



# SWAP THE SALT AND SPICE IT UP

An ingredient guide for  
adding flavor to your food

Includes common seasonings and spices  
to use instead of salt for delicious and  
healthier homemade meals

# HERBS

# FRESH & DRIED



## BASIL

Available dried or fresh. Slightly peppery, and tastes great with tomatoes, pasta and in sauces.

## PARSLEY

Available dried or fresh; slightly bitter. Often used as a garnish, it also accents sauces, chicken, salads and potatoes.

## THYME

Available dried or fresh. Quite fragrant; pairs well with meat, stuffing and root vegetables.

## CILANTRO

Available fresh. Smells woody, with a slightly bitter bite. Tastes great in salsas and guacamoles and with fish.

## ROSEMARY

Available dried or fresh. Smells earthy; try it with roasted chicken, fish, sauces and potatoes.

## OREGANO

Available dried or fresh. Distinctively earthy and flavorful; tastes great on grilled vegetables and in pasta.



**Herbs come from the leaves of plants.** They can be found either fresh or dried. You can substitute dried herbs for fresh, but since they are more concentrated in flavor, use only one-third of the amount of dried herbs for fresh herbs and add them to your recipe during cooking rather than at the end.



## BAY LEAVES

Almost always found dried. Provides a mild, woody flavor. Often used in slow-cook dishes, stews, and soups; discard leaf/leaves before serving.

# SPICES

## WHOLE & GROUND



BLACK PEPPER

TURMERIC

CORIANDER SEED

CARDAMOM

PAPRIKA

CLOVE

GARAM MASALA

GINGER

CINNAMON

CUMIN

Spices come from the seeds, roots, bark, berries, or flower buds of plants. They are usually found dried. You can either buy them ground, or you can buy them whole and grind them yourself.

Available as whole peppercorns or ground. Adds a touch of heat to meals; is versatile enough to pair with just about any dish.



Available ground and distinctively yellow in color. Try it with rice, vegetables and in curries.

The dried seeds of cilantro. Tastes floral and nutty, and works well with curry dishes, lamb and stews.



Warming and spicy, sometimes used in teas. Try with baked goods like muffins and certain types of breads.



Has a distinctive red-orange hue, with a smoky, sometimes sweet flavor. Great with baked chicken, fish, potatoes and stews.

Sweet and spicy. Used in some teas and spice blends; found most often in baked goods. Try it in slow-cooked dishes.



A very sweet blend that typically includes cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, cumin, coriander, nutmeg and/or black pepper. Try it with curries and grilled meat.

Available fresh in root form, or dried and ground. Distinctively spicy and sweet; tastes great with chicken, fish and in stir fries.



Spicy, sweet and warming. Often found in baked goods; can also be used with chicken, root vegetables and curries.



Very smoky and distinctive. Try it with meats, stews, chilies and curries.



# MORE FLAVORS



## CITRUS

A splash of juice from a lemon, lime, orange, or any other citrus fruit can add brightness to your dish.

- Try placing halved lemons inside or lemon slices on top of chicken before roasting.
- A squeeze of citrus juice into hearty stews or soups can help cut through the richness. Lemon juice can also minimize the “fishiness” of seafood.
- Fresh squeezed juice can be used to make simple salad dressings and vinaigrettes that taste fresher than anything from the store.
- A lot of the flavor and fragrance of citrus comes from the colorful zest, or skin of the fruit. Try adding some into your dishes. Avoid the white layer beneath the zest, which can be bitter.

- Citrus juice makes a great marinade for meats.

## GARLIC AND ONIONS

Cooking garlic and onions, either together or alone, can create a flavorful foundation for just about any recipe. In fact, they are often part of the backbone for some of your favorite recipes.

- **Sofrito:** sautéed onion, garlic, and tomatoes.
- **Mirepoix:** sautéed onion, carrot, and celery.
- **Holy Trinity:** sautéed onion, celery, and green bell pepper.

## CHILIES AND PEPPERS

Whether dried or fresh, mild or hot, powdered or whole, chilies and peppers add flavor, color, and excitement to any dish.

- In general, large peppers (like bell peppers) are mild, while small peppers (like jalapeño) are hotter.
- Dried chilies are usually soaked in water until soft, then puréed before they are added.
- Consider roasting your peppers first. This adds an extra level of flavor.
- Discard the inner seeds and membranes to cut down on heat without removing flavor.
- When handling spicy peppers, try to wear gloves. Wash your hands thoroughly before touching your eyes.



# SALT-FREE

As you shop for new spices and seasonings, watch for salt listed in the ingredients. Many popular seasoning blends and flavoring packets have high amounts of salt. Choose salt-free versions instead. Or, try these no-salt seasoning recipes for a no-fat, low-sodium way to spice up your meals! Feel free to experiment and add or remove spices to suit your tastes.

## SOUL FOOD SEASONING

A great substitute for seasoning salts and Adobo.

- 1 tablespoon ground red pepper
- 3 tablespoons garlic powder
- 3 tablespoons onion powder
- 1 tablespoon dried chili powder
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon thyme powder
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper



## CHINESE SEASONING RECIPE

A great substitute for soy sauce.

- 4 teaspoons ground ginger
- 2 tablespoons onion powder
- 1 tablespoon anise seeds crushed
- 2 teaspoons ground allspice
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves
- 2 teaspoons sesame seeds



## ITALIAN SEASONING RECIPE

Similar Italian seasoning blends can also be found in the spice aisle; just check the ingredients for salt before purchasing.

- 2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon parsley
- 1 tablespoon basil
- 1 tablespoon oregano
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ½ teaspoon thyme
- 2 teaspoons onion powder



# SEASONING



## SIMPLE ITALIAN FLAVOR

A variation of Italian seasoning.

- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon basil
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon powdered lemon rind



## TACO SEASONING

A healthier and more flavorful alternative to pre-packaged taco seasonings.

- 3 tablespoons onion powder
- 2 tablespoons ground cumin
- 1 ½ teaspoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon cayenne
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder



## SPICY SEASONING

A versatile blend that adds a spicy kick to any dish.

- 1 teaspoon cloves
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon crushed coriander seed
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon rosemary



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Mayor Martin J. Walsh

You can find more simple ways to reduce sodium online at **[BPHC.org/SwapTheSalt](https://www.bphc.org/swapthesalt)**.

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