

INDIAN SPICES



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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Spices have been an important part of seasoning in foods throughout the world. Spices, herbs and essential oils have been the foundation for flavorings that defines the foods of the wide range of cultures and their cuisines throughout the world. Unless we have been exposed to these flavorings and smells, they may be “exotic” or “foreign” or “stinky.” In today’s world, we have more opportunities to experience cuisines that are new and different. Sometimes flavors have to be experienced several times to appreciate them and then we enjoy the new seasonings and find them delicious. This is often the case of spices from India. Many of these spices, herbs, and oils have been used not only for flavoring, but also for health and medicinal purposes. Some of these are being examined more carefully by researchers and western medical practitioners.



Definitions

Herbs – something which can be grown in our own locality, even if it is not native to the area. It can be dried and include the seed of the plant.

Spices – plant parts that could not be grown at home. “Spice” covers dried roots, bark and berries and referred to any dried aromatics, nearly all parts of plants which grew in the tropical East.

Health and medicinal use of spices and herbs of India

As in many cultures throughout the world, Indians have used herbs and spices in their health practices. The Indian form of medicine using herbals including spices is “Ayurvedic medicine”. Indians describe this as a system of “science of life” which looks at holistic treatment. Herbs and spices are seen to not only lend flavor to bland meals, but also “have a profound impact on human health because they affect many of the body’s metabolic processes.” In all medicine, Eastern or Western, herbs have been used for treating many conditions.

Spices and herbs are used abundantly in Indian cooking. We will just be scratching the surface of Indian flavors because most of these are used in combination with other spices, thus making very complex flavors.



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Ajwain Seeds

Ajwain adds a pungent, slightly bitter flavor and a distinctive aroma to various Indian dishes, particularly in North Indian and street food cuisine. Ajwain is often used to aid digestion and is a key ingredient in popular dishes like parathas, puris, and savory snacks like namkeen and chaat items.



Allspice

Allspice adds a warm, sweet, and spicy flavor to various Indian dishes, particularly in Mughlai and North Indian cuisine, where it is used in combination with other spices. In Indian cooking, Allspice is often used in small quantities to add depth and aroma to popular dishes like biryanis, kebabs, and desserts like gulab jamun.



Fennel Seeds (Sounf)

Fennel Seeds add a sweet, anise-like flavor and aroma to various Indian dishes, particularly in North Indian and South Indian cuisine, where they are used in combination with other spices. In Indian cooking, Fennel Seeds are often used to aid digestion and are a key ingredient in popular dishes like curries, chutneys, and desserts like barfi and laddu.



Asafoetida (Hing)

Asafoetida adds a pungent, savory flavor and aroma to various Indian dishes, particularly in South Indian and Gujarati cuisine, where it is used to add depth and umami flavor. Asafoetida is often used in small quantities to aid digestion and is a key ingredient in popular dishes like dal, sambar, and vegetable curries.



Basil

Basil adds a sweet, aromatic flavor and fragrance to various Indian dishes, particularly in North Indian and Mughlai cuisine, where it is used in combination with other spices. In Indian cooking, Basil is often used to add freshness and flavor to popular dishes like curries, biryanis, and desserts like kulfi and falooda.



Bay Leaves

Bay Leaves add a mild, slightly sweet and savory flavor to various Indian dishes, particularly in Mughlai, North Indian and South Indian cuisine, where they are used to add depth and aroma. Bay Leaves are often used in combination with other spices to make popular dishes like biryanis, pulao, and curries like rogan josh and chana masala.

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Black Salt

Black Salt, also known as Kala Namak, adds a distinctive, savory, and slightly sweet flavor to Indian and Southeast Asian dishes. With its strong, sulfurous aroma and crunchy texture, Black Salt is often used to add depth and warmth to chutneys, salads, and street food recipes.



Caraway Seeds

Caraway seeds bring a nutty, slightly bitter, and anise-like flavor to various dishes, complementing breads, cheeses, and vegetables. With their distinctive aroma and flavor, caraway seeds are a staple spice in European, Middle Eastern, and Indian cuisine.



Cardamom Black

Black Cardamom, with its smoky, earthy, and minty flavor, adds a unique depth and warmth to Indian and Chinese dishes. Often used in slow-cooked recipes like stews, braises, and curries, Black Cardamom's bold aroma and flavor complement meats, vegetables, and legumes.



Cardamom Green

Green Cardamom, with its sweet, aromatic, and herbal flavor, is a versatile spice used in baked goods, desserts, and savory dishes. Its unique, sweet-savory flavor complements coffee, tea, and Indian sweets, while also pairing well with meats, vegetables, and grains in a variety of international recipes.



Dry Red Chillies

Dry Red Chillies add a fiery, smoky heat and a deep, slightly sweet flavor to a variety of dishes, from curries and stews to sauces and marinades. With their intense, concentrated flavor, Dry Red Chillies are a staple spice in many global cuisines, including Indian, Chinese, and Latin American cooking.



Fresh Green Chillies

Fresh Green Chillies bring a vibrant, grassy flavor and a moderate level of heat to various dishes, from salads and chutneys to curries and stir-fries. With their crunchy texture and fresh, herbaceous aroma, Fresh Green Chillies add a bright, lively kick to many global cuisines, including Indian, Thai, and Mexican cooking. Can be eaten raw, cooked or pickled.

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Cinnamon

Cinnamon, known as 'Dalchini' in Hindi, adds warmth and depth to various Indian dishes, from sweet desserts like gulab jamun to savory curries and biryanis. In Indian cuisine, Cinnamon is often paired with cardamom, cloves, and other spices to create complex, aromatic blends that characterize regional specialties like Hyderabadi biryani and Kerala-style curries.



Cloves

Cloves, known as 'Laung' in Hindi, bring a potent, warm, and slightly sweet flavor to various Indian dishes, from rich curries and biryanis to fragrant rice dishes and desserts. Cloves are often paired with cinnamon, cardamom, and other spices to create the distinctive 'garam masala' blend, which adds depth and warmth to many regional specialties.



Coriander seeds

Coriander Seeds, known as 'Dhania' in Hindi, add a warm, earthy, and citrusy flavor to various Indian dishes, from curries and stews to chutneys and pickles. In Indian cuisine, Coriander Seeds are often paired with cumin seeds to create a flavorful spice blend that complements vegetables, legumes, and whole grains in popular dishes like dal, sabzi, and khichdi.



Coconut

Coconut, in its various forms - grated, shredded, or as oil, adds a rich, creamy flavor and texture to numerous Indian dishes, particularly in South Indian and coastal cuisines. In Indian cooking, Coconut is often used to enhance the flavor of curries, chutneys, and desserts like ladoos, barfis, and halwas, while also providing a soothing and cooling effect.



Cumin Seeds

Cumin Seeds, known as 'Jeera' in Hindi, add a warm, earthy, and slightly bitter flavor to various Indian dishes, from curries and stews to chutneys and street food snacks. In Indian cuisine, Cumin Seeds are often used to temper oils, enhancing the flavor of vegetables, legumes, and whole grains in popular dishes like dal, rice, and roti.



Curry Leaves

Curry Leaves, also known as 'Kadi Patta' in Hindi, add a fresh, citrusy, and slightly bitter flavor to various Indian dishes, particularly in South Indian and coastal cuisines. In Indian cooking, Curry Leaves are often used to temper oils, enhancing the flavor of curries, chutneys, and soups, while also providing medicinal benefits and aroma.

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Dill Seeds

Dill Seeds, known as 'Sada Kopu' in some Indian languages, add a warm, aromatic, and slightly bitter flavor to various Indian dishes, particularly in vegetarian and dal-based recipes. In Indian cuisine, Dill Seeds are often used to aid digestion and add depth to dishes like dal, rasam, and vegetable curries, especially in South Indian and Gujarati cooking.



Fenugreek Seeds

Fenugreek Seeds, known as 'Methi Dana' in Hindi, add a nutty, slightly bitter flavor and a hint of sweetness to various Indian dishes, particularly in curries, dal, and vegetable recipes. In Indian cuisine, Fenugreek Seeds are often used to aid digestion, reduce inflammation, and add depth to dishes like sarson ka saag, methi chaman, and other popular North Indian and Punjabi recipes.



French Lavender

French Lavender, with its floral and slightly sweet flavor, is not a traditional spice in Indian cuisine, but is sometimes used in modern Indian desserts and beverages for its unique and soothing flavor. In some Indian fusion recipes, French Lavender is paired with ingredients like cardamom, rose, and honey to create innovative desserts like lavender gulab jamun and lavender lassi.



Garlic

Garlic, known as 'Lahsun' in Hindi, adds a pungent flavor and aroma to various Indian dishes, particularly in curries, chutneys, and marinades. In Indian cuisine, Garlic is often paired with ginger and onions to create a flavorful base for popular dishes like curries, biryanis, and tandoori recipes, especially in North Indian and Punjabi cooking.



Ginger

Ginger, known as 'Adrak' in Hindi, adds a spicy, warming flavor and aroma to various Indian dishes, particularly in teas, curries, and digestive remedies. Ginger is often paired with garlic and onions to create a flavorful base for popular dishes like curries, biryanis, and tandoori recipes, and is also used for its digestive and anti-inflammatory properties.



Mango Powder

Dry Mango Powder, known as 'Amchur' in Hindi, adds a tangy, slightly sweet flavor to various Indian dishes, particularly in North Indian and street food recipes. In Indian cuisine, Amchur is often used to add a burst of citrus flavor to dishes like chutneys, curries, and snacks like chaat and kebabs, while also aiding digestion and balancing flavors.

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Mint Leaves (fresh or dried)

Mint, known as 'Pudina' in Hindi, adds a refreshing, cooling flavor to various Indian dishes, particularly in beverages, chutneys, and desserts. In Indian cuisine, Mint is often used to create popular drinks like mint lassi and jal jeera, as well as to add flavor to dishes like raitas, salads, and street food snacks like chaat and kebabs.



Mustard Seeds

Mustard Seeds, known as 'Rai' in Hindi, add a pungent, nutty flavor and aroma to various Indian dishes, particularly in curries, chutneys, and pickling spices. Mustard Seeds are often used to temper oils, adding a burst of flavor to popular dishes like sarson ka saag, sambar, and other South Indian and Punjabi recipes. Available in yellow, brown and black varieties.



Nigella (Onion seeds)

Nigella Seeds, known as 'Kalonji' in Hindi, add a nutty, slightly bitter flavor and aroma to various Indian dishes, particularly in curries, breads, and desserts. In Indian cuisine, Nigella Seeds are often used to add depth and complexity to popular dishes like naan bread, biryanis, and curries, especially in North Indian, Hyderabad, and Mughlai cooking.



Nutmeg

Nutmeg, known as 'Jaiphal' in Hindi, adds a warm, aromatic, and slightly sweet flavor to various Indian desserts and savory dishes, particularly in Mughlai and North Indian cuisine. Nutmeg is often used in small quantities to add depth and warmth to popular dishes like biryanis, kormas, and desserts like gulab jamun and kulfi.



Mace

Mace, known as 'Javitri' in Hindi, adds a warm, aromatic, and slightly sweet flavor to various Indian desserts and savory dishes, particularly in Mughlai and North Indian cuisine. Mace is often used in combination with nutmeg, its outer covering, to add depth and warmth to popular dishes like biryanis, kormas, and desserts like kulfi and halwa.



Paprika

Paprika, although not a traditional Indian spice, is sometimes used in modern Indian cuisine to add a smoky, slightly sweet flavor and vibrant color to dishes like tandoori chicken, vegetable stir-fries, and fusion recipes. Paprika is often blended with other spices like cumin, coriander, and chili powder to create innovative and aromatic spice blends.

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Pomegranate Seeds (anardana)

Pomegranate Seeds, known as 'Anar Dana' in Hindi, add a sweet, tangy, and crunchy texture to various Indian dishes, particularly in salads, raitas, and chutneys. Pomegranate Seeds are often used as a garnish or mixed into yogurt-based side dishes like raita, adding a burst of flavor and nutrition to popular dishes like biryanis and kebabs.



Poppy Seeds

Poppy Seeds add a nutty, slightly sweet flavor and a delicate crunch to various Indian dishes, particularly in curries, breads, and desserts. In Indian cuisine, Poppy Seeds are often used to thicken and enrich the texture of popular dishes like kormas, curries, and halwas.



Saffron

Saffron adds a subtle, earthy flavor and a vibrant yellow-orange color to various Indian dishes, particularly in biryanis, desserts, and Mughlai cuisine. In Indian cooking, Saffron is often used to add luxury and aroma to popular dishes like kulfi, gulab jamun, and traditional sweets like barfi and laddu.



Sesame Seeds

Sesame Seeds add a nutty, slightly sweet flavor and a crunchy texture to various Indian dishes, particularly in breads, snacks, and desserts. In Indian cuisine, Sesame Seeds are often used to garnish popular dishes like buns, cookies, and savory snacks like namkeen and chaat items.



Tamarind

Tamarind adds a sour, slightly sweet flavor to various Indian dishes, particularly in South Indian cuisine, where it is used to make popular dishes like sambhar, rasam, and chutneys. In Indian cooking, Tamarind is often used to balance and enhance the flavors of spices, and is also used in traditional drinks like sharbat and jal jeera.



Turmeric

Turmeric adds a warm, slightly bitter flavor and a vibrant yellow color to various Indian dishes, particularly in curries, stews, and rice dishes. In Indian cooking, Turmeric is often used for its medicinal and antioxidant properties, and is a staple spice in popular dishes like haldi doodh, chicken tikka masala, and vegetable curries.

MEDICINIAL PROPERTIES OF SPICES





MEDICINAL PROPERTIES

AJWAIN

- Digestive, relieves indigestion and flatulence
- Antimicrobial and antifungal properties
- Relieves respiratory issues like bronchitis and asthma

ALLSPICE

- Digestive aid, relieves nausea and vomiting
- Antimicrobial and antifungal properties
- Relieves pain and inflammation

FENUGREEK SEEDS

- Lowers blood sugar, cholesterol, and triglycerides
- Digestive aid, relieves constipation
- Relieves menstrual cramps and other symptoms associated with PMS

ASAFOETIDA

- Digestive aid, relieves flatulence and indigestion
- Antimicrobial and antifungal properties
- Relieves respiratory issues like bronchitis and asthma

BASIL

- Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antibacterial properties
- Digestive aid, relieves nausea and vomiting
- Relieves stress and anxiety

BAY LEAVES

- Digestive aid, relieves indigestion and flatulence
- Antimicrobial and antifungal properties
- Relieves respiratory issues like bronchitis and asthma

BLACK SALT

- Digestive aid, relieves indigestion and flatulence
- Antimicrobial and antifungal properties
- Relieves respiratory issues like bronchitis and asthma

CARAWAY SEEDS

- Digestive, relieves indigestion and flatulence
- Antimicrobial and antifungal properties
- Relieves respiratory issues like bronchitis and asthma

BLACK CARDAMOM

- Digestive aid, relieves indigestion and flatulence
- Antimicrobial and antifungal properties
- Relieves bad breath and gum inflammation

GREEN CARDAMOM

- Digestive aid, relieves indigestion and flatulence
- Antimicrobial and antifungal properties
- Relieves bad breath and gum inflammation

DRY RED CHILLIES

- Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antibacterial properties
- Relieves pain and inflammation
- Improves digestion and relieves constipation

FRESH GREEN CHILLIES

- Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antibacterial properties
- Relieves pain and inflammation
- Improves digestion and relieves constipation

CINNAMON

- Lowers blood sugar, cholesterol, and triglycerides
- Antimicrobial and antifungal properties
- Relieves digestive issues like diarrhea and nausea

CLOVES

- Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antibacterial properties
- Relieves toothache and gum inflammation
- Improves digestion and relieves nausea



MEDICINAL PROPERTIES

CORIANDER SEEDS

- Digestive aid, relieves indigestion and flatulence
- Antimicrobial and antifungal properties
- Relieves anxiety and insomnia

COCONUT

- Rich in healthy fats, protein, and fiber
- Improves digestion and relieves constipation
- Relieves skin conditions like acne and eczema

CUMIN SEEDS

- Digestive aid, relieves indigestion and flatulence
- Antimicrobial and antifungal properties
- Relieves anxiety and insomnia

CURRY LEAVES

- Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antibacterial properties
- Improves digestion and relieves nausea
- Relieves skin conditions like acne and eczema

DILL SEEDS

- Digestive aid, relieves indigestion and flatulence
- Antimicrobial and antifungal properties
- Relieves anxiety and insomnia

FENUGREEK SEEDS

- Lowers blood sugar, cholesterol, and triglycerides
- Digestive aid, relieves constipation
- Relieves menstrual cramps and other symptoms associated with PMS

FRENCH LAVENDER

- Calming and relaxing properties
- Relieves anxiety and insomnia
- Improves skin health and reduces inflammation

GARLIC

- Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antibacterial properties
- Lowers blood pressure and cholesterol
- Relieves digestive issues like diarrhea and nausea

GINGER

- Digestive aid, relieves nausea and vomiting
- Anti-inflammatory properties, relieves pain and swelling
- Relieves respiratory issues like bronchitis and asthma

DRY MANGO POWDER

- Digestive aid, relieves indigestion and flatulence
- Antioxidant properties, protects against cell damage
- Rich in vitamins and minerals, improves overall health

MINT

- Digestive aid, relieves nausea and vomiting
- Relieves respiratory issues like bronchitis and asthma
- Cooling properties, relieves headaches and fever

MUSTARD SEEDS

- Antioxidant properties, protects against cell damage
- Anti-inflammatory properties, relieves pain and swelling
- Stimulates digestion and relieves constipation

NIGELLA SEEDS

- Anti-inflammatory properties, relieves pain and swelling
- Relieves respiratory issues like bronchitis and asthma
- Improves immune function and reduces inflammation



MEDICINAL PROPERTIES

NUTMEG

- Anti-inflammatory properties, relieves pain and swelling
- Relieves digestive issues like diarrhea and nausea
- Stimulates brain function and improves mood

MACE

- Anti-inflammatory properties, relieves pain and swelling
- Relieves digestive issues like diarrhea and nausea
- Stimulates brain function and improves mood

PAPRIKA

- Anti-inflammatory properties, relieves pain and swelling
- Relieves digestive issues like diarrhea and nausea
- Improves immune function and reduces inflammation

POMEGRANATE SEEDS

- Anti-inflammatory properties, relieves pain and swelling
- Relieves heart problems like high blood pressure and cholesterol
- Improves immune function and reduces inflammation

POPPY SEEDS

- Anti-inflammatory properties, relieves pain and swelling
- Relieves digestive issues like diarrhea and nausea
- Stimulates brain function and improves mood

SAFFRON

- Anti-inflammatory properties, relieves pain and swelling
- Relieves digestive issues like diarrhea and nausea
- Improves mood and reduces stress

SESAME SEEDS

- Antioxidant properties, protects against cell damage
- Relieves digestive issues like diarrhea and nausea
- Improves bone health, reduces inflammation

TAMARIND

- Digestive aid, relieves indigestion and flatulence
- Relieves respiratory issues like bronchitis and asthma
- Improves immune function and reduces inflammation

TURMERIC

- Anti-inflammatory properties, relieves pain and swelling
- Relieves digestive issues like diarrhea and nausea
- Improves immune function and reduces inflammation

Please note that while these spices and herbs have medicinal properties, they should not be used as a replacement for medical treatment. Always consult with a healthcare professional before using any new remedies.



ESSENTIAL SPICE BLENDS

SPICE BLENDS

SPICE COMBINATIONS

Spice blends are an integral part of Indian cuisine, adding depth, aroma, and flavor to various dishes. These intricate combinations of spices can vary greatly depending on the region, personal preferences, and the type of dish being prepared.

The art of blending spices is a revered tradition in India, with each blend carefully crafted to evoke a specific flavor profile. The process of creating a spice blend involves roasting, grinding, and mixing whole spices in precise proportions to achieve the desired flavor and aroma.

Spice blends can be broadly classified into two categories: sweet and savory. Sweet spice blends, often used in desserts and snacks, typically include spices like cardamom, cinnamon, and cloves. Savory spice blends, on the other hand, are used in a wide range of dishes, from curries and stews to rice dishes and breads.

The beauty of spice blends lies in their versatility and customizability. Each region and community in India has its own unique spice blends, reflecting local tastes and traditions. Moreover, spice blends can be tailored to suit individual preferences, making Indian cuisine incredibly diverse and dynamic.

In Indian cooking, spice blends are not just added to dishes for flavor; they are also believed to possess medicinal and spiritual properties. Certain spice blends are thought to aid digestion, while others are believed to have anti-inflammatory properties. This holistic approach to spice blending reflects the deep connection between food, health, and spirituality in Indian culture.

HOW TO STORE

Here are a few tips to ensure that spice blends last longer and retain their aromas and flavors:

- Store spice blends in a cool, dark place, away from direct sunlight and heat sources. This will prevent the spices from losing their potency and flavor.
- Use airtight containers, such as glass jars or tin containers, to store spice blends. This will keep air, moisture, and light out, preserving the spices' flavor and aroma.
- Keep spice blends away from strong-smelling foods, as they can absorb odors easily.
- Label and date each container, so you can easily identify the spice blend and how long it has been stored.
- Use bay leaves or silica gel packets to absorb moisture and prevent clumping in spice blends.
- Freeze spice blends for longer storage. Simply scoop the spice blend into an airtight container or freezer bag, label, and date it. Frozen spice blends will retain their flavor and aroma for up to 6 months.

By following these storage tips, you can enjoy your spice blends for a longer period while preserving their flavor, aroma, and potency.



Whether used in traditional Indian recipes or as a seasoning in modern fusion dishes, Garam Masala is an essential spice blend that adds a unique and aromatic flavor to any dish.

One of the unique aspects of Kitchen King Masala is its ability to enhance the flavors of other spices and ingredients without overpowering them. This makes it a versatile and essential spice blend in many Indian kitchens.

To use Chana Masala, simply add it to the dish towards the end of cooking, allowing the flavors to meld together. It can also be mixed with yogurt or lemon juice to create a marinade for meats or vegetables. Chana Masala is a staple spice blend in many Indian kitchens, and its versatility makes it a great addition to any spice collection.



COMMON BLENDS

CHAAT MASALA

Chaat Masala is a popular Indian spice blend that adds a burst of flavor and aroma to various street food-style snacks and chaats. This tangy and slightly spicy blend typically includes ingredients like amchur powder, cumin, coriander, cinnamon, and black salt, which are carefully proportioned to create a balanced and refreshing flavor profile.

In Indian cooking, Chaat Masala is often sprinkled over snacks like samosas, kachoris, and golgappas to add a burst of flavor. It's also used to add zing to fruit salads, raitas, and other yogurt-based side dishes. Chaat Masala is a staple spice blend in many Indian kitchens, and its unique flavor profile makes it a great addition to any snack or appetizer. With its versatility and refreshing flavor, Chaat Masala has become a must-have spice blend for anyone who loves Indian street food and snacks.

SAMBAR MASALA

Sambar Masala is a quintessential spice blend from South India, specifically designed to add flavor and aroma to the popular lentil-based vegetable stew, sambar. This intricate blend typically includes ingredients like coriander, cumin, cinnamon, cardamom, and turmeric, which are carefully proportioned to create a balanced and aromatic flavor profile.

In Indian cooking, Sambar Masala is essential for making authentic sambar, a staple dish in South Indian cuisine. It's added to the stew towards the end of cooking, allowing the flavors to meld together. The masala adds a deep, slightly sweet, and tangy flavor to the dish, which is characteristic of traditional sambar.

Sambar Masala is also used to add flavor to other South Indian dishes like rasam, dal, and vegetable curries. Its unique flavor profile makes it a must-have spice blend in every South Indian kitchen. With its versatility and aromatic flavor, Sambar Masala has become a popular spice blend throughout India, and is also used in various modern fusion dishes. Its flavor profile is a perfect blend of spices, making it a great addition to any lentil-based dish or vegetable curry.

DAL MAKHANI MASALA

Dal Makhani Masala is a popular Indian spice blend specifically designed to add flavor and aroma to the iconic Punjabi lentil dish, Dal Makhani. This rich and creamy blend typically includes ingredients like cumin, coriander, cinnamon, cardamom, and kasoori methi, which are carefully proportioned to create a balanced and aromatic flavor profile.

In Indian cooking, Dal Makhani Masala is essential for making authentic Dal Makhani, a staple dish in North Indian cuisine. It's added to the lentils towards the end of cooking, allowing the flavors to meld together. The masala adds a deep, slightly sweet, and smoky flavor to the dish, which is characteristic of traditional Dal Makhani.

Dal Makhani Masala is also used to add flavor to other popular North Indian dishes like kidney bean curries and vegetable stews. Its unique flavor profile makes it a must-have spice blend in every North Indian kitchen, and its versatility has made it a popular spice blend throughout India. With its rich and creamy flavor, Dal Makhani Masala is a great addition to any lentil-based dish or vegetable curry.



COMMON BLENDS

KADAHI MASALA

Kadahi Masala is a popular Indian spice blend specifically designed to add flavor and aroma to North Indian dishes, particularly those cooked in a kadahi or wok. This robust blend typically includes ingredients like coriander, cumin, cinnamon, cardamom, and red chili powder, which are carefully proportioned to create a balanced and aromatic flavor profile.

In Indian cooking, Kadahi Masala is essential for making authentic North Indian dishes like kadahi paneer, kadahi chicken, and vegetable stir-fries. It's added to the dish towards the end of cooking, allowing the flavors to meld together. The masala adds a deep, slightly spicy, and smoky flavor to the dish, which is characteristic of traditional North Indian cuisine.

Kadahi Masala is also used to add flavor to other North Indian dishes like curries, stews, and biryanis. Its unique flavor profile makes it a must-have spice blend in every North Indian kitchen. With its versatility and aromatic flavor, Kadahi Masala has become a popular spice blend throughout India, and is also used in various modern fusion dishes.

ACHAARI MASALA

Achaari Masala is a popular Indian spice blend inspired by the traditional pickling spices of North India. This tangy and aromatic blend typically includes ingredients like mustard seeds, fennel seeds, cumin, coriander, and amchur powder, which are carefully proportioned to create a balanced and zesty flavor profile.

In Indian cooking, Achaari Masala is used to add a burst of flavor to various dishes, particularly those inspired by traditional North Indian cuisine. It's often used to make pickles, chutneys, and raitas, as well as to add flavor to vegetables, meats, and legumes.

Achaari Masala is also used to make popular North Indian dishes like achaari paneer, achaari chicken, and achaari vegetables. With its unique flavor profile and versatility, Achaari Masala has become a popular spice blend throughout India, and is also used in various modern fusion dishes. Its tangy and aromatic flavor adds a new dimension to any dish, making it a must-have spice blend in every Indian kitchen.

PAVBHAJI MASALA

Pavbhaji Masala is a popular Indian spice blend specifically designed to add flavor and aroma to the iconic Mumbai street food dish, pav bhaji. This flavorful blend typically includes ingredients like cumin, coriander, cinnamon, cardamom, and red chili powder, which are carefully proportioned to create a balanced and aromatic flavor profile.

In Indian cooking, Pavbhaji Masala is essential for making authentic pav bhaji, a spicy and flavorful curry made with mixed vegetables, bread, and spices. It's added to the curry towards the end of cooking, allowing the flavors to meld together. Pavbhaji Masala is also used to add flavor to other popular street food dishes like vada pav, misal pav, and bhel puri.

With its unique flavor profile and versatility, Pavbhaji Masala has become a staple spice blend in many Indian kitchens, particularly in Western India. Its aromatic and slightly spicy flavor adds a new dimension to any dish, making it a must-have spice blend for anyone who loves Indian street food.



COMMON BLENDS

BIRYANI MASALA

Biryani Masala is a popular Indian spice blend specifically designed to add flavor and aroma to the iconic rice-based dish, biryani. This complex blend typically includes ingredients like cumin, coriander, cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, and star anise, which are carefully proportioned to create a balanced and aromatic flavor profile.

In Indian cooking, Biryani Masala is essential for making authentic biryani, a flavorful and aromatic rice dish made with a mixture of spices, basmati rice, and marinated meat or vegetables. It's added to the dish during the cooking process, allowing the flavors to meld together. Biryani Masala is also used to add flavor to other popular rice dishes like pulao, khichdi, and fried rice.

With its unique flavor profile and versatility, Biryani Masala has become a staple spice blend in many Indian kitchens, particularly in South and North Indian cuisine. Its aromatic and slightly spicy flavor adds a new dimension to any rice dish, making it a must-have spice blend for anyone who loves Indian cuisine.

TANDOORI MASALA

Tandoori Masala is a popular Indian spice blend specifically designed to add flavor and aroma to dishes cooked in a tandoor, a traditional clay oven. This flavorful blend typically includes ingredients like cumin, coriander, cinnamon, cardamom, cayenne pepper, and garam masala, which are carefully proportioned to create a balanced and aromatic flavor profile.

In Indian cooking, Tandoori Masala is essential for making authentic tandoori chicken, naan bread, and other tandoor-cooked dishes. It's added to the marinade or dough before cooking, allowing the flavors to penetrate deep into the meat or bread. Tandoori Masala is also used to add flavor to other popular Indian dishes like chicken tikka, seekh kebabs, and vegetable skewers.

With its unique flavor profile and versatility, Tandoori Masala has become a staple spice blend in many Indian kitchens. Its aromatic and slightly smoky flavor adds a new dimension to any dish, making it a must-have spice blend for anyone who loves Indian cuisine.

CHICKEN MASALA

Chicken Masala is a popular Indian spice blend specifically designed to add flavor and aroma to chicken dishes. This flavorful blend typically includes ingredients like cumin, coriander, cinnamon, cardamom, cayenne pepper, and garam masala, which are carefully proportioned to create a balanced and aromatic flavor profile.

In Indian cooking, Chicken Masala is essential for making authentic chicken curries, tandoori chicken, and chicken tikka masala. It's added to the dish during the marination process or towards the end of cooking, allowing the flavors to meld together. Chicken Masala is also used to add flavor to other popular chicken dishes like chicken biryani, chicken pulao, and chicken soups.

With its unique flavor profile and versatility, Chicken Masala has become a staple spice blend in many Indian kitchens. Its aromatic and slightly spicy flavor adds a new dimension to any chicken dish, making it a must-have spice blend for anyone who loves Indian cuisine. Chicken Masala is also used in various modern fusion dishes, adding an Indian twist to international cuisine.



COMMON BLENDS

MUTTON MASALA

Mutton Masala is a popular Indian spice blend specifically designed to add flavor and aroma to mutton dishes. This robust and aromatic blend typically includes ingredients like cumin, coriander, cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, and black pepper, which are carefully proportioned to create a balanced and savory flavor profile.

In Indian cooking, Mutton Masala is essential for making authentic mutton curries, stews, and biryanis. It's added to the dish during the cooking process, allowing the flavors to meld together and the meat to tenderize. Mutton Masala is also used to add flavor to other popular Indian dishes like lamb korma, rogani gosht, and mutton kebabs.

With its unique flavor profile and versatility, Mutton Masala has become a staple spice blend in many Indian kitchens, particularly in North Indian and Mughlai cuisine. Its rich and savory flavor adds a new dimension to any mutton dish, making it a must-have spice blend for anyone who loves Indian cuisine.

NIHARI MASALA

Nihari Masala is a popular Indian spice blend specifically designed to add flavor and aroma to the iconic slow-cooked stew, Nihari. This rich and complex blend typically includes ingredients like cumin, coriander, cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, and star anise, which are carefully proportioned to create a balanced and aromatic flavor profile.

In Indian cooking, Nihari Masala is essential for making authentic Nihari, a traditional dish originating from the Mughal Empire. It's added to the stew during the slow-cooking process, allowing the flavors to meld together and the meat to tenderize. Nihari Masala is also used to add flavor to other popular Indian dishes like lamb shanks, beef stews, and vegetable curries.

With its unique flavor profile and versatility, Nihari Masala has become a staple spice blend in many Indian kitchens, particularly in North Indian and Mughlai cuisine. Its rich and aromatic flavor adds a new dimension to any slow-cooked dish, making it a must-have spice blend for anyone who loves Indian cuisine.

FISH MASALA

Fish Masala is a popular Indian spice blend specifically designed to add flavor and aroma to fish dishes. This delicate and aromatic blend typically includes ingredients like cumin, coriander, turmeric, red chili powder, and garam masala, which are carefully proportioned to create a balanced and savory flavor profile.

In Indian cooking, Fish Masala is essential for making authentic fish curries, fries, and biryanis. It's added to the dish during the marination process or towards the end of cooking, allowing the flavors to meld together and the fish to absorb the spices. Fish Masala is also used to add flavor to other popular Indian seafood dishes like prawn curries, squid fries, and crab masalas.

With its unique flavor profile and versatility, Fish Masala has become a staple spice blend in many Indian kitchens, particularly in coastal regions like Bengal, Kerala, and Goa. Its delicate and aromatic flavor adds a new dimension to any fish dish, making it a must-have spice blend for anyone who loves Indian seafood cuisine.

REGIONAL SPICE BLENDS



REGIONAL BLENDS

PANCH PHORAN

Region: West Bengal, Odisha, and Assam

Ingredients: A unique mix of five spices: fenugreek, mustard seeds, cumin, nigella seeds, and fennel

Use: Panch phoran is used primarily for tempering or "tadka" and is commonly found in vegetable dishes, dals, pickles, and some fish preparations. It gives a fragrant, slightly bitter taste with a touch of sweetness from fennel.

RASAM POWDER

Region: Predominantly Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh

Ingredients: Tamarind, coriander seeds, cumin, black pepper, fenugreek, dry red chilies, and curry leaves

Use: Rasam powder is used to make rasam, a tangy soup made with tamarind, tomatoes, and spices. The powder provides a balanced mix of heat, acidity, and aroma, and is often served as a side with rice.

MEETHA MASALA

Region: Uttar Pradesh, especially in Lucknow

Ingredients: A sweet-spicy blend of cumin, coriander, cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, black salt, and sugar

Use: Used to flavor chaats like aloo tikki or dahi puri, meetha masala adds a sweet-spicy element that complements the tangy yogurt and crispy elements typical of Indian street food.

CHETTINAD MASALA

Region: Tamil Nadu (Chettinad region)

Ingredients: A fiery and aromatic mix of dry red chilies, fennel seeds, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, cumin, curry leaves, and star anise

Use: Chettinad masala is used in both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. Use in Chettinad chicken curry, known for its intense heat and deep, rich flavor.

GOAN XACUTI MASALA

Region: Goa

Ingredients: A complex mix of dry roasted spices including coriander, cumin, cinnamon, black pepper, cloves, and star anise, along with fresh coconut, garlic, and onion

Use: Xacuti masala is used to make Xacuti curry, a rich and aromatic curry usually prepared with chicken, lamb, or pork. The roasted spices and coconut create a deep, earthy flavor that is characteristic of Goan cuisine.

METHI MASALA

Region: Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan

Ingredients: Fenugreek seeds (methi), cumin, coriander, turmeric, chili powder, and sometimes dried mango powder

Use: Methi masala is used in dishes like methi thepla (flatbread), and also in dals, vegetable curries, and pickles. The bitterness of fenugreek is balanced with other spices, lending a distinctive flavor.



CHETTINAD CHICKEN CURRY

REGIONAL BLENDS

DHANIYA JEERA POWDER

Region: Widely used across India, especially in North and West India

Ingredients: A simple blend of ground coriander (dhaniya) and cumin (jeera)

Use: A staple in Indian kitchens, this blend is used as a base for many curry and vegetable dishes, lentils, and rice. It imparts a mild, aromatic, and earthy flavor to the food.

VINDALOO MASALA

Region: Goa and Konkan regions

Ingredients: A pungent blend of vinegar, tamarind, garlic, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, mustard seeds, and red chilies

Use: Vindaloo masala is used in the famous Goan Vindaloo curry, a spicy and tangy dish, typically made with pork but also used for chicken and beef. It combines the sharpness of vinegar with the heat of chilies and the depth of garam masala.

KALAADI

Region: Maharashtra

Ingredients: A blend of roasted and ground spices, including cumin, coriander, sesame seeds, dry coconut, cinnamon, and dried red chilies

Use: Kalaadi masala is used in a variety of Maharashtrian dishes, including sabzis, rice dishes like bhakri, and snacks like vada pav, adding a rich, earthy flavor.

TIKKA MASALA

Region: Mostly Punjab and North India.

Ingredients: A mixture of garam masala, cumin, coriander, turmeric, paprika, garlic, ginger, and sometimes fenugreek.

Use: Often used to marinate meat before grilling or baking, as in Chicken Tikka, and can also be used in the sauce to make dishes like Chicken Tikka Masala, a popular dish in Indian restaurants worldwide.

DHUSKA MASALA

Region: Jharkhand.

Ingredients: A combination of black cumin (shahi jeera), dry red chilies, coriander, and turmeric.

Use: Dhuska masala is used to flavor dhuska, a deep-fried rice and lentil-based batter snack from Jharkhand, often served with chutneys. The blend adds a unique, spicy flavor to the crunchy snack.

RAJASTHANI GARAM MASALA

Region: Rajasthan.

Ingredients: A robust combination of cinnamon, cloves, cardamom, cumin, coriander, black pepper, and nutmeg. Some variations may include saffron or dried rose petals.

Use: Extensively in Rajasthani cuisine, especially in dishes like Laal Maas (spicy mutton curry), Dal Baati Churma, and various vegetable and rice dishes. It is slightly more aromatic and fragrant compared to the North Indian garam masala.



DAL BAATI CHURMA

REGIONAL BLENDS

BENGALI GARAM MASALA

Region: West Bengal.

Ingredients: Cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, cumin, and bay leaves. Some versions also include nutmeg and dried ginger.

Use: Used in many Bengali dishes such as Macher Jhol (fish curry), Shorshe Bata Maach (mustard fish curry), and even Chingri Malai Curry (prawn curry). It adds a delicate warmth and fragrance to these dishes.

TANDOORI SPICE MIX

Region: Popular across India

Ingredients: A blend of garam masala, paprika, cumin, coriander, garlic powder, ginger powder, and sometimes dried mint or saffron.

Use: This spice mix is often used to marinate meats like chicken, lamb, and fish before cooking them in a tandoor (clay oven). It's also used in making Tandoori Roti or Tandoori Naan. The blend gives a smoky, spicy, and aromatic flavor to the dish.

KOLHAPURI MASALA

Region: Kolhapur, Maharashtra.

Ingredients: A hot and fiery combination of red chilies, coriander, cumin, sesame seeds, garlic, dry coconut, tamarind, and sometimes poppy seeds or fennel.

Use: Kolhapuri masala is most commonly used in Kolhapuri misal (a spicy curry with sprouts) and Kolhapuri chicken or mutton. It's known for its spicy, tangy, and smoky flavors.

KORMA MASALA

Region: North India (especially in Mughlai cuisine).

Ingredients: A rich blend of cashews, almonds, cardamom, cloves, cinnamon, coriander, cumin, and sometimes saffron.

Use: Korma masala is used in the preparation of korma—a creamy, mildly spiced curry that can be made with vegetables, chicken, or lamb. The masala gives a delicate, aromatic flavor to the curry, enhanced by the richness of yogurt and cream.

KHADA MASALA

Region: Gujarat.

Ingredients: A whole-spice blend of cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, cumin, mustard seeds, and dried red chilies.

Use: Khada masala is often used in the tempering of Gujarati dal, vegetable dishes, or pickles. The whole spices impart a fresh, fragrant flavor to the food and are often left whole or crushed just before use.

PULI INJI MASALA

Region: Kerala.

Ingredients: Tamarind, ginger, green chilies, jaggery, mustard seeds, and curry leaves.

Use: This tangy-sweet-spicy paste is often used as a condiment or side dish in Kerala meals. It can accompany rice, sadya (traditional Kerala feast), or pulao, giving the meal a burst of flavor. It's a great balance of sweet, sour, and spicy.



PANEER KORMA

REGIONAL BLENDS

MYSORE MASALA

Region: Karnataka.

Ingredients: A combination of coriander, cumin, black pepper, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, and turmeric, with a touch of curry leaves and sometimes dried coconut.

Use: Used in making the famous Mysore Pak (a sweet), as well as in curries, gravies, and fried snacks like masala vada. It imparts a balanced spicy flavor with mild sweetness, particularly when used in curries.

SINDHI BIRYANI MASALA

Region: Sindh (both in Pakistan and parts of India).

Ingredients: A bold mix of cumin, coriander, garam masala, red chili powder, yogurt, ginger, garlic, and mint leaves.

Use: Used to flavor Sindhi Biryani, a spicy, tangy rice dish often prepared with mutton or chicken. The masala is known for its rich flavors, which balance the heat of chilies with the tanginess of yogurt.

CHEESE MASALA

Region: Maharashtra.

Ingredients: A special spice blend of coriander, cumin, garam masala, black pepper, dried mint, and sometimes garlic and ginger powder.

Use: This masala is particularly used in the preparation of paneer or cheese-based dishes like paneer tikka and paneer bhurji, adding a tangy yet flavorful twist to cheese-based recipes.

KASHMIRI VER MASALA

Region: Kashmir.

Ingredients: Kashmiri red chili powder, cumin, coriander, black pepper, cardamom, cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, dried ginger, bay leaves, fennel seeds, mace.

Use: This masala is used in Kashmiri dishes like Rogan Josh, Gushtaba, Yakhni, and Kashmiri Pulao, adding vibrant color and aromatic depth to meat and rice dishes.

DHANSAK MASALA

Region: Gujarat, Maharashtra.

Ingredients: Coriander, cumin, turmeric, cinnamon, cloves, cardamom, dried ginger, garlic, mustard seeds, tamarind or jaggery (optional).

Use: This masala is used in Dhansak, a Parsi lentil and meat curry (usually lamb or chicken), adding a unique blend of spicy, earthy, and sweet flavors.

KAALA MASALA

Region: Maharashtra.

Ingredients: A blend of roasted spices including coriander, cumin, black pepper, cloves, cinnamon, cardamom, and dried red chilies.

Use: This masala is used in Maharashtrian dishes like Kadhi, Vangi Bath, and sabzis, adding a smoky, spicy, and aromatic flavor.



REGIONAL BLENDS

KANDA LEHSUN MASALA

Region: Maharashtra

Ingredients: A blend of onions (kanda), garlic (lehsun), red chili powder, turmeric, cumin, coriander, and tamarind.

Use: This masala is used in onion-garlic-based dishes like sabzis, pithla, and thecha, giving them a sharp, tangy, and flavorful punch.

PERI PERI MASALA

Region: Widely used in India, especially for snacks and grilling.

Ingredients: Dried red chilies, garlic powder, onion powder, paprika, lemon zest, and herbs like oregano and thyme.

Use: This masala is used to flavor grilled meats, peri peri fries, and even in sauces, giving dishes a fiery, tangy, and herby flavor.

MALVANI MASALA

Region: Maharashtra (Malvan region).

Ingredients: A mix of dried red chilies, coriander, cumin, fennel seeds, cinnamon, cloves, turmeric, and coconut.

Use: This masala is used in Malvani seafood curries, veg curries, and rice dishes, adding a rich, spicy, and slightly sweet flavor.

GODA MASALA

Region: Maharashtra.

Ingredients: A blend of roasted spices like coriander, cumin, cinnamon, cloves, black pepper, sesame seeds, coconut, and jaggery.

Use: This masala is used in Maharashtrian dishes like Sambar, Vegetable Stews, and Pulaos, giving a warm, slightly sweet, and spicy flavor.

CHAI MASALA

Region: Popular across India.

Ingredients: A blend of cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, black pepper, ginger, and sometimes nutmeg and fennel.

Use: This masala is used to make masala chai, a spiced tea that adds warmth and fragrance to the beverage.

THANDAI MASALA

Region: North India (especially during festivals like Holi).

Ingredients: A blend of almonds, cardamom, fennel seeds, rose petals, black pepper, saffron, and sometimes poppy seeds.

Use: This masala is used to prepare Thandai, a cooling, spiced drink made with milk, nuts, and spices.



MALVANI PRAWN CURRY



A BRIEF GUIDE OF INDIAN SPICES



YOGESH KHATRI