



Spice Up Your Summer!

Maynard Library

Spice Club

CUMIN

SPICE INFORMATION



Cumin (*Cuminum cyminum*) is a member of the parsley family, a group of flowering, aromatic plants known as Umbelliferae or Apiaceae (that also includes celery, carrots, and fennel) native to Egypt and the Middle East. The use of its small, oblong seeds, both whole and in powdered form, goes back to ancient Greek and Roman times. It became a staple in both Mexican and South American cuisine after the arrival of Spanish and Portuguese colonists.

Cumin's whole seeds have an earthy heat and brightness to them that's almost reminiscent of dried lemon peel when applied to rich, savory ingredients like meat or yogurt. When combined with fluffy basmati rice, its nutty, floral character becomes more pronounced.

In Indian dishes, frying whole cumin seeds (referred to in Indian cuisine as the *tadka*, the tempering of spices before building a dish) allows the flavor of cumin to infuse the cooking oil and the rest of the dish as a result. Ground cumin seeds can be added throughout the cooking process to boost the aromatic character of a dish, especially marinades or stews like chili.

Noted for its versatile and subtle floral heat, ground cumin is a prominent addition to many spice blends across the Mediterranean, Asian, Middle Eastern,

and North African diaspora. It can be found alongside black pepper, coriander seeds, chilis, turmeric and other spices in chili powder, [garam masala](#), curry powder, baharat, berbere, as well as some achiote blends and adobos.

Note: Nigella seeds are sometimes referred to as black cumin seeds though the seeds are not related. The small, jet-black nigella seeds are savory like caraway and cumin, but have a uniquely herby and oniony flavor profile.

<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/what-is-cumin-learn-benefits-and-culinary-uses-of-cumin-spice>

RECIPES

Avocado-Tomatillo Dip with Cumin Pita Chips

<https://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/avocado-tomatillo-dip-with-cumin-pita-chips>

From Cooking Light

INGREDIENTS

Chips:

- 3 (6-inch) pitas, split in half horizontally
- Cooking spray
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds, crushed
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt

Dip:

- ½ pound tomatillos (about 5 large)
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped seeded jalapeño pepper
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ⅓ cup fat-free sour cream
- 2 ripe peeled avocados, seeded and coarsely chopped



DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. To prepare chips, coat rough side of each pita half with cooking spray; sprinkle pita halves evenly with cumin seeds, oregano, and 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt. Cut each pita half into 8 wedges; arrange wedges in a single layer on baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 15 minutes or until golden brown.

3. To prepare dip, discard husks and stems from tomatillos. Place tomatillos in a small saucepan; cover with water. Bring to a boil; cook 5 minutes or until tender. Cool to room temperature. Place tomatillos, onion, cilantro, jalapeño, and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a blender or food processor, and process until smooth. Add sour cream and avocado; process until smooth. Serve with chips.

Spicy Corn, Black Bean & Feta Salad

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/spicy-corn-black-bean-feta-salad>

Time 30 minutes Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

2 ears sweet corn, shucked
15.5 ounce can black beans,
drained and rinsed
1 avocado, cut into chunks
8 ounces cherry tomatoes, halved
4 scallions, roughly chopped
4 ounces feta cheese, crumbled
lime wedges, to serve (optional)

For the dressing

1 tsp ground cumin
1 tbsp chipotle Tabasco sauce (or
regular Tabasco)
juice and zest 2 limes
1 tbsp sherry vinegar
2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil



DIRECTIONS

1. Boil the corn for 10 mins in salted water, rinse in cold water, then cut the kernels off. Tip the beans into a bowl with the cooked corn, avocado, tomatoes and spring onions.
2. Mix the dressing ingredients with some seasoning, then pour over the salad. Toss together well, scatter the feta over the top and serve with lime wedges, if using.

Scallion, Cumin & Cheddar Bread

<https://www.feedingyourappetite.com/scallion-cumin-cheddar-bread/>

Adapted from Taste of Home's: Savory Cheddar Bread Recipe

Time 55 minutes Yield: 1 8 inch loaf

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon cayenne powder or red chili powder
- 1 tablespoon roasted cumin seeds, roughly crushed with a mortar and pestle
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground mustard
- 1 teaspoon fine granulated sugar
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- ¾ teaspoon salt (Use 1 teaspoon if you like your bread more savory)
- 1 ¼ cups sharp cheddar cheese shredded
- ½ cup scallion greens, chopped
- 1 egg, beaten well
- 1 cup 2% milk
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted



DIRECTIONS

1. Pre-heat the oven to 350 degrees F. Grease a 8in x 4in loaf pan and set aside.
2. In a large mixing bowl mix together the flour, baking powder, cayenne pepper, cumin seeds, garlic powder, sugar, pepper, salt and mustard powder. Do not over-mix. Stir in the shredded cheese and scallions and set aside.
3. In a separate bowl mix together the egg, milk and butter.
4. Add the wet ingredients to the dry and stir everything together until the dry ingredients are well moistened.
5. Pour the batter into the loaf pan and bake for 35-45 minutes – until a toothpick inserted into the batter comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes in the loaf pan before inverting. Serve warm or at room temperature with regular or flavored butter.

Jeera (Cumin) Rice

<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/14130/jeera-cumin-rice/>

Variation: After adding the cumin seeds add one or more of these: onion, ginger, cardamom pods, whole black peppercorn, cloves, a cinnamon stick.

Time 20 mins Servings: 2

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
½ teaspoon cumin seeds
1 cup jasmine or basmati rice
1 ¾ cups water
salt to taste



DIRECTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a medium size saucepan over a medium-high heat. Drop in the cumin seeds, and cook until they splutter. Do not allow the cumin seeds to burn or become really dark brown in color. Add the rice and fry it in the oil for about 1 minute.
2. Add the water and salt and bring to a boil. Once the water is boiling, reduce the heat to low and cover the saucepan. Cook the rice for approximately 15 minutes. If you feel the rice is getting burnt near the base of the pan as it cooks, one trick is to place the saucepan on another flat pan or griddle which is directly on the flame. Toss with a fork.

Mexican Pinto Beans

<https://www.theblackpeppercorn.com/mexican-pinto-beans>

Time: 1 hour 10 minutes Servings: 6

INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup butter
3 garlic cloves minced
1/2 onion diced
1/2 red bell pepper diced
1 tomato diced
1 can pinto beans
(18oz/540ml) drained
1/4 cup water
1 tsp cumin
1/2 tsp ground coriander
1/2 tsp chipotle powder
1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp salt
2 tbsp brown sugar
fresh cilantro for garnish



DIRECTIONS

1. Melt butter in a saucepan on medium heat. Add the garlic cloves, diced onion, red pepper and tomato. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions and peppers are tender and the tomatoes are broken down to create a sauce, about 7 minutes.
2. Add the remaining ingredients, minus the fresh cilantro. Bring to a boil and then lower the heat so it cooks at a low simmer. Cook for 45 minutes. If the water evaporates, it may be necessary to add another 1/4 cup of water.
3. Garnish with the fresh cilantro.

Grilled Vegetable and Barley Salad

<https://www.saveur.com/grilled-vegetable-and-barley-salad-recipe/>

Time: 2 hours, 30 minutes Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 1 generous cup pearl barley
- 1 large zucchini, cut lengthwise into 1/2-inch-thick slices
- 1 small eggplant, cut crosswise into 1/2-inch-thick slices
- 1 red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and halved
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
- 1/4 tsp. ground coriander
- 1 small clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 oz. feta cheese, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1/2 cup loosely packed arugula
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped cilantro
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped Italian parsley
- 2 Tbsp pistachios
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- 1/2 long red chile, stemmed, seeded, and finely chopped



DIRECTIONS

1. In a large bowl, soak the barley in water for 1 hour and then drain. Meanwhile, light a grill. Brush the zucchini, eggplant, and peppers with 1/4 cup of the olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill the vegetables, turning occasionally, until tender and charred, 10 minutes. Transfer to a board and cut into 1/2-inch pieces.
2. Bring a medium pot of salted water to a boil and add the barley. Turn the heat down to

medium and cook until the grains are tender, about 45 minutes. Drain the barley and set aside to cool to room temperature.

3. In a large bowl, whisk the remaining olive oil with the lemon juice, cumin, coriander, and garlic, and then stir in the reserved barley; season with salt and pepper, and transfer to a platter. Arrange the grilled vegetables, the feta, arugula, cilantro, parsley, pistachios, scallions, and chile over the barley, and serve at room temperature.

Ethiopian Cabbage (Atakilt Wat)

<https://urbanfarmie.com/ethiopian-cabbage/>

Time: 30 mins Servings: 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

For infused oil

- 2 tablespoon olive oil, can substitute avocado oil
- 1 teaspoon garlic paste or minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon ginger paste or grated ginger
- 2 teaspoon turmeric powder, divided
- 1 teaspoon cumin powder

For cabbage

- ½ medium red onion
- 3 medium carrots, diced
- 1 medium potato, diced
- 1 cup water or vegetable broth
- ½ medium head cabbage, chopped finely
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper, freshly ground



DIRECTIONS

1. In a cast iron skillet or Dutch oven, heat olive oil on medium flame.
2. After about 30 seconds, add garlic, ginger, 1 teaspoon of turmeric, and cumin powder.
3. Saute for 30 seconds to infuse the oil. When done, it should look dark throughout.
4. Add the chopped onion and saute for about 1 minute until browned.
5. Add carrots, potatoes, water and turmeric and mix well to infuse with spices
6. Cover and cook for 10 minutes on medium flame. Check if the carrots and potatoes are cooked by piercing them with a fork. If not, cook for a few more minutes until they're soft.
7. Stir in the cabbage, add salt and pepper (to taste) and cook covered about 5 minutes.
8. Serve hot with rice or flatbread.

Sweet Potato Tacos

<https://smittenkitchen.com/2018/03/sweet-potato-tacos/>

Makes 12 small tacos, 4 servings Time: 60 minutes



INGREDIENTS

2 pounds (about 4 medium) sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2 to 3/4" cubes
Olive oil
1 heaped teaspoon kosher salt
1 heaped teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
1 to 3 teaspoons chili powder, to taste
Chipotle powder, cayenne, or shakes of hot sauce, to taste
1/2 teaspoon sweet smoked paprika
12 small (6-inch) or 6 medium (8 to 9-inch) flour tortillas
1 15-ounce can refried black beans
1 lime, in wedges
Sliced avocado, pickled red onions, pickled jalapenos, chopped fresh cilantro, hot sauce, Lazy Taco Slaw, or your choice(s) thereof, to finish

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 400 degrees F. Toss sweet potatoes with 2 tablespoons of olive oil, then add salt, cumin, garlic powder, onion powder, chili powder, chipotle powder, and paprika and toss to evenly coat. If you'd like to roast the vegetables on parchment paper, line a large baking sheet with it and spread the potatoes in a single layer. If you'd like to roast them directly on your baking sheet (I find they get crispier this way), first coat it with 1 more tablespoon of olive oil, then spread potatoes in an even layer.

2. Roast potatoes for 40 to 45 minutes, tossing once or twice for even color.
3. To assemble, if you have a gas stove, I love running flour tortillas over an open flame to give them a little char and complexity. Otherwise, you can wrap the stack of them in foil and let them warm in the oven while the potatoes roast for 5 minutes.
4. Schmear some refried black beans on each tortilla. Add a big spoonful or two of roasted sweet potatoes. Squeeze a little lime juice over the potatoes and black beans and finish with toppings of your choice, shown here with a shake of hot sauce, sliced avocado, pickled red onions, and cilantro. Repeat with the rest of the ingredients.

Spice-Crusted Salmon with Citrus Sauce

<https://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/spice-crusted-salmon-with-citrus-sauce>

*NOTE: As written this recipe makes **12 servings**, but should be easy to cut down to 3 or 4 servings.*

INGREDIENTS

Sauce:

- 6 ounces plain fat-free yogurt
- ½ cup fat-free sour cream
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro
- ½ teaspoon grated orange rind
- 3 tablespoons fresh orange juice
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- ½ teaspoon grated lemon rind
- ½ teaspoon grated lime rind
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Salmon:

- 2 tablespoons fennel seeds
- 1 tablespoon coriander seeds
- 1 tablespoon cumin seeds
- ¼ cup panko (Japanese breadcrumbs)
- 2 ½ teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 12 (6-ounce) salmon fillets (about 1 inch thick), skinned
- Cooking spray
- Fresh cilantro sprigs (optional)



DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400°
2. To prepare sauce, spoon yogurt onto several layers of heavy-duty paper towels; spread to 1/2-inch thickness. Cover with additional paper towels; let stand 5 minutes. Scrape into a bowl using a rubber spatula. Add sour cream and next 8 ingredients (through salt). Cover and chill.

3. To prepare salmon, place fennel, coriander, and cumin in a spice or coffee grinder; process until finely ground. Combine spice mixture, breadcrumbs, 2 1/2 teaspoons salt, and black pepper in a shallow dish. Dredge skinned side of salmon in spice mixture. Heat a large nonstick skillet coated with cooking spray over medium-high heat. Add half of salmon, crust side down; cook 3 minutes or until golden brown. Transfer salmon, crust side up, to a baking sheet lined with aluminum foil. Repeat procedure with remaining salmon. Bake at 400° for 8 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Serve with sauce. Garnish with cilantro sprigs, if desired.

Brazilian Chicken with Coconut Milk

<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/58647/brazilian-chicken-with-coconut-milk/>

Time 45 mins Servings 4

INGREDIENTS

- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- 2 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ onion, chopped
- ½ tablespoon minced fresh ginger
- 1 jalapeno peppers, seeded and chopped
- 1 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 ½ tomatoes, seeded and chopped
- ½ (14 ounce) can light coconut milk
- ½ bunch chopped fresh parsley



DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, mix the cumin, cayenne pepper, turmeric, and coriander. Place the chicken in the bowl, season with salt and pepper, and rub all over with the spice mix.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Place the chicken in the skillet. Cook 10 to 15 minutes on each side, until no longer pink and juices run clear. Remove from heat and set aside.
3. Heat the remaining olive oil in the skillet. Cook and stir the onion, ginger, jalapeno peppers, and garlic for 5 minutes, or until tender. Mix in the tomatoes and continue cooking 5 to 8 minutes. Stir in the coconut milk. Serve over the chicken. Garnish with the parsley.

Seared Pork Tenderloin with Cocoa-Chili Mexican Spice Rub

<https://www.nattyspantry.com/seared-pork-tenderloin-with-cocoa-chili-mexican-spice-rub.html>

NOTE: This recipe was apparently written by a non-native English speaker and I've tried to fix it, but beware. The cooking time seems very short, so please check the internal temperature is 160 degrees.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound pork tenderloin
- 1 ½ teaspoons chipotle chili powder
- 1 ½ teaspoons ancho powder
- 1 ½ teaspoons coriander powder
- 1 tablespoon cocoa powder
- 1 tablespoon cumin powder
- 1 tablespoon paprika powder
- 1½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven at 400 degrees.
2. In the large mixing bowl, mix all the spices and salt until combined. Rub a great amount (?) on the pork tenderloin. Cover the bowl and let sit in the fridge in about 20 minutes or up to 2 hours.
3. Heat a large skillet pan over medium high heat, not until smoking. Sear pork tenderloin each side until golden brown (about 2 minutes each side). Transfer skillet to the oven and let cook, about 10 minutes or until cooked through (160 degrees).
4. Transfer pork tenderloin onto a cutting board. Rest at least 10 minutes before cutting.

Cumin Shortbread Cookies

<https://www.mycookingjourney.com/jeera-cookies-roasted-cumin-shortbread-cookies/>

Time 30 minutes Makes 18 Cookies

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup + ~2 Tbsp all-purpose flour
- ½ cup unsalted butter, softened
- ⅓ cup powdered sugar
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp baking powder
- 1 ½ teaspoon cumin seeds, roasted and slightly crushed



DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a small frying pan, roast the cumin seeds over low until lightly brown and aromatic, about 2 minutes. Let cool down a bit, then crush them lightly and set aside.
3. In a bowl, whisk the butter and the powdered sugar until creamy.
4. In another bowl, sift the flour along with the baking powder and the salt.
5. Add one cup flour in batches and mix it with a spatula to form a soft dough. Gradually add a teaspoon of flour at a time to bring the dough to the right consistency.
6. Add the roasted and crushed cumin seeds to the flour mixture.
7. Chill in the refrigerator for about 10 minutes (optional).
8. Roll the dough out to about 1/8th inch thick. Make sure to liberally dust your work surface and the rolling pin with flour. Using a cookie cutter, shape out the cookies and place them on the prepared baking sheet.
9. Bake the cookies for about 15 to 17 minutes or until they are slightly golden at the edges. Remove the cookies from the tray and place them on the cooling rack to completely cool.
10. Store the cookies in an airtight container.

Homemade Baharat Spice Blend

<https://www.daringgourmet.com/baharat-middle-eastern-spice-blend/>

INGREDIENTS

- 1 T cumin seeds
- 1 T black peppercorns
- 2 tsp coriander seeds
- 1 tsp whole cloves
- 1/2 tsp cardamom seeds
- 1 1/2 T paprika
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat a small skillet over medium-high heat and dry roast the whole spices/seeds (set aside the paprika, cinnamon and nutmeg) until they become very fragrant, about 3-5 minutes, tossing regularly to prevent scorching. Transfer them to a bowl and allow them to cool completely before grinding them in a spice or coffee grinder along with the paprika, cinnamon and nutmeg. Keep stored in an airtight glass jar.

Recipes with Baharat

<https://www.daringgourmet.com/koshari-national-dish-of-egypt/>

<https://www.daringgourmet.com/chicken-machboos-bahraini-chicken-rice/>

ADDITIONAL RECIPES

Cretan Country Bread

<https://www.greekboston.com/food/country-bread-recipe/>

Add these ingredients to make a version from Crete

1 T cumin seeds

1 egg plus 1 tablespoon water, beaten

Add cumin just before adding the flour

When ready to bake the bread, preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit. Brush the loaves with the egg wash and place in the center of the oven. Bake until cooked—30-40 minutes.

Jeera Chicken Recipe - Kenyan Style Cumin Chicken

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4c1_UZU9bSM (contains recipe)

Moroccan Meatballs - Kefta Tagine

<https://leitesculinaria.com/79209/recipes-moroccan-meatballs.html>

Adapted from Paula Wolfert

Very long ingredient list!

Pork, Poblano and Pumpkin Stew

<https://www.thekitchn.com/recipe-pork-poblano-and-pumpkin-stew-225032>

Egyptian Ful Mudammas (Fava Beans)

<https://www.tasteofbeirut.com/egyptian-ful-mudammas/>

Wilted Cabbage with Toasted Cumin

<https://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/wilted-cabbage-with-toasted-cumin>

Chickpea Salad with Cumin Vinaigrette

<https://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/chickpea-salad-with-cumin-vinaigrette>

Moroccan Vegetable Stew

<https://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/moroccan-vegetable-stew>

Indian Butter Chicken

<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-make-perfect-indian-butter-chicken-recipe-and-techniques>

SHARING RESULTS

Post a picture of your dish (huge success or epic fail!) on the library's social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) [@maynardpubliclibrary](#) using [#maynardspiceclub](#).

We'll have a potluck buffet and discussion on Thursday, June 30@ 7 pm (in person!) To see other food resources and register to receive email updates about kits and meetings, visit <https://www.maynardpubliclibrary.org/spice>. If you've registered for previous discussions, you don't need to register again.