

# Garam Masala - The Spices of India

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## **Sample of Content:**

This spicy Indian rub will not only tickle your tastebuds, but will add an exciting and pleasing aroma to your entire house!

## **Content:**

India is known for its excellent cuisine, it's unique regions of cooking, and a pleasant dining experience. India is distinguished in the world's cuisine for its vegetarian dishes. One thing all of the regional cuisines of India have in common is its use of spices.

Garam masala is an essential ingredient in the cooking of the Punjab region of northern India. Loosely defined, "masala" is any blend of spices, and "garam" means hot.

Generally, garam masala is added to the dish very shortly before serving to enhance flavor. Garam Masala is also an excellent rub for chicken and beef.

Garam masala is available prepared in ethnic groceries, and specialty stores such as World Market. The disadvantage of this is that one doesn't know how old the spices are, or what changes in temperatures and packaging it has been subjected to. One takes a chance on the potency and fragrance of this blend if it is bought already prepared. It is a simple process to make garam masala, and ingredients, with the exception of cardamom pods, are readily available. cardamom pods are available in Indian and natural food stores. Buy the green pods versus the white pods, which are bleached. Cardamom is an expensive spice, second only in price to saffron. It is expensive because it has to be hand picked. This spice is best used by toasting the seed removed from the pod, and then ground in a spice mill, along with the other ingredients of garam masala. Cardamom loses its essential oils and flavors quickly after being cracked and ground, and so buying the pods and toasting and grinding is the best method of use for this great spice.

To make Garam Masala, use the following ingredients:

- 2 cardamom pods, seeded
- 1 teaspoon whole cloves
- 30 whole peppercorns
- 2 teaspoons whole cumin seed
- 1 2-inch piece cinnamon stick
- 1 teaspoon coriander seeds
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg

The best method for making garam masala is to toast and then grind the ingredients. This is accomplished by placing the seed ingredients one at a time in a pan over medium high heat, and shaking them until they just begin to smoke and release their distinctive aromas. It will take approximately 1-3 minutes. Be sure not to burn the seeds!

Place the toasted ingredients in a spice mill, and grind to a fairly fine mixture. The garam masala can then be stored in a tightly sealed glass jar for up to 6 months. Any time after that, and the spices will begin to lose flavor and aroma.

I use garam masala for a rub for roasted or grilled chicken and beef. The aroma and flavor are outstanding, and chicken baked or grilled will retain the excellent flavor of the garam masala.

Try garam masala today. Cooking with the spices of northern India is an experience that every adventurous chef should try!

Alden Smith is an award winning and published author who has been marketing on the internet for over 7 years. Visit his website <http://www.allthebestrecipes.com> for great articles, recipes, and cooking tips. Join his mailing list, and receive the 660 page cookbook "Famous Secret Recipes." His monthly ezine contains tips, recipes, and articles on cooking. A world traveler, he has experienced the cuisine of many countries.

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