

## Spices Serve as Treasures in the Kitchen

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### Abstract:

The role of spices to enhance flavor, aroma, color, and taste in the food is acknowledged since ancient times. Globally, over 100 varieties of spices are available, and the consumption of spices in the food has a plethora of health benefits, such as antioxidant, antibacterial, anticarcinogenic, and antifungal properties besides boosting the immune system. Nowadays, many cultures are known in the world. Part of these cultures is the lifestyle, in which nutrition plays a prominent role. Healthy nutrition contributes to the ideal provision of physical and mental development, as well as to the preservation and improvement of health. In different cultures, eating habits also differ, and special foods characteristic of the cultures appear. Spices are used willingly within most cultures, which are known to have numerous beneficial effects. Therefore, our publication presents the most important spices, which are commonly used during preparation of food. Due to their useful components, they are good for health by helping digestion, and give food a distinctive flavor and aroma. These spices include for example basil, cinnamon, turmeric, oregano, clove, mustard seeds, coriander, ginger, and ground paprika.

**Key words:** basil; cinnamon; clove; coriander, ginger; ground paprika; health benefits; mustard seeds; oregano; turmeric

### Introduction

There are many cultures, such as Arabic culture, Japanese culture, Indian culture, Hungarian culture, Italian culture, Brazilian culture and others. The nutritional habits and special food specialties of different cultures also differ from each other. Spices are often used in these dishes, which are also known to have many beneficial effects [1]. Furthermore, various spices give excellent taste and aroma to international dishes. They also contain useful components, such as vitamins and minerals. The physiologically active ingredient content of spices also has a positive effect on the human body (such as: help digestion, help thinking, stimulate memory, have an antioxidant, antibacterial and anti-inflammatory effects, stimulate the immune system and so on) [2, 3, 4]. Among these spices, we summarized the most important properties of basil, cinnamon, turmeric, oregano, clove, mustard seeds, coriander, ginger and ground paprika in our manuscript.

### 2. Various Spices

A brief information of nine types of spices is mentioned below.

**2.1. Basil:** Basil is a favorite spice of Italian cuisine with a characteristic smell and taste. An additional part of pasta dishes and salads. It is also known for its anti-inflammatory, antibacterial and antioxidant effects. The content of vitamins A and C, and minerals like potassium, manganese, copper, and magnesium are also significant [5].

**2.2. Cinnamon:** Cinnamon is one of the expensive spices that is acknowledged for its several beneficial effects. It helps in digestion, and also lowers the blood pressure. Primarily, it is used as an additional flavoring spice for sweet foods and teas. It contains many vitamins (A, E, K, C, and B), and minerals (calcium, manganese) [6].

**2.3. Turmeric:** Turmeric imparts a beautiful yellow color to the food, and is commonly used in Indian and Mexican dishes.

It is an additional element of many dishes (soups, meats, sauces). Due to its beneficial components, turmeric has an antioxidant effect, stimulates the immune system, and has an anti-inflammatory effect [7].

**2.4. Oregano:** Oregano is the most popular in Italian cuisine. It is mainly used for tomato dishes, pasta or soups. It also contains vitamin E, vitamin B, calcium, magnesium, zinc, potassium, and iron [8].

**2.5. Clove:** Cloves are most often used in sweet dishes, cakes, and drinks. It is also known for its antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, pain-relieving and immune system-boosting effects. Clove also contains vitamin C, vitamins K and E [9].

**2.6. Mustard seeds:** Mustard plant is a member of the *Cruciferae* (*Brassicaceae*) family. Mustards are considered functional foods due to their beneficial components, and are consumed in many countries as part of their dietary habits [10].

**2.7. Coriander:** Coriander is one of the most widely used spices, used for both nutritional and medicinal purposes. It has antimicrobial, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, pain-relieving and anti-anxiety effects. Coriander is also found beneficial in respiratory diseases [11].

**2.8. Ginger:** Ginger is also a very popular spice in India. It is a good source of zinc, magnesium, iron, and vitamins B6 and C. Ginger contains many bioactive components. It reduces nausea, strengthens the immune system, and improves blood sugar levels [12].

**2.9. Ground paprika:** Ground paprika is one of the most popular spices in Hungarian cuisine. In addition, it is used to prepare many dishes worldwide, and is known for its sweet and hot versions. The pungency of paprika is caused by an ingredient called capsaicin. The vitamin C content is also significant in ground paprika [13].

### 3. Conclusion and Recommendations

Many varieties of spices that are available in the world, offer a wide array of health benefits to the consumers. The compounds present in spices help in the prevention of cancer. In Indian cultures, spices are most commonly used during the cooking of food. Various spices play the most important role in the preparation of international dishes. Therefore, each spice has a unique taste, aroma and content. In this way, they also contribute to the creation of a unique taste world of different cuisine. In addition, spices help digestion and other physiological processes of the human body. One of the most popular food ingredients in the world. Therefore, it is recommended to promote spices among consumers due to their beneficial effects. Furthermore, a useful area of research could be the survey of spice consumption, the examination of their popularity indicators or even the development possibilities of spices.

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### Contribution of authors

Both authors contributed during the preparation of the manuscript.

### Conflict of interest

There was no conflict of interest.

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