



SPICE CLUB: TURMERIC

ABOUT

Turmeric or *Curcuma longa* is a rhizomatous tuber with tough, paper brown skin and bright, rusty orange flesh. It is an underground plant, that can grow up to one meter high and flowers at ground level.

Member of the ginger family, Turmeric is a perennial tropical plant. Native to Indonesia and Southern India. It was brought to Europe in the 1200s but is still chiefly grown in India. There are two main types of Turmeric: Alleppey (deeper in color and more flavorful, found in most supermarkets in USA) and Madras (available in Indian stores).

Turmeric could be eaten fresh cooked or raw, cut into small pieces and added to a juice or smoothie, used in Thai yellow curry and turmeric soup. Ground into an intense yellow-orange powder with a mild, gingery aroma, Turmeric is one of the main components of curry. It is used as a coloring agent in mustard, baked goods, dairy products, ice cream, juice, cereals, and flavored gelatin.

Natural turmeric is used as a food supplement; it is also available in a capsule form at pharmacies. Its leaves are used to wrap and cook food. It pairs well with vegetables, eggs, lentils, soup, rice, and pasta. In Mediterranean cuisine, it is used to spice up fish and meat: lamb, beef, and chicken.

There are over 10,000 peer reviewed scientific articles published about the many benefits of Turmeric.

- Curcumin gives turmeric its anti-inflammatory properties.
- Turmeric supports liver detoxification and helps with blood sugar levels.
- Turmeric can reduce depression symptoms.
- Turmeric can clean out your arteries, improve heart health and prevent against Alzheimer's and cancer.

As with all natural remedies, herbs, and supplements, it is always a good idea to check with your doctor before taking it. Excessive doses have been reported to cause nausea, diarrhea, and increased risk of bleeding.

FUN FACTS

- In ancient times, it was used as a perfume as well as a spice!
- India is the leading exporter of turmeric worldwide. In 2021, India exported approximately 226 billion US dollars of turmeric!
- Some research suggests that turmeric does have a positive relationship with improving mood!
- Turmeric has been used as a fabric dye for hundreds of years!
- A study found after adults added curcumin into their daily diets for 4 weeks, it improved their ability to answer subtraction questions. Another study found curcumin improve attention and memory!
- Some people use turmeric to color their hair by adding it to shampoo or as a paste, mixing it with water and chamomile tea!

Fall Harvest Salad with Turmeric Dressing

Ingredients

For the salad

- 1 medium Delicata squash
- 2 bunches kale, stems removed and chopped
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Splash of extra virgin olive oil
- 2 apples, cored and diced
- ½ cup pomegranate arils

Turmeric dressing

- ½ cup lemon juice (about 2 lemons)
- ¼ cup water
- 1 small shallot, diced
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. pure maple syrup
- ¼ tsp. ginger
- ¼ ground turmeric
- salt to taste
- pinch of cayenne (optional)



Preparation

Preheat oven to 400°F then line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Chop off the stem of the squash, slice in half, scoop out the seeds and flesh, and cut each side into ½-inch pieces. Coat each piece with oil and arrange on the baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt & pepper. Bake for 12 minutes on each side, until tender and light golden brown.

In a large bowl, place the kale, pour in the olive oil, juice of 1 lemon and a pinch of salt. Massage it into the kale and top with diced apple and pomegranate arils.

For the dressing: combine all the ingredients into a blender. Blend until smooth, add more water as needed to thin.

Once the squash is done, place it in the bowl with the kale and toss to combine. Top with turmeric dressing, serve immediately and enjoy!

Chicken Shawarma

Ingredients

- 2 lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- 1 large red onion, peeled and quartered
- ½ cup plus 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 6 cloves garlic, peeled, smashed, and minced
- ½ tsp. turmeric
- 2 tsp. ground black pepper
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- 2 tsp. paprika
- pinch ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- red pepper flakes to taste
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley



Preparation

Prepare the marinade for the chicken: combine lemon juice, ½ cup olive oil, garlic, salt, pepper, turmeric, cumin, paprika, cinnamon, and red pepper flakes in a large bowl. Add the chicken and toss well to coat. Cover and store in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour and up to 12 hours.

Preheat oven to 425°F. Use the remaining tbsp. olive oil to grease a rimmed sheet pan. Add the quartered onion to the chicken and marinade. Toss once to combine. Remove the chicken and onion from the marinade, and place them on the pan, spreading everything evenly across the pan. Place the chicken in the oven and roast it for about 30–40 minutes, until it is browned, crisp at the edges, and cooked through.

Remove the chicken from the oven, allow it to rest for 2 minutes, and then slice it into bites.

Scatter the parsley over the top. Enjoy!