



HERBS & SPICES MASTERY CHART

Herbie's School Of Culinary Arts
MASTERING FLAVOR WITH HERBS AND SPICES 101



♦ HERBS ♦

♦ SPICES ♦

BASIL LEAF

FLAVOR: Sweet & Peppery
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Tomato, Mozzarella, Garlic



Basil

BAY LEAF

FLAVOR: Woody & Subtle
INTENSITY: Mild
PAIRS: Stews, Braises, Stocks



Bay Leaf

ALLSPICE

FLAVOR: Warm & Complex
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Tomato, Mozzarella, Garlic



Allspice

CARAWAY

FLAVOR: Nutty & Earthy
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Rye Bread, Sauerkraut, Pork



Caraway

CHIVES

FLAVOR: Mild Onion
INTENSITY: Mild
PAIRS: Eggs, Potatoes, Cream



Chives

CILANTRO

FLAVOR: Bright & Citrus
INTENSITY: Mild
PAIRS: Salsa, Curries, Fish



Cilantro

CARDAMOM

FLAVOR: Floral & Spicy
INTENSITY: Bold
PAIRS: Coffee, Rice, Pastry



Cardamom

CAYENNE

FLAVOR: Fiery & Sharp
INTENSITY: Intense
PAIRS: Chili, Seafood, Chocolate



Cayenne

DILL LEAF

FLAVOR: Tangy & Grassy
INTENSITY: Mild
PAIRS: Salmon, Cucumber, Eggs



DILL

GARLIC

FLAVOR: Pungent & Savory
INTENSITY: Bold
PAIRS: Everything



Garlic

CELERY SEED

FLAVOR: Bitter & Vegetal
INTENSITY: Mild
PAIRS: Coleslaw, Pickles, Soups



Celery

CINNAMON

FLAVOR: Sweet & Warm
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Pastry, Lamp, Chocolate.



Cinnamon

LAVENDOR

FLAVOR: Floral & Sweet
INTENSITY: Bold
PAIRS: Lamb, Honey Chocolate



Lavender

MACE POWDER

FLAVOR: Floral, Nutty, Warm
INTENSITY: Delicate & Aromatic
PAIRS: Pastry Creams, Fruit Pies



MACE

CLOVES

FLAVOR: Intense & Sweet
INTENSITY: Intense
PAIRS: Ham, Mulled Wines, Curry



Clove

CORIANDER

FLAVOR: Citrusy & Nutty
INTENSITY: Mild
PAIRS: Fish, Curries, Pork.



Coriander

MARJORAM

FLAVOR: Sweet & Floral
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Sausage, Beans, Veggies



Marjoram

MEXICAN OREGANO

FLAVOR: Sweet & Floral
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Sausage, Beans, Veggies



Mex Oreg

CUMIN

FLAVOR: Earthy & Warm
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Lamb, Chickpeas, Rice.



Cumin

FENNEL SEED

FLAVOR: Anise & Sweet
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Pork, Fish, Breads.



Fennel

ONION

FLAVOR: Strong Onion
INTENSITY: Bold
PAIRS: Meats, Fowl, Everything



ONION

OREGANO (Italian, Greek)

FLAVOR: Robust & Bitter
INTENSITY: Bold
PAIRS: Pizza, Beef, Olive Oil



Oregano

FENUGREEK

FLAVOR: Bitter & Maple-Like
INTENSITY: Bold
PAIRS: Curries, Pickles, Bread.



Fenugreek

GINGER ROOT

FLAVOR: Warm & Zesty
INTENSITY: Bold
PAIRS: Stir-fry, Curries, Tea.



Ginger Rt

PARSLEY

FLAVOR: Fresh & Mild
INTENSITY: Mild
PAIRS: Fish, Soups Salads



Parsley

ROSEMARY

FLAVOR: Piney & Resinous
INTENSITY: Bold
PAIRS: Lamb, Potatoes, Olive Oil



Rosemary

NUTMEG

FLAVOR: Warm & Nutty
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Bechamel, Pumpkin, Eggs.



Nutmeg

PAPRIKA

FLAVOR: Sweet & Smoky
INTENSITY: Mild
PAIRS: Chicken, Eggs, Stews.



Paprika

SAGE

FLAVOR: Musty & Warm
INTENSITY: Bold
PAIRS: Pork, Butter, Fowl, Stuffing



Sage

SAVORY

FLAVOR: Peppery & Herbal
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Beans, Sausage, Lamb



Savory

SAFFRON

FLAVOR: Floral & Honeyed
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Risotto, Paella, Bouillabaisse.



Saffron

STAR ANISE

FLAVOR: Licorice & Sweet
INTENSITY: Bold
PAIRS: Duck, Pho, Poached Fruit.



Star Anise

TARRAGON

FLAVOR: Anise & Sweet
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Chickens, Eggs, Bearnaise



Tarragon

THYME

FLAVOR: Earthy & Floral
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Chicken, Root Veg. Stocks



Thyme

SUMAC BERRY

FLAVOR: Tangy & Fruity
INTENSITY: Moderate
PAIRS: Salads, Meat, Hummus.



SUMAC

TURMERIC ROOT

FLAVOR: Bitter & Earthy
INTENSITY: Mild
PAIRS: Curries, Rice, Eggs.



Turmeric

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This chart works together with our website to help you grow into a confident, master home chef. Scan the QR code in the top right corner to take Herbi's quick, informative course on using herbs and spices like a pro. Use the back of this chart to review what you've learned, and scan the QR code on any herb or spice box to visit our Herb Page—where you'll find rich, detailed information about every herb we offer.



HERBIE'S SCHOOL OF CULINARY ARTS

3-Step Professional Herb & Spice Selection Guide · Mastering Flavor 101



1 KNOW YOUR FLAVOR FOUNDATION

Identify what each herb & spice contributes before you choose

WHAT YOU'RE WORKING WITH

HERBS: Leafy parts · Fresh or dried · Bright & aromatic · 1 tbsp fresh = 1 tsp dried

SPICES: Seeds, bark, roots, pods · Usually dried · Deep & concentrated · Bloom in fat to unlock

One plant — two uses: Cilantro leaf = herb · Coriander seed = spice

HERB FLAVOR FAMILIES

BRIGHT & FRESH — Light dishes, salads, fresh sauces, finishing
Basil · Parsley · Cilantro · Mint · Dill · Chervil · Chives
"Light, grassy, clean — add at end of cooking to preserve brightness"

EARTHY & WOODSY — Roasts, braises, hearty soups, stocks
Rosemary · Thyme · Sage · Oregano · Bay Leaf · Savory · Marjoram
"Robust, piney, resinous — add early so flavors integrate fully"

DELICATE & FLORAL — Egg dishes, delicate proteins, French sauces
Tarragon · Chervil · Lavender · Mexican Oregano
"Soft, fragrant, sweet — add at very end or off-heat"

SPICE FLAVOR FAMILIES

WARM & SWEET
Cinnamon · Nutmeg · Cardamom · Allspice
→ braises, pastry, warm curries

EARTHY & SAVORY
Cumin · Coriander · Turmeric · Paprika · Caraway · Fenugreek
→ chili, curries, roasted meats, legumes

SPICY & PUNGENT
Cayenne · Celery Seed · Ginger Root
→ spicy sauces, brines, adding heat

RICH & TANGY
Sumac · Star Anise · Saffron · Fennel Seed · Cloves
→ finishing, tagines, aromatic rice

GLOBAL FLAVOR PALETTES

FR FRENCH: Thyme · Tarragon · Bay · Chervil · Herbes de Provence

IN INDIAN: Cumin · Cardamom · Turmeric · Coriander · Garam Masala

MIDDLE EASTERN: Za'atar · Sumac · Allspice · Cinnamon · Mint

CN CHINESE: Star Anise · Cloves · Fennel · Cinnamon · Sichuan Pepper

LATIN: Cumin · Oregano · Cilantro · Garlic · Chili Paprika

2 PROFESSIONAL PAIRING GUIDE

Match the right herbs & spices to the food you are preparing

RULE #1 — MATCH INTENSITY TO PROTEIN

DELICATE → Fish · Eggs · Tofu · Mild Veg

Dill · Chervil · Tarragon · Parsley · Mild paprika · Celery seed

MEDIUM → Chicken · Pork · Shellfish · Root Veg

Thyme · Sage · Marjoram · Cumin · Coriander · Fennel seed · Ginger

BOLD → Lamb · Beef · Game · Duck · Lentils

Rosemary · Oregano · Caraway · Allspice · Cloves · Cardamom · Cayenne

"Match like with like — robust proteins need robust herbs; delicate foods need a gentle touch"

RULE #2 — CONGRUENT VS. COMPLEMENTARY

CONGRUENT (same family — amplify)

Basil + Oregano on tomato sauce

Rosemary + Thyme on lamb

Cumin + Coriander in chili

→ "Shared aromatics blend seamlessly"

COMPLEMENTARY (opposite — balance)

Mint in spicy curry (cool vs hot)

Cinnamon in beef braise (sweet vs savory)

Dill + Lemon on fish (fresh vs rich)

→ "Contrast creates complexity & depth"

CLASSIC FOOD PAIRING REFERENCE

FOOD	PRIMARY HERB	SUPPORTING SPICE
Lamb	Rosemary	Cumin + Allspice
Beef	Thyme / Oregano	Black Pepper + Paprika
Chicken	Sage / Tarragon	Cumin + Paprika
Fish	Dill / Chervil	Fennel Seed + Cayenne
Pork	Sage / Savory	Caraway + Cloves
Eggs	Chives / Tarragon	Paprika + Celery Seed
Tomato	Basil / Oregano	Fennel + Garlic Pwd
Mushrooms	Thyme / Marjoram	Cumin + Nutmeg
Potatoes	Rosemary / Chives	Paprika + Garlic Pwd
Legumes	Cumin / Cilantro	Turmeric + Ginger Root

RULE #3 — THE BASE + HERB + SPICE FRAMEWORK

[AROMATIC BASE] + [HERB] + [SPICE] + [FAT]

Olive oil + Garlic → Thyme + Paprika → Roast Chicken

Butter + Garlic → Sage + Nutmeg → Pork & Pasta

Oil + Ginger → Cilantro + Turmeric → Fish Curry

3 PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Execute your selection — technique, timing & final adjustment

THE 5-STEP CHEF'S SELECTION PROCESS

1 CONCEPT — What protein/veg? What cuisine? What feeling (warm & hearty vs bright & fresh)?
"Let your dish concept guide which of the 3 flavor families you reach for first"

2 CHOOSE CORE FLAVOR — Pick 1 dominant herb or spice (40–50% of your blend)
"This is the backbone — everything else must support it, not compete"

3 ADD SUPPORT — Choose 2–3 complementary seasonings
"One congruent + one contrasting for complexity · Keep to 2–4 total per dish"

4 PLAN TIMING — Decide WHEN each goes in:

EARLY — Rosemary · Thyme · Bay · Sage · Cumin seeds · Coriander · Allspice

END — Basil · Cilantro · Mint · Dill · Parsley · Chervil · Sumac · Saffron

5 COOK · TASTE · ADJUST — Layer seasonings at each stage, taste frequently
"Start small — you can add more, you cannot remove. Use acid, fat, or sweetness to correct"

SPICE TECHNIQUE GUIDE

TOAST: Whole spices in dry pan 60–90 sec until fragrant → triggers aromatic compounds
→ Cumin · Coriander · Fennel · Caraway · Cardamom pods · Star Anise

BLOOM: Ground spices in hot oil/butter 30–60 sec → fat extracts & spreads flavor
→ Turmeric · Paprika · Ginger · Cayenne · Fenugreek · Garam masala

MARINADE: Fat + Acid + Herb/Spice · 30 min minimum · overnight for deep penetration
→ Rubs and marinades for roasts, grilled meats, tandoori-style dishes

TIMING QUICK-REFERENCE

BUILD YOUR SIGNATURE BLEND

CREATE YOUR OWN BLEND IN 4 STEPS

- 1. DEFINE:** Choose theme (regional cuisine, cooking method, main protein)
- 2. BASE:** 1 dominant herb or spice = 40–50% of total blend
- 3. SUPPORT:** 2–3 complementary = remaining 50–60% (one congruent, one contrasting)
- 4. TEST:** Taste on plain butter or yogurt · Adjust ratios · Apply to dish

The Finest Herbs And Spices...

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