

Essential Spices & Herbs

CHEATSHEET

These are essential spices and herbs which you should have in your pantry if you are serious about international “ethnic” food cooking. Most ingredients are dry, 2 herbs mentioned are used fresh but are essential as well!

Spices and Herbs season your food, a combination creates new delicious food flavours. For example, Caraway seeds and Paprika are the base flavour for a Hungarian Goulash. See further below for proper storing tips! Spices in red, Herbs in green, from A to Z, with described major usage in cooking.

- **Allspice seeds** – Great with pork meat
- **Bay Leaves** – Essential soup and sauce ingredient
- **Basil** – In salads and Mediterranean dishes
- **Black Pepper** – Used in any cuisines around the world
- **Caraway seeds** – Essential for Goulash, meat & stew flavouring. Even in breads
- **Cilantro** – Garnishing for Asian, African, South & Central American Food, mostly used fresh
- **Cinnamon** – Warming Spice, Sweet and savory meals
- **Cloves** – Sweet and savory meals alike. Mulled wine, Rice puddings, curries etc.
- **Coriander Seeds** – Essential in Asian cooking
- **Cumin** – Useful in Mexican, Asian cuisines and any meat seasonings.
- **Garlic Powder** – For salad dressings, seasoning blends
- **Green Cardamom** – For milk tea, curries and desserts
- **Juniper Seeds** – For serious soup lovers. Super healthy dried berry turned into spice
- **Marjoram** – Similar to Oregano but different, great in dressings, sandwiches.
- **Nutmeg** – Essential soup and sauce spice
- **Parsley** – Garnishing ingredient for Western meals, best used fresh
- **Paprika Powder** (sweet and/or smoked version) – Various uses in European cuisine
- **Onion Powder** – Salad dressings and seasonings
- **Oregano** – Mediterranean Cuisine
- **Red Pepper powder/flakes (Chilis)** – To add heat to any dish
- **Rosemary** – French and Mediterranean cuisine
- **Mustard Seeds** – Black variation for Asian food, yellow for condiments & dressings
- **Savory** – French and Mediterranean cuisine
- **Sichuan Pepper** – Hot and spicy commonly used in Chinese Cuisine
- **Star Anise** – Essential in Indian and Chinese Cuisine, sweet and savory
- **Thyme** - French and Mediterranean cuisine, great for chicken
- **Turmeric** (Curcuma) – Indian cuisine and new health food fads

Tips to store your spices properly:

When you have a collection of spices you run in danger of forgetting about them in the back of your pantry.

Has this happened to you? Can you relate? I have to confess, I sure had this problem until I started to reorganize my spice pantry!

A proper display or a little space where you can see your spices at any time is the ONLY thing you need so to organize your pantry effectively. If it's out of sight it's out of the mind, right?

I have a wall mounted custom build spice rack but you can easily buy really good-looking spice racks which will work for most spice jar sizes.

I really like the [retractable bamboo spice rack](#) because it can be extended if you need more space for your spice jars. I recommend a retractable spice rack or a [compact spice rack](#). Something that suits YOUR kitchen and working flow.

You also need proper jars. I can't emphasise enough on quality spice jars. If you don't store your spices properly they will lose their aroma and may even get spoiled due to room humidity or because of other environmental conditions.

Spices are not always cheap. In fact, they are precious and should be stored so that they do not lose value.

To make sure to always see and remember your spices in your kitchen, I recommend you get see-through spice glass jars such as [these here](#). I love to be able to look at my spices and decide which ones to use for a new dish. It's total cooking freedom!

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Now tell me, what spices are you planning to keep in your kitchen?

How do you store your spices?

Share your thoughts in a [quick message](#). I am looking forward to it. 😊