



Quick Cooking with Cardamom

- Use in place of (or alongside) other warm spices, like cinnamon and nutmeg.
- Add to pancake, waffle, and French toast batter.
- Add seeds (before brewing) to coffee or tea.
- Add to any pastry, cookie, cake or scone recipe.
- Use to flavor apple pie or any fruit desserts.
- Stir into softened cream cheese for a fruit dip.
- Add to stir-fry spices.
- Add to vegetable, bean, meat, or poultry casseroles.
- Add, along with salt and pepper to taste, to side-dish vegetables.
- Include in water when making rice or other grains.
- Add to quick bread recipes (like banana or zucchini bread).
- Stir into puddings or custards while cooking.
- Include in your granola recipe; add before baking.
- Add to baked beans or chili.
- Stir into stews (a Moroccan tagine, for example)
- Include in homemade curries.
- Add to tomato sauce for pasta dishes.
- Add to homemade ice cream recipes.
- Stir into cooked oatmeal, along with dried fruit and nuts.

Tips:

To use cardamom pods, place in a mortar and lightly pound with a pestle. The pods will open and the seeds will fall out. Use the pestle to grind the seeds, if desired.

Some cooks like to lightly toast the pods in a dry pan before removing the seeds for grinding.

To retain maximum flavor and aroma, store your cardamom in airtight container away from light, heat, and moisture.

notes from the field

Location: Cobán, Guatemala

Product Sourced: Cardamom

The Story: We get our top-quality organic cardamom from our Well Earth™ partner deep in the mountains of Guatemala. It's a cooperative group made up of 36 smaller cooperatives that support 60,000 people, mostly indigenous Mayan.

In addition to fair wages and legal services, the co-op provides free traveling health and dental clinics for the workers and their families, even in the remote regions. The co-op also offers scholarships, assistance with forest utilization and reforestation projects, and loans for expansion and production. And it trains growers in sustainable agriculture and organic certification.

By working directly with the cooperative rather than going through middlemen, Frontier is able to ensure that the farmers receive the best prices for one of their most important cash crops. We also support the cooperative with market information and technical assistance.



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The Lure of Cardamom

Recipes for...

- » Cardamom Tapioca
 - » Cardamom Cashew Rice
- ... and more!

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Q&A

I want to grind my own cardamom seed. How many pods should I buy?

For the freshest flavor, grinding your own cardamom seeds is a great idea. As a rough guideline, there are about a dozen seeds per pod, and 10 pods will produce about 1½ teaspoons of ground cardamom.

Which ethnic dishes use cardamom?

Indian cooks use cardamom in meats, vegetable dishes and desserts. It's an essential ingredient in authentic East Indian curry and Indian garam masala and pilaus (rice dishes). Whole pods are also chewed after spicy meals to cleanse the breath. In Scandinavia, where cardamom is more popular than cinnamon, you'll find it in spice cakes, sweet pastries, breads, cookies (Dutch windmill cookies), and ground meats (Swedish meatballs). Spanish, Mexican and German cooks also enjoy cardamom. (German Pfeffernusse cookies rely on it.)

In South Asia, cardamom is used in a spiced tea called Masala chai, and in the Middle East cooks make use of the warm sweetness of cardamom in coffee.



What are "extra fancy" cardamom pods?

These are the cream of the crop when it comes to cardamom. "Extra fancy" is the same as a "G#1" grading, with "G" signifying that the pods are green and the number 1 meaning that it's the largest of the pods, which are rated according to size from 1 to 3. (A "P" designation means that the pods are pale. And "MG" means that there's a mixture of pale and green of various sizes, as well as split pods.)

For more cardamom recipes, visit www.frontiercoop.com

CARDAMOM...

Warm, subtly spicy, exotically aromatic, with a flavor that transforms both sweet and savory recipes into heavenly dishes. No wonder "cardamom" means "grains of Paradise."

A member of the ginger family, *Elettaria cardamomum* is available in several forms. The quirky looking, seed-containing capsules are sold as papery thin green pods, and the hard, dark brown seed is sold without the pod in whole or ground form. ("Decorticated" simply refers to the seed without the pod.)

Cardamom's no newcomer. Ancient Greeks and Romans used it in foods, medicines, and perfumes. The Vikings added it to festival cakes, and Europeans (who tucked it in pomanders) treasured it for its aphrodisiac powers. Today, cardamom can be found in curries and coffees, fruit dishes (like baked apples and fruit salad), coffee cakes, honey, mulled wines, grape jelly, pickling spices (especially pickled herring) and sausage seasonings. While some describe cardamom as an intense flavor, when used carefully it's actually rather subtle and enticing.



Cardamom Tapioca

Cardamom and almond extract give tapioca pudding a slight twist, but this is still comfort food at its best.

1 cup tapioca, medium pearl, soaked in water for 2 hours and drained
4 cups milk
¾ cup honey
½ teaspoon salt
2 eggs, beaten
1 teaspoon almond extract
½ teaspoon cardamom ground

Combine tapioca pearls, milk, honey, and salt in a saucepan and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until the pearls become clear, about 10 to 15 minutes. (Don't overcook or the pudding will become gummy.)

Remove pan from heat. While stirring, add about a cup of the hot pudding to the beaten eggs in a small bowl. Slowly pour the egg mixture into the saucepan, stirring until well mixed. Add the almond extract and cardamom. Stir well.



Let cool, then spoon into serving cups. Refrigerate until ready to serve (consistency thickens even further if left overnight in the refrigerator).

Makes 8 servings

Cardamom Cashew Rice

Subtly flavored yet interesting, this dish makes a versatile side at just about any meal. You can substitute ground cardamom (try about ¼ teaspoon) for the seeds, if you prefer.

1 tablespoon olive oil
2 tablespoons sesame seeds
1 teaspoon cardamom seeds
1 large onion, coarsely chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 cup cooked and cooled brown rice
¼ cup roasted cashews

Heat oil in a skillet. Add sesame seeds and cardamom seeds and cook over medium heat, stirring, about 3 minutes. Add onion and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally, until tender and lightly browned, about 5 minutes.

Add the brown rice and cook until warmed throughout. Sprinkle with cashews and serve. Makes 2 servings.

