

Paper: 3026 Unit 5

Listing of important spices, their family and part used

A spice is a seed, fruit, root, bark, or other plant substance primarily used for flavouring, colouring or preserving food. Spices are distinguished from herbs, which are the leaves, flowers, or stems from plants used for flavouring or as a garnish. Sometimes, spices may be ground into a powder for convenience. Spices are generally used as important food adjuncts help to avoid monotony, disguise unpleasant odor, aid digestion, increase rate of perspiration, resulting in lowering body temperature, carminative and antiseptic, antioxidants, anti-inflammatory, perfumes, soaps, incenses, dyes, etc

Right from the kitchen and medicinal uses in homes, spices have an important role to play in different places. As India is blessed with a varied climate, each of its state produces some spice or the other. Therefore, spices are used so extensively for cooking in India. Not only in India but also in some other countries spices are considered to be of great use.

From ancient times, spices have played a major role in the lifestyle of people from certain parts of the world. They have served numerous roles through history, including as colouring agents, flavouring agents, preservatives, food additives and medicine. The active phytochemicals derived from these spices have provided the molecular basis for these actions.

India produces a wide variety of spices including cardamoms, chillies, black pepper, mustard, coriander etc. Indian cuisine is also known for its rich taste which it derives from numerous spices. The demand of Indian spices is high in the global market due to their rich aroma, texture, and taste. India has the largest domestic market for spices in the world. The major importers of Indian spices are the US, Germany, China, the UAE and Malaysia. The primary spices imported from India are pepper, chili, turmeric, coriander, cumin, and fennel.

Apart from adding colour, flavour and taste, consumption of spices provide infinite health benefits. One can be more creative in use of spices if he/she knows its uses better. Some may be also a substitute for costly beauty products and even medicines.

Commerce of spice

The spice trade developed throughout South Asia and Middle East by at least 2000 BCE with cinnamon and black pepper, and in East Asia with herbs and pepper. The Egyptians used herbs for mummification and their demand for exotic spices and herbs helped stimulate world trade. The word *spice* comes from the Old French word *espice*, which became *epice*, and which came from the Latin root *spec*, the noun referring to “appearance, sort, kind”: *species* has the same root.

In world trade of spices, India is at number three with 8.8% of the share. The major spices exported by India are Chillies (40%), Turmeric (10%), Cumin (10%), Coriander (9.5%), Fenugreek (4.2%), Peppers (4%) and others (19%). Though these spices provide innumerable benefits they should be used sparingly. The excessive use of spices in food can cause harm to the health. One should make specific use of these spices. This will help to make optimal

use of the resources provided by nature. A list of the important Indian Spices, their uses and benefits are summarised below -

List of the important Indian Spices, their uses and benefits

Spice (Common name)	Botanical Name	Family	Part Used	Uses and benefits
Cardamom (Elaichi)	<i>Elettaria cardamomum</i> Maton <i>Amomum subulatum</i> Roxb.	Zingiberaceae	Fruit, Seed	It is used in most of the Indian and other sweet dishes to give a good flavour and smell. It is also used widely in pharmaceutical sector. Helps to control bad breath and digestive disorder. A whole cardamom chewed is good for coping with diabetes.
	 			
Chilli (Lal Mirch)	<i>Capsicum annum</i> L.	Solanaceae	Fruit	It is a main ingredient used for adding hot flavor to the food. The antioxidants present in chilli help to cope with cholesterol. It also helps burning calories.
				
Cinnamon (Dalchini)	<i>Cinnamomum zeylanicum</i> Breyn	Lauraceae	Bark	It is used for mainly for seasoning food and preparing masalas. It has medicinal uses too. It supports natural production of insulin and reduces blood cholesterol.
				
Tejpat	<i>Cinnamomum tamala</i> (Buch Ham) Nees & Eberum	Lauraceae	Bark & Leaf	Fresh or dried bay leaves are used in cooking for their distinctive flavor and fragrance. The leaves are often used to flavor soups, sauces, stews, meat dishes and pickling recipes. The fresh leaves are very mild and do not develop their full flavor until several weeks after picking and drying. Tejpat in food helps reduce sugar levels in the body and provide protection against type-2 diabetes. Tejpat is rich in phytonutrients, which is effective in treating cardiovascular diseases.
				

Clove (Laung)	<i>Syzygium aromaticum</i> (L) Merr.& Perry 	Myrtaceae	Unopened Flower bud	It is used as a cooking ingredient mainly for seasoning or preparing Masalas. Clove oil is beneficial for coping with tooth ache and sore gums. It is also beneficial remedy for chest pains, fever, digestive problems, cough and cold.
Coriander (Dhaniya)	<i>Coriandrum sativum</i> L. 	Apiaceae	Leaf & Fruit	Coriander leaves as well as coriander seeds are used in cooking. It also has some medicinal uses. It can be used externally on aching joints and rheumatism. It is also good for coping with soar throat, allergies, digestion problems, hay fever etc
Cumin (Zeera)	<i>Cuminum cyminum</i> L. 	Apiaceae	Fruit	It is used for cooking and it also possesses medicinal properties. It is a good source of iron and keeps immune system healthy. Water boiled with cumin seeds is good for coping with dysentery.
Fenugreek (Methi)	<i>Trigonella foenum-graecum</i> L. 	Fabaceae	Seed	It is mainly used as a green leafy vegetable and seeds are used for seasoning and preparing Masalas. It also has medicinal uses. Fenugreek seed tea or sweet fudge is good for increasing breast milk. It also helpful for treating diabetes and lowering cholesterol.
Garlic (Rasun/ Lassan)	<i>Allium sativum</i> L. 	Alliaceae	Bulb	It is used for cooking as well as for the medicinal purpose. It is useful for coping with cough and cold. It also has antibiotic properties.
Ginger (Adrak)	<i>Zingiber officinale</i> Rosc.	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome	It is used for giving a specific flavour to food and has many medicinal

				uses. Helps to avoid digestive problems. It is beneficial for coping with cough and cold.
Bishop's weed (Ajwain)	<i>Trachyspermum ammi</i> L.  	Apiaceae	Fruit	It is used for seasoning and as flavorant as well as medicinal purpose. Used in Gastro Intestinal (GI) ailments including: diarrhoea, dyspepsia, flatulence, indigestion and cholera. In Ayurvedic medicine it is used as antiseptic, preservative, respiratory and GI ailments. Unani system of medicine as an enhancer of the body's resistance.
Nutmeg (Jaiphal)	<i>Myristica fragrans</i> Houtt. 	Myristicaceae	Seed	It is used in powdered form for garnishing and also for masala preparation. It is used in soaps, perfumes and shampoos. It can also be used for medicinal purpose. It is beneficial for the treatments of asthma, heart disorder and bad breath.
Pepper (Kaali Mirch)	<i>Piper nigrum</i> L. 	Piperaceae	Fruit	It is extensively used in cooking, especially for garnishing. It has many medicinal uses too. It helps coping with cold, cough, infections etc. It helps to deal with muscle pains and digestive problems.
Saffron (Zaffran/ Kesar)	<i>Crocus sativus</i> L. 	Iridaceae	Stigma	It is used for cooking as well as in beauty products. It is mainly used in sweet dishes. It has good medicinal properties. It helps to cope with skin diseases. It is a good remedy for cough, cold and asthma.

Star anise (Chakra Phool)	<i>Illicium verum</i> Hook. 	Illiciaceae	Fruit	It is used in cooking and for medicinal purpose. Star anise oil is beneficial for rheumatism. It is helpful for digestion and avoiding bad breath.
Turmeric (Haldi)	<i>Curcuma longa</i> L. 	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome	It is used in cooking and skin care products. It has wide range medicinal uses. It helps deal with skin problems. Turmeric powder can be used for healing cuts and wounds. It also makes coping with diabetes easier.
Vanilla	<i>Vanilla planifolia</i> Andr. 	Orchidaceae	Pod	Vanilla is a well-known flavoring agent in foods and beverages. Rich in Antioxidants. Antioxidants are the most significant benefit of vanilla because they help repair your body at the molecular level. They help in reducing the effects of diabetes, aging and promote more vibrant skin.
Fennel/ Saunf	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Mill. 	Apiaceae	Fruit/seed	Fennel/ Saunf is chiefly used in Ayurvedic medicine to treat digestive ailments, while the secretolytic properties assist in curing respiratory ailments with antispasmodic effect easing abdominal cramps. Saunf has a beneficial effect on the stomach, liver, brain, heart, kidney and uterus.

Apart from the above spices, following are some other spices which are under the purview of Spices Board, Govt. of India with their English and Botanical name, family and part used

English Name	Botanical Name	Family	Parts used
1. Celery	<i>Apium graveolens</i> L.	Apiaceae	Leaf, Fruit & Stem
2. Aniseed	<i>Pimpinella anisum</i> L.	Apiaceae	Fruit
3. Caraway	<i>Carum carvi</i> L.	Apiaceae	Fruit
4. Dill	<i>Anethum graveolens</i> L.	Apiaceae	Fruit
5. Cassia	<i>Cinnamomum cassia</i> .Blume	Lauraceae	Bark

6. Curry leaf	<i>Murraya koenigii</i> (L) Sprengel	Rutaceae	Leaf
7. Kokam	<i>Garcinia indica</i> Choisy	Clusiaceae	Rind
8. Mint	<i>Mentha piperita</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Leaf
9. Mustard	<i>Brassica juncea</i> L.Czern	Brassicaceae	Seed
10. Parsley	<i>Petroselinum crispum</i> Mill.	Apiaceae	Leaf
11. Pomegranate	<i>Punica granatum</i> L.	Punicaceae	Seed
12. Pepper Long	<i>Piper longum</i> L.	Piperaceae	Fruit
13. Sweet flag	<i>Acorus calamus</i> L.	Araceae	Rhizome
14. Greater Galanga	<i>Alpinia galanga</i> Willd.	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome
15. Horse Radish	<i>Armoracia rusticana</i> Gaertn.	Brassicaceae	Root
16. Caper	<i>Capparis spinosa</i> L.	Capparidaceae	Flower buds
17. Asafoetida	<i>Ferula asafoetida</i> L.	Apiaceae	Oleogum resin from rhizome and thickened root
18. Camboge	<i>Garcinia cambogia</i> (Gaertn).Desr	Clusiaceae	Rind
19. Hyssop	<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Leaf
20. Juniper berry	<i>Juniperus communis</i> L.	Cupressaceae	Berry
21. Bay Leaf	<i>Laurus nobilis</i> L.	Lauraceae	Leaf
22. Lovage	<i>Levisticum officinale</i> Koth.	Apiaceae	Leaf & Stem
23. Marjoram	<i>Marjorana hortensis</i> Moench.	Lamiaceae	Leaf
24. Nutmeg	<i>Myristica fragrans</i> Houtt.	Myristicaceae	Seed
25. Mace	<i>Myristica fragrans</i> Houtt.	Myristicaceae	Aril
26. Basil	<i>Ocimum basilicum</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Leaf
27. Poppy seed	<i>Papaver somniferum</i> L.	Papaveraceae	Seed
28. All spice	<i>Pimenta dioica</i> (L) Merr.	Myrtaceae	Fruit & Leaf
29. Rosemary	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Leaf
30. Sage	<i>Salvia officinalis</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Leaf
31. Savory	<i>Satureja hortensis</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Leaf
32. Thyme	<i>Thymus vulgaris</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Leaf
33. Oregano	<i>Origanum vulgare</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Leaf
34. Tarragon	<i>Artemisia dracunculus</i> L.	Asteraceae	Leaf
35. Tamarind	<i>Tamarindus indica</i> L.	Caesalpiniaceae	Fruit
