

MENASHA PUBLIC LIBRARY: SPICE OF THE MONTH CLUB



WHAT IS BAHARAT?

Baharat is a traditional spice blend that is believed to have originated from North Africa. It is most often found in middle eastern cuisine, namely Saudi Arabian and Turkish. It generally comes as a ground powder, reddish in hue, and is very aromatic. Baharat is an all-purpose spice that some consider to be the middle eastern equivalent of salt and pepper. The spices in our *Spice of the Month* sample blend are: black pepper, ginger, allspice, cardamom, nutmeg, cloves, and cinnamon. Like most spice blends, there are regional variations in ingredients and ratios. Salt is rarely present, though in Turkey you would find dried mint has been added to the blend. North African baharat even features dried rosebuds.

Although widely divergent, these spices come together to create a mixture that evokes warmth, with earthy and smoky notes. That warmth makes it a great option for seasoning meats such as lamb and chicken in the same way that barbeque rubs are used here in the west. The word “baharat” is, quite simply, the Arabic word for “spice.”

OCTOBER

BAHARAT



8 TIPS FOR BAHARAT

- Add baharat to a mixture of: olive oil, lemon juice, and salt to make a great base for a smoky-sweet marinade for grilled shrimp.
- The vitamin A in baharat's spices is vital to good vision and for the prevention of eye problems like macular degeneration and cataracts.
- All of the spices you need to make your own baharat spice blend can be found in a typical local grocery store. This gives you the freedom to add or eliminate specific spices according to your taste. You could also toast the spices in a dry skillet before grinding.
- For recipes using ground beef, baharat is best used by mixing it into the meat before cooking, using about one teaspoon for every pound of ground beef. Baharat can add a little exotic zing to hamburgers and meatloaf.
- Try frying baharat in oil to release the flavors, and then using the oil to baste meat or vegetables for grilling.
- Baharat contains spices that are loaded with health benefits. It is a rich source of antioxidants, phytonutrients and polyphenols. These compounds are supposed to have anti-inflammatory, digestive, anti-carcinogenic, and anti-oxidant properties.
- In Morocco, smoked chiles are normally added to baharat, which gives it a bit more heat.
- Need a new snack idea? Top a little baharat on whole-wheat pita bread that has been brushed with olive oil. Add cheese and toast.



Add Baharat to:

-Soups

-Rice

-Meatballs



Note: This information is meant to supplement, not replace advice from your healthcare provider and is not meant to cover all possible uses, precautions, interactions or adverse effects.

Sources Consulted: Encyclopedia Britannica; Consumer Health Complete; spiceography.com; Gale Health and Wellness; MasterClass

One Pot Baharat Chicken and Rice

Courtesy of: joythebaker.com

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds boneless skinless chicken thighs
- Sea salt and fresh cracked black pepper
- Smoky paprika
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium red onion, sliced thick (about 1 cup).
- 5 cloves garlic, crushed and coarsely chopped
- 2 – 3 tablespoons baharat spice
- 2 teaspoon ground cumin
- sea salt and fresh cracked black pepper
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1/2 cup dry white wine or light beer
- 1 1/2 cups long grain white rice (I used basmati because that's what I had on hand)
- 2 dried bay leaves
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley.

Time:

Prep: 15 Minutes

Cook Time: 35 Minutes

Total Time: 50 Minutes



Directions:

1. First make the spice mix if you aren't able to buy it in a store. To make the whole spice mix: Grind the whole spices using a spice mill or coffee grinder. You'll likely need to do this in several batches.) Place freshly ground spices in a small bowl and stir in the paprika and nutmeg.
2. To make the chicken dinner, place a rack in the center of the oven and preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
3. Season both sides of the chicken liberally with salt, pepper and smoked paprika. Place a large shallow skillet (with a tight fitting lid) over medium-high heat with the olive oil. Once hot, add in half of the chicken in a single layer. Cook until browned on both sides, about 3 to 4 minutes per side. The chicken doesn't have to be fully cooked, we're just looking to brown it at this point. It will continue to cook in the oven. Transfer the browned chicken to a plate and brown the rest.
4. Once the all the chicken has browned, add the onion and garlic to the skillet and cook until softened, about 3 to 5 minutes. Season with salt and fresh cracked black pepper. Stir in the tomato paste and cook until deep red in color, about 1 minute. Add the spices and stir until fragrant. Add the rice and bay leaves and cook for another minute or so to develop the rice's flavor. Stir in the wine or beer and cook until almost evaporated completely, making sure to scrape up the browned bits on the bottom of the skillet. Stir in the chicken stock and bring up to a simmer. Nestle in the chicken and any juices that may have collected on the plate.
5. Cover and transfer to the oven to bake for 25 minutes. Remove from the oven and allow to rest with the lid on for 10 minutes. Remove the lid, sprinkle with parsley and serve warm.

Baharat Chewy Molasses Cookies

Courtesy of: silkroaddiary.com



Ingredients:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup Valrhona cocoa powder
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 4 teaspoons Baharat, ground
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup butter, melted
- 1/3 cup dark brown sugar
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1/3 cup molasses
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract, or scrape the insides of one vanilla bean
- 1/4 cup white sugar + 1/2 teaspoon Baharat, ground

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and prepare a sheet pan lined with parchment paper. Whisk dry ingredients together in a small bowl.
2. Whisk egg, butter, sugars, vanilla and molasses in a medium bowl until well mixed. Add dry ingredients and mix until combined.
3. Put remaining sugar and Baharat into a shallow bowl or saucer. Scoop out dough by the tablespoon and roll into balls. If dough is sticky, refrigerate for 20 minutes. Roll in sugar mixture and place on parchment lined sheet pan, about 2 inches apart.
4. Bake until puffed, cracked and just set around the edges, about 8 - 10 minutes. (Over baked won't be chewy.) Transfer to wire rack until cooled.