Spice it Up

15 seasoning blends so good you won’t miss the salt!

Spices are usually defined as the roots, bark or seeds of various plants. Herbs are usually defined as the leaves. Salt is neither an herb nor a spice!

Most herbs and spices lose flavor and color with age. Each year, test your herbs and spices by sprinkling a small amount into your hand and crushing them; if a distinct aroma is not immediately obvious, your herbs are past their prime. Sealed glass jars are best to lock in flavor and color.

Another way to preserve freshness is to buy whole spices (such as cumin seeds and black peppercorns) and grind them as needed in a coffee grinder (about $20 retail). This grinder should then be used for spices only and not for other uses.

All these recipes contain negligible amounts of sodium and fat, while many spice blends available in grocery stores are very high in sodium.

**LOW SODIUM SEASONED SALT**  Makes ¼ cup

- 2 tbsp salt
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tbsp onion powder
- ½ tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp garlic powder

**MEDITERRANEAN BLEND**  Makes 4 tsp

- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp cayenne
- ½ tsp onion powder
- ½ tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp oregano
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp thyme
- 1 tsp coriander

**LATINO BLEND**  Makes 1¼ tbsp

- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp cayenne
- ½ tsp onion powder
- ½ tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp cilantro
- 1 tsp coriander

**THAI BLEND**  Makes about 1 tbsp

- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp cayenne
- ½ tsp onion powder
- ½ tsp ginger
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp coriander

**SOUTHERN BLEND**  Makes 1/3 cup

- ¼ cup paprika
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp oregano
- ½ tsp cayenne

Use 1½ to 2 tsp to coat 1 pound of tofu, tempeh or lean animal protein.

**SALT SHAKER BLEND #1**  Makes 2½ tbsp

- 1 tbsp onion powder
- 1½ tsp basil
- 1½ tsp dry mustard
- ½ tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp ground celery seed
- ½ tsp paprika

Each blend contains 5 mg sodium or less per teaspoon, except as noted.
SALT SHAKER BLEND #2  Makes 3 tbsp
- 2 tsp thyme
- 2 tsp basil
- 2 tsp savory
- 1 tsp marjoram
- 1 tsp sage

CURRY BLEND  Makes ½ cup
- 2 tbsp cumin
- 2 tbsp turmeric
- 4 tsp coriander
- 4 tsp dry mustard
- 1 tsp each: allspice, cayenne, cinnamon, ginger

Use 1:1 in place of store-bought

HERB BLEND  Makes 3 tbsp
- 1 tbsp thyme
- 2 tsp rosemary
- 1 tsp sage
- 1 tbsp marjoram

TRADITIONAL SEAFOOD BLEND  Makes ½ cup
- 2 tbsp allspice
- 1 tbsp ginger
- 2 tsp salt
- 4 tsp celery seed, ground

185 mg sodium per tsp

COOKING BLEND  Makes 2½ tbsp
- 2 tsp thyme
- 1 tsp rosemary
- 1 tsp oregano
- 2 tsp dried minced onion

Use 1 tsp for each pound of lean animal protein. Add ½ tsp for each 2 quarts of soup.

SPICE RUB BLEND  Makes ½ cup
- 2 tbsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp garlic
- 2 tbsp onion powder

255 mg sodium per tsp

ALL-PURPOSE BLEND  Makes 3 tbsp
- 1 tsp celery seed
- 1 tbsp basil
- 1 tbsp marjoram

Use 1 tsp per pound of protein food. Use ½ tsp for 2 cups of vegetables.

TANDOORI BLEND  Makes ¼ cup
- 1 tbsp paprika
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp cardamom

153 mg sodium per tsp

SALAD BLEND  Makes 3½ tbsp
- 1 tbsp marjoram
- 1 tsp tarragon
- 2 tsp basil

Sprinkle over tossed salads or add 2 tsp for each cup of homemade salad dressing.

Adapted with permission, Preventive Nutrition Services
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