



Spice Up Your Winter!

Maynard Library

Spice Club

GINGER

SPICE INFORMATION

Ginger is the dried knobby shaped rhizome of the plant *Zingiber officinale* indigenous to Southern China. The Latin name, *zingiber*, derives from interpretations of the name in Indic languages where ginger was described as “shaped like a deer’s antler (horn)”.



Ginger is a 2-4 feet tall slender perennial with grass-like leaves and greenish-yellow flowers. Once the leaves of the plant die, the thick rhizomes, about 6 inches long, are dug up. Ginger is often referred to as a root but this is technically incorrect. Rhizomes are underground stems that grow horizontally underground (and have smaller roots growing from them).

Fresh ginger root is typically light brown on the outside and pale yellow on the inside. Dried ground ginger has a fine texture and is light tan in hue. Crystallized ginger is darker yellow to amber in hue. The ginger rhizome contains 1-3% essential oils and the compound "gingerol" is responsible for its pungent/hot sensation. Dried ginger is generally less spicy than fresh ginger.

Queen Elizabeth I of England is credited with the invention of the gingerbread man, which became a popular Christmas treat. Ginger was so valued by the Spanish that they established ginger plantations in Jamaica in the 1600's. "Canada Dry Ginger Ale" was patented in 1907 by Canadian pharmacist John J. McLaughlin, and became a popular beverage in America during prohibition.

Ginger is one of the most used spices in the world and comes in numerous forms, including fresh, dried, pickled, preserved, crystallized, candied, and powdered/ground. Ginger, along with green onion and garlic, is considered part of the "holy trinity" of Chinese cooking. In Thailand, it is an essential ingredient in many curry dishes. In India, ginger is an essential flavor in the vast majority of dishes as well as the popular hot beverage masala chai (milky black tea with aromatic spices). In Japan, pickled ginger (gari) is served with sushi as a palette cleanser. Ginger tea, prepared by soaking slices of ginger in hot water, with or without tea leaves, is popular throughout Asia. In Western cuisine, ginger is mostly used in sweet applications such as ginger ale, gingerbread, ginger snaps, parkin (a traditional English cake), and speculaas (Dutch spiced shortbread cookies).

Ground ginger (also known as powdered ginger) is readily available in most supermarkets and is used for baking and in curry mixes. Ground ginger is a popular ingredient in apple and pumpkin pies. Fresh ginger can be purchased in the produce section of most supermarkets. Use a vegetable peeler to peel away the outer skin and then grate, chop, or julienne. Preserved, or candied, ginger can be added to desserts as an ingredient or garnish. Ground ginger tends to be more concentrated in flavor but lacks the pungent heat of fresh ginger.

From: <https://www.mccormickscienceinstitute.com/resources/culinary-spices/herbs-spices/ginger>

RECIPES

Lemon Ginger Spritzers with Fresh Mint

<https://www.makingthymeformehealth.com/lemon-ginger-spritzers-with-fresh-mint/>

Servings: 2 Total time: 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS

GINGER SYRUP

- 1 tablespoon (about 1-inch) minced fresh ginger
- 2 tablespoons agave nectar (or honey)
- 1/2 cup water

FOR THE SPRITZERS

- 1 pint sparkling water
- 4 tablespoons ginger syrup
- juice of 1 large lemon
- 1 handful fresh mint
- crushed ice



PREPARATION

Make the ginger syrup: In a small saucepan, combine the fresh ginger, agave, and water. Bring to a boil then reduce to a simmer and cook for 35 minutes. Careful not to cook at too high of a temperature or the ginger will burn. Set aside to cool.

Make the spritzers: Fill two 16-ounce glasses with ice. Add 2 tablespoons of ginger syrup in each and juice of 1/2 lemon in each. Distribute fresh mint evenly and fill each glass with sparkling water. Serve immediately and enjoy!

Cinnamon Ginger Candied Walnuts

<https://www.sumptuouspoonfuls.com/cinnamon-ginger-candied-walnuts/>

Servings: 8 Total Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

These sweet, salty nuts are great on salads and desserts, or just for snacking.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 egg white
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 cups raw walnuts
- 2 Tablespoons white sugar
- 1/4 cup light brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger

PREPARATION

1. Preheat the oven to 250 degrees F.
2. Spray a large jelly roll pan (or other rimmed baking pan) with cooking spray or line it with a silicone baking mat.
3. In a medium mixing bowl, beat the egg white and vanilla with a mixer until they are frothy, but not stiff yet. Pour in the nuts, and stir until well coated.
4. In a separate smaller bowl, mix the sugars, salt, and spices until well mixed. Stir the spiced sugar into the egg/nut mixture and toss to coat all the nuts evenly.
5. Spread the nuts out onto a 10 x 15 inch jelly roll pan (or other large rimmed baking pan) and bake in a preheated oven for 1 hour and 15 minutes, stirring every 15 minutes.
6. Remove from oven and set aside to cool. Store in an airtight container or tin.

Sweet-And-Spicy Ginger Green Beans

Milk Street

<https://www.177milkstreet.com/recipes/sweet-and-spicy-ginger-green-beans>

Servings: 4

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons packed light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon fish sauce (substitute soy sauce)
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
- 1 pound green beans, stemmed and halved on the bias crosswise
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 tablespoon finely grated fresh ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 2 tablespoons unseasoned rice vinegar
- Ground white pepper



PREPARATION

1. In a small bowl, stir together the sugar, fish sauce and soy sauce. Set aside.
2. In a large Dutch oven or 12-inch skillet over medium-high, heat 2 tablespoons of the oil until beginning to smoke. Add the beans and cook, without stirring, until beginning to color, about 3 minutes.
3. Add the water and immediately cover the pan. Cook until the beans are bright green and barely tender, about 2 minutes.
4. Clear a space in the center of the pan, then add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil to the clearing. Stir in the ginger and pepper flakes and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds.
5. Pour the sugar-fish sauce mixture into the skillet and cook, stirring occasionally, until the liquid has thickened and coats the beans, about 1 minute.
6. Off of the heat, stir in the vinegar. Taste and season with pepper.

Ginger Scallion Ramen Noodles

Bon Appetit

<https://www.bonappetit.com/recipe/ginger-scallion-ramen-noodles>

Servings: 4

The noodles are just a vessel for this savory, gingery, simple weeknight sauce. Double the batch, and you'll always have a way to brighten up simple grilled or pan-roasted chops, roasted veggies, or grain bowls.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 5-inch piece ginger, peeled, finely chopped (about ⅓ cup)
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 large bunch of scallions, very thinly sliced (about 2 cups), divided
- ½ cup grapeseed or other neutral oil
- 2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon unseasoned rice vinegar
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- Kosher salt
- 4 5-ounce packages wavy ramen noodles, preferably fresh
- Toasted sesame seeds and chili oil (for serving)

PREPARATION

1. Stir ginger, garlic, and two-thirds of scallions in a large bowl.
2. Heat grapeseed oil in a small saucepan over high until oil is shimmery and hot but not smoking, about 2 minutes. Pour hot oil over scallion mixture. The scallions will sizzle, turn bright green, and wilt almost immediately. Let sit 5 minutes before stirring in remaining scallions. Stir in soy sauce, vinegar, pepper, sesame oil, and sugar; season with salt. Let sit to let flavors meld, 15 minutes. Taste and adjust seasonings.
3. Meanwhile, cook noodles according to package directions. Drain and toss with as much or as little scallion sauce as you'd like in bowl.
4. Divide noodles among bowls. Top with sesame seeds and serve with chili oil alongside.



Roasted Squash and Tofu with Ginger and Garlic

<https://smittenkitchen.com/2020/01/roasted-squash-and-tofu-with-ginger/>

Smitten Kitchen, from Diana Henry's *From the Oven to the Table*

Servings: 2 to 4 Time: 45 Minutes

Vegan if using brown sugar; Gluten-free depending on soy sauce

INGREDIENTS

- 14-ounce package extra-firm tofu
- 2 pounds winter squash (such as kabocha or acorn)
- 3 tablespoons honey (or brown sugar for vegan)
- 1/3 cup soy sauce (check label for gluten-free)
- 1/2 to 2 teaspoons crushed red pepper flakes

1-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and finely grated
7 tablespoons vegetable or peanut oil, divided
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
6 garlic cloves, very thinly sliced
1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds
2 scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced on the diagonal
Juice of half a lime

PREPARATION

1. Drain your tofu and remove as much water as you can. Place the block of tofu on a few layers of paper towel with more towels over it and weight the block down with a plate. Set aside for 5 minutes.
2. Heat oven to 400°F. Cover 1 to 2 baking sheets with parchment paper for easy cleanup.
3. Cut tofu into 1/2-inch slices, and then in half again. Halve and seed the squash with a metal soup spoon. Cut squash into 1/2 to 3/4-inch thick wedges. If using two pans, arrange the squash on one and the tofu on another. If using one, puzzle them together.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together the honey or sugar, soy sauce, pepper flakes, ginger, and 4 tablespoons of the oil. If using two pans, pour 2/3 of the marinade over the squash and 1/3 over the tofu, and turn each slice of squash over gently to coat on both sides. If using only one, use all the marinade, coating the squash and tofu together. In all cases, season the squash and tofu with salt and pepper.
5. Roast for 15 minutes, then using a thin metal spatula, turn the squash and tofu chunks over. In a small bowl, combine the remaining 3 tablespoons oil with the garlic and spoon this all over the squash and tofu. Return pan(s) to the oven and roast until the tofu is dark and the squash is completely tender, 10 to 15 more minutes.
6. Scatter with sesame seeds and scallions, and squeeze lime juice over.

NOTE: Another way to remove moisture from the tofu. Freeze your tofu, still in the package or already drained. Once defrosted, it easily shakes off all of its water and even has a lovely texture. Blot the tofu dry.

Braised Ginger Meatballs in Coconut Broth

Smitten Kitchen, adapted from Food & Wine

<https://smittenkitchen.com/2019/05/braised-ginger-meatballs-in-coconut-broth/>

Servings: 6 Time: 45 minutes

INGREDIENTS

MEATBALLS

- 2 pounds ground pork or chicken
- 2 large eggs
- 3 tablespoons panko breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped peeled fresh ginger
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- Lemon grass paste, optional
- 1 tablespoon fish sauce
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt

BROTH

- One 13 1/2-ounce can unsweetened coconut milk
- 2 cups chicken stock or low-sodium broth
- 1/4 cup thinly sliced peeled fresh ginger
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 2 fresh red chiles, thinly sliced, plus extra for serving (to taste)
- Finely grated zest and juice of 1/2 lime
- 1 tablespoon fish sauce
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric, optional
- 1/2 teaspoon granulated sugar
- Kosher salt
- A few handfuls of baby spinach



FOR SERVING

- Roughly chopped fresh mint and cilantro leaves
- Additional lime wedges
- Steamed jasmine rice (about 1/4 cup cooked per serving)

PREPARATION

1. Preheat your oven to 425°.
2. Combine all of the ingredients in a large bowl with a fork or potato masher. Form the mixture into 1 1/2-inch meatballs and arrange them on a large rimmed baking sheet about 1-inch apart. Bake until the meatballs are golden brown and just cooked through, about 12 to 14 minutes.
3. In a large saucepan, combine the coconut milk, stock, ginger, garlic, chiles (to taste), lime zest and juice, fish sauce, turmeric, and sugar. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat so the broth is simmering. Simmer 10 minutes, until the flavors are infused into the broth. Remove ginger and chiles with a skimmer, if desired. Season to taste, if needed, with salt.

4. Add the meatballs to the broth, return to a simmer, cover, and simmer until cooked through and tender, about 10 to 15 more minutes. Add spinach and cook just to wilt. Season the broth with more sugar, salt and lime juice if necessary. Serve with herbs, additional chiles, lime wedges, and rice.

Do Ahead: The uncooked meatballs can be refrigerated on a baking sheet for up to one day. The broth can also be prepared in advanced; it will keep for three days.

Crystallized Ginger Shortbread

<https://themom100.com/recipe/crystallized-ginger-shortbread/>

Servings: 18 Total Time: 2 hours, including 1 hour chilling and cooling

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour plus more for dusting the counter
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup finely chopped crystallized ginger



PREPARATION

1. In a large bowl, with an electric mixer, beat together the butter and sugar. Beat in the salt, then the flour, and then the vanilla. Finally beat in the crystallized ginger. The dough will appear crumbly but will hold together when you pinch it.
2. Press the dough into an 8-inch square baking pan so that the top is flat and the dough is even. Score the top with a sharp knife into 36 small squares. Place the pan in the freezer for 20 minutes, or the fridge for at least an hour, until it firms up slightly.
3. Preheat the oven to 300°F.
4. Bake for about 40 minutes, until just very slightly colored; the edges will be just a bit browned. Remove the cookies to a wire rack and cool for 20 to 30 minutes. Carefully flip the shortbread, turn it right side up, and cool completely on the rack out of the pan.
5. Place the shortbread on a cutting board and using a large sharp knife cut into squares following the lines you scored in the dough before baking.

Glazed Lemon-Ginger Scones

Martha Stewart, from Joanne Chang

<https://www.marthastewart.com/1535920/glazed-lemon-ginger-scones>

Joanne Chang, the owner of Boston's celebrated Flour Bakery, has baked more scones than you can imagine. This version is one of her bestsellers--it's packed with flavor, thanks to the trifecta of ginger (fresh, dried, and crystallized), as well as the lemon in the batter and glaze.

INGREDIENTS

SCONES

- 2 3/4 cups unbleached all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 cup finely chopped crystallized ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- Grated zest of 2 lemons
- 1 3/4 sticks (14 tablespoons) cold unsalted butter, cut into 8 to 10 pieces
- 1/2 cup cold buttermilk
- 1/2 cup cold heavy cream
- 1 large egg, well chilled
- 2 tablespoons grated fresh ginger



LEMON GLAZE

- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 2 to 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees with rack in center.
2. In a large bowl, beat together flour, granulated sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt, crystallized ginger, ground ginger, and lemon zest. Add butter; cut in with a pastry cutter until butter is somewhat broken down with some visible pieces remaining, about 30 seconds.
3. In a liquid-measuring cup, whisk together buttermilk, cream, egg, and grated ginger. With mixer on low, add buttermilk mixture and beat until dough just comes together, 20 to 30 seconds (there will still be some flour mixture at bottom of bowl).
4. Using your hands, gather and lift dough, turning it over in the bowl, until remaining flour mixture has been incorporated into dough.

5. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and gently roll out 1 inch thick. Using a 2 1/2-inch round cutter, cut out 10 rounds, rerolling scraps as necessary. Transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet, spacing about 2 inches apart.
6. Bake until light golden brown, 30 to 35 minutes. Transfer sheet to a wire rack; let cool 10 minutes.
7. Make the lemon glaze. In a small bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and enough lemon juice to make a smooth, thick, pourable glaze. Brush glaze over warm scones and serve.

Brown Sugar Maple Ginger Cookies

Half Baked Harvest

<https://www.halfbakedharvest.com/brown-sugar-maple-ginger-cookies/>

Servings: 22 cookies Total Time: 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 sticks (3/4 cup) salted butter, at room temperature, plus more for greasing
- 3/4 cup dark brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 large egg
- 1/3 cup blackstrap molasses
- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 3/4 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Maple Glaze

- 4 tablespoons salted butter
- 1/3 cup maple syrup
- 1/2-3/4 cup powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Position an oven rack in the upper 1/3 of the oven. Preheat the oven to 375° F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a mixing bowl, beat together the butter, brown sugar, and vanilla until light and fluffy, about 3-5 minutes. Add the egg and molasses and mix until evenly combined. Add the flour, baking soda, ginger, cinnamon, and salt, beating until combined. Fold in the chocolate chips.

3. Rub your hands with butter and roll the dough into tablespoon-size balls (if the dough is too sticky, chill for 20 minutes). Place on the prepared baking sheet, spacing the cookies 2 inches apart. Bake for 9-12 minutes or until the cookies are just starting to set around the edges, the centers should be a little doughy. Let cool on the pan.
4. Meanwhile, make the glaze. Melt together the butter and maple syrup in a small pot over medium heat. Remove from the heat and whisk in the powdered sugar, vanilla, and a pinch of salt. Drizzle or dip the glaze over each cookie. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

Banana Bread with Chocolate and Crystallized Ginger

<https://themom100.com/recipe/banana-bread-with-chocolate-and-crystallized-ginger/>

Servings: 8 Total Time: 1 hour 30 minutes, including 30 minutes cooling

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
- ½ cup chopped crystallized ginger
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter at room temperature
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 2 large very ripe bananas peeled and mashed (about 1 cup mush)
- ½ cup sour cream or plain Greek yogurt



PREPARATION

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease or spray a 9 x 5 inch loaf pan.
2. In a small bowl, mix together the flour, salt, and baking soda. Mix in the chocolate and the ginger.
3. In a large bowl with an electric mixer, beat the butter and sugar until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Beat in the eggs one at a time, then add the vanilla. Blend in the mashed bananas and sour cream.
4. Switch to a wooden spoon and add the flour mixture in batches to the batter, mixing just until each addition is incorporated. At the end the batter should be barely blended (it will be thick). Pour the mixture into the loaf pan. Bake until a toothpick or wooden skewer inserted in the middle comes out clean, about 45 minutes. Cool in the pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes, then turn the loaf out of the pan and finishing cooling the bread upright on the wire rack.

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 Zoom discussion on Thursday, January 27 @ 7 pm. Register to receive the Zoom link and see other food resources at <https://www.maynardpubliclibrary.org/spice>.

The library's Cookbook Club this month is also cooking with ginger. All are welcome to join the discussion on Monday, January 24 at 12 noon. Contact Sally at sthurston@minlib.net to be added to the cookbook club mailing list.