. Become a seasoning pro and never make a bland meal again!

KEY	ALLSPICE	BASIL	CINNAMON	CLOVES	CORIANDER	NUTMEG	OREGANO	PAPRIKA
FLAVOR PROFILE	EARTHY, SWEET	SWEET	EARTHY, SWEET	EARTHY, SWEET	EARTHY, PEPPERY	SWEET	EARTHY	SWEET, WARM
PRODUCE								
PROTEINS	Apples, Beets, Cabbage, Carrots, Squash, Sweet Potatoes, Turnips	Bell Peppers, Eggplant, Potatoes, Tomatoes, Zucchini	Apples, Carrots, Pears, Sweet Potatoes, Squash	Apples, Beets, Squash, Tomatoes, Sweet Potatoes	Bell Peppers, Potatoes, Onions, Tomatoes	Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrots, Squash, Cauliflower, Sweet Potatoes	Artichokes, Tomatoes, Bell Peppers, Zucchini, Potatoes, Mushrooms	Bell Peppers, Squash, Cauliflower, Broccoli, Potatoes
USE IN	Beef, Lamb, Soups, Desserts, Breads	Cheeses, Chicken, Fish, Pork, Salad Dressings, Sauces, Dry Rubs, Marinades	Chicken, Lamb, Fruit Sauces, Desserts, Breads	Lamb, Curries, Soups, Marinades, Desserts, Breads	Chicken, Beef, Fish, Pork, Tofu	Lamb, Rice, Stuffings, Sauces	Beans, Chicken, Fish, Lamb, Pork	Chicken, Shellfish, Lamb, Tofu
PAIRS WELL WITH	Cardamom, Nutmeg, Cinnamon, Cloves, Ginger, Mace	Garlic Powder, Rosemary, Thyme, Marjoram, Oregano	Allspice, Cloves, Nutmeg	Cinnamon, Nutmeg, Allspice, Basil	Chili Powder, Cumin, Cinnamon	Allspice, Cloves	Chili Powder, Bay Leaves, Thyme	Garlic Powder, Chili Powder, Cardamom, Cinnamon, Cumin
BAY LEAVES	CARDAMOM	CAYENNE PEPPER	CUMIN	GARLIC POWDER	GINGER	ROSEMARY	THYME	TURMERIC
BITTER	SWEET	SPICY	SMOKY, EARTHY	SAVORY	SWEET, WARM	EARTHY	EARTHY	PEPPERY, BITTER
								
Potatoes, Tomatoes, Mushrooms	Carrots, Citrus, Corn, Peas, Sweet Potatoes, Squash	Eggplant, Potatoes, Zucchini, Bell Peppers, Corn, Tomatoes	Eggplant, Tomatoes, Zucchini, Carrots, Corn, Green Beans	Cabbage, Tomatoes, Zucchini, Carrots, Mushrooms	Carrots, Citrus, Sweet Potatoes, Beets, Squash	Mushrooms, Peas, Potatoes, Onions	Carrots, Tomatoes, Zucchini, Cauliflower, Green Beans, Peas	Cauliflower, Cabbage, Potato, Sweet Potatoes
Beans, Lentils, Shellfish	Chicken, Duck, Lentils, Pork	Chicken, Beef, Fish	Beans, Chicken, Beef, Fish, Lentils, Pork, Tofu	Beans, Chicken, Beef, Fish, Tofu	Chicken, Beef, Fish, Pork, Tofu	Beans, Chicken, Lamb, Pork, Fish	Beef, Chicken, Fish, Lamb, Pork, Lentils	Beans, Lentils, Chicken, Fish, Tofu
Risotto, Soups	Curries, Rice	Rice, Soups, Salad Dressings, Sauces, Marinades	Curries, Rice, Soups, Sauces, Dry Rubs, Marinades	Curries, Soups, Sauces, Stir-Fries, Dressings, Dry Rubs, Marinades	Rice, Curries, Stir-Fries, Marinades	Lamb, Pork, Fish, Marinades	Beef, Chicken, Fish, Lamb, Pork, Lentils	Curries, Rice
Oregano, Sage, Thyme, Marjoram	Cumin, Ginger, Turmeric	Cumin, Paprika, Cinnamon	Garlic Powder, Turmeric, Ginger, Cinnamon, Oregano	Oregano, Cumin, Coriander, Turmeric	Garlic Powder	Garlic Powder, Oregano, Thyme, Basil	Soups, Salad Dressings, Dry Rubs, Marinades	Cardamom, Garlic Powder
Oregano, Rosemary								



POPULAR SPICE BLENDS

Spice blends combine complementary spices to create a whole new taste. Create them on your own or buy them as a blend to add instant flavor.

KEY

FLAVOR PROFILE



PRODUCE



PROTEINS



USE IN

CHILI POWDER

SPICY, SMOKY



Corn, Tomato, Cauliflower, Green Beans, Squash

Beans, Chicken, Beef, Fish

Soups, Sauces, Salad Dressings, Dry Rubs, Marinades

ZA'ATAR

BITTER, WARM



Eggplant, Sweet Potatoes, Squash, Onions, Carrots

Chicken, Beef, Lamb, Fish

Dry Rubs, Bread Dips

CURRY POWDER

WARM, SPICY



Cauliflower, Cabbage, Zucchini, Broccoli, Green Beans

Chicken, Lentils, Pork, Tofu

Curries, Rice, Soups, Sauces, Stir-Fries, Marinades

CHINESE FIVE SPICE

WARM, SWEET, BITTER



Bell Peppers, Broccoli, Carrots, Celery, Shiitake Mushrooms

Beef, Duck, Tofu, Pork

Stir-Fries, Dry Rubs, Marinades, Rice

CAJUN SEASONING

SPICY, EARTHY



Bell Peppers, Onions, Celery, Carrots

Chicken, Beef, Pork, Shellfish

Dry Rubs

HERBS DE PROVENCE

EARTHY



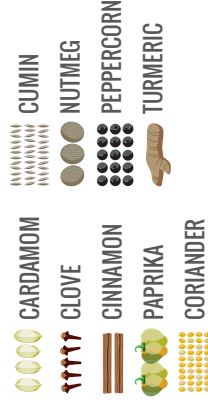
Onions, Potatoes, Zucchini, Eggplant, Tomatoes

Chicken, Beef, Lamb, Fish

Soups, Salad Dressings, Dry Rubs, Marinades

RAS EL HANOUT

SPICY, SWEET



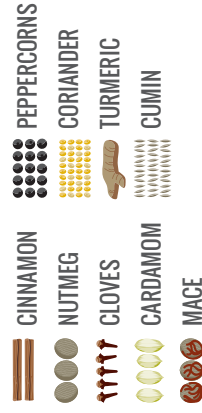
Onions, Tomatoes, Dates, Prunes, Carrots

Chicken, Beef, Lamb, Fish, Beans, Lentils

Soups, Dry Rubs, Marinades

GARAM MASALA

WARM, SWEET, BITTER



Potatoes, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Green Beans, Squash

Chicken, Beef, Beans, Lentils

Curries, Rice, Marinades, Salad Dressings, Stir-Fries

SPICES BY CUISINE

These spice combinations will have you whipping up dishes from all over the world! Use this chart as a guide to give your meals those traditional ethnic flavors you love.

CUISINE	SPICES
MEXICAN	CORIANDER CUMIN OREGANO GARLIC POWDER CINNAMON CHILI POWDER
CARIBBEAN	ALLSPICE NUTMEG GARLIC POWDER CLOVES CINNAMON GINGER
FRENCH	NUTMEG THYME GARLIC POWDER ROSEMARY OREGANO HERBES DE PROVENCE
NORTH AFRICAN	CARDAMOM CINNAMON CUMIN PAPRIKA TURMERIC GINGER RAS EL HANOUT
CAJUN	CAYENNE PEPPER OREGANO PAPRIKA THYME ROSEMARY BAY LEAVES CAJUN SEASONING
THAI	BASIL CUMIN GARLIC GINGER TURMERIC CARDAMOM CURRY POWDER
MEDITERRANEAN	OREGANO ROSEMARY THYME BAY LEAVES CARDAMOM CINNAMON CLOVES CORIANDER BASIL GINGER
INDIAN	BAY LEAVES CARDAMOM CAYENNE PEPPER CINNAMON CORIANDER CUMIN GINGER NUTMEG PAPRIKA TURMERIC GARAM MASALA CURRY POWDER
MIDDLE EASTERN	BAY LEAVES CARDAMOM CINNAMON CLOVES CUMIN GINGER CORIANDER OREGANO ZA'ATAR GARLIC POWDER