



SUMMER Recipe Book

inspired by the principles of
AYURVEDA



ecoretreats



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FOREST RETREAT - TEAHOUSE - CONSCIOUS LIVING CENTRE

As the weather warms up, it's wonderful to enjoy cooking nutritious food in harmony with our bodies and the seasons.

This book aims to provide a brief introduction to the principles of Ayurveda and a range of Ayurveda-inspired recipes – traditional and modern – that are quick, simple and cheap to prepare.

At the end we share a catalogue of the healing properties of key spices and ingredients.

We hope you enjoy experimenting with these delicious recipes.

Anyone for a mint chai?





AYURVEDA

Ayurveda is a study of Nature. Our busy, city lives have disconnected us from Nature's wise rhythms. By realigning to the rhythms of Nature, we access our innate state of vitality and harmony. That is why it is so important to adjust what we eat in accordance with the seasons.

Food preparation is an art and a science: Ayurveda acknowledges that food is medicine and teaches us how to combine foods and spices to bring healing to our unique body-mind constitution (Dosha) and balance the subtle energies of our being.

Ayurveda (known in Sanskrit as the 'Science of Life') is the ancient Indian philosophy of holistic health that originated over 5000 years ago. It is a powerful system that guides us in the art of living wisely. It teaches us how to live life on a moment to moment basis that is in harmony with our individual nature **and** the environment, a way of living with insight and ease. This natural healing system is a teaching on how to optimize physical, mental and emotional wellbeing and live a fulfilled life spiritually.

It provides an integrated approach to the prevention and treatment of dis-ease through herbal remedies, food, massage, yoga, meditation and wise living as part of its philosophy to bring balance to your vital energies or 'doshas' namely *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*. Without health, we cannot pursue or enjoy our life purpose!

According to Ayurveda, everything in the Universe is composed of the 5 elements – ether, air, fire, water and earth. The human body is also composed of these 5 elements, so the body is a reflection of the greater Universe – it is a microcosm of the macrocosm. By studying nature and learning about the qualities of the elements, we can then develop a deeper understanding of our unique body-mind constitution or *dosha*.



3 DOSHAS

Vata Dosha – Movement: consisting of space and air

- Qualities - light, dry, cold, erratic, mobile
- Quick & irregular rhythms - balancing principle stability and grounding
- Aggravated during winter, spring and autumn; favour sweet, sour and salty tastes

Pitta Dosha – Transformation: consisting of fire and water

- Qualities - hot, oily, dispersing, ascending, intense
- Fast & decisive rhythms - balancing principle moderation and calmness
- Aggravated during summer; favour sweet, bitter and astringent tastes

Kapha Dosha – Solidity: consisting of earth and water

- Qualities - heavy, wet, cold, stable
- Slow & methodical rhythms - balancing principle stimulation and letting go
- Aggravated during spring and late winter; favour pungent, bitter and astringent tastes





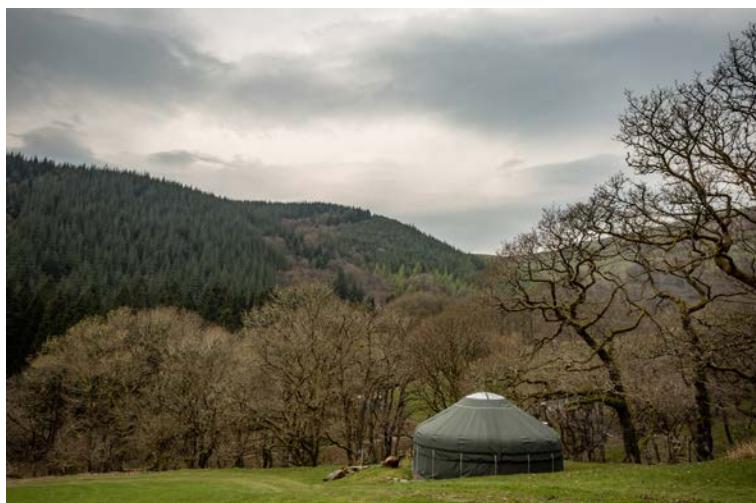
3 GUNAS

Everything in creation according to Ayurveda is pervaded by 3 prime qualities or ‘Gunas’ – Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. We can observe the effects of these qualities in the different mental and emotional states that we experience in our daily lives. It is mainly on the mental level that the Gunas are used in Ayurveda.

Sattwa is the principle of love, light, harmony and perception. Being Sattwic is the pure and virtuous state to which we all aspire, enjoying clarity of mind, tranquility, compassion and love. Sattwa is our Divine nature. When people are in a Sattwic state they radiate light, joy and happiness. Health of mind and body is maintained by Sattwic living.

Rajas is the quality of energy, action, distraction, movement and turbulence. Rajas activates all movement in the Universe, whether it is the movement of ideas in the mind or instructions to your body to spring out of bed in the morning. In the mind Rajas provokes thought and action and is responsible for inspiration and creativity but it can also mean restlessness, agitation, passion, aggression, anger, competition and ambition.

Tamas is the quality of darkness, inertia, stability and dullness. Heavy, material and solid, it gives us a certain calm and steadiness. In the mind it can obstruct movement causing laziness, ignorance, attachment, irrationality, stubbornness, confusion, depression and delusion. We may struggle to understand the truth and our minds can be pervaded with doubts, negative or destructive thoughts. From Tamas comes the power of ignorance veiling our true nature.





By eating a healthy diet and living a harmonious lifestyle with love, compassion, faith and other Sattwic attributes we can experience inner peace and a sense of joy and fulfillment.

In Ayurveda food, like everything else in creation, falls in to the same categories. There are Sattwic, Rajasic and Tamasic foods which have the ability to increase these qualities within us by eating them.

Sattwic foods: these are the highest quality foods that help to create physical balance, to enhance health and strength, energy and vitality; laying the foundations for a Sattwic state of mind. Sattwic foods are fresh, light, juicy, sweet, nourishing, energy giving and tasty. They are easy to digest and so do not tax our energy through the process of digestion.

They include fresh and organic vegetables and salads, seasonal fruits and fruit juices, mung beans, chick peas, lentils, sprouted beans yoghurt, fresh milk, sweet grains, sunflower and pumpkin seeds, almonds, honey. Rock salt, black pepper and lemons are also Sattwic.

Rajasic foods: these are medium quality foods, often high in protein and carbohydrate. They tend to be stimulating and capable of generating high levels of energy. They include meat, cheese, eggs, fish, hot, spicey and fried foods, pickles, garlic, onions, potatoes, homogenized milk, sweets, biscuit, sea salt, bread, tea, coffee and small amounts of alcohol.

Tamasic foods: these are low quality foods which are stale, fermented and unpalatable. They are devitalized foods and include over-cooked, tinned, dried, processed, frozen and junk foods as well as left-overs. Tamasic foods use a lot of energy to be digested. They include sweets, fizzy drink, snacks like chips, chocolate, ice cream, a lot of alcohol and all foods containing preservatives.



GUIDELINES FOR HEALTHY EATING

- Eat only when hungry and drink when thirsty.
- Follow the body and not the mind - listen to your body and what it needs.
- Treat your digestion like a fire - stoke it with easy to assimilate light meals.
- The main meal is best eaten at lunchtime when the digestive fire is at its strongest.
- Eating in between meals slows down digestion and must be avoided in intestinal imbalance.
- Eat the last meal of the day early in the evening. Late eating can cause constipation, indigestion and the accumulation of toxins. Allow 2 hours between last meal and sleep.
- Eat to less than full capacity. It is recommended to eat until the stomach is $\frac{1}{2}$ full with food, $\frac{1}{4}$ full with liquid and to leave $\frac{1}{4}$ empty for space for the digestive process.
- Eat simple meals – simplicity in a meal, variety in the week!
- Eat in a peaceful environment in the spirit of harmony and gratitude; not driving, hurrying or standing.
- Eat fresh and seasonal food that is local and organically grown
- Avoid drinking water or other fluids with the meal. The liquid douses the digestive fire and makes the process sluggish. Taking water or fluids directly after the meal has the same counter-productive effects and promotes lethargy and weight gain.
- Chew the meal thoroughly and joyfully to aid proper assimilation of nutrients and digestion, so that the vital tissues are nourished, the body's hunger is fed and emotional cravings are satisfied.
- Eat fruit, including juice, away from other foods about one hour before or after a meal, because fruit tends to ferment in the digestive tract.
- Do not eat contra-indicated foods: Dairy and fruit, melon after other food, fruits with other food, fish and milk, eggs with milk, lemons with milk or yoghurt, yoghurt after dark, equal parts of ghee and honey (3:1 by weight), cooked honey.
- Eat warm and cooked food as this is easier to digest. Cold food, raw food, ice and cold water can weaken the digestive process.
- Avoid eating lots of raw and cooked food together.
- Antidote extreme qualities of food with digestive spices.
- Minimise the use of leftovers, tinned, frozen or preserved foods.
- Avoid excessive fasting or excessive eating.



The recipes



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Mung bean and coconut casserole

serves 4

½ cup mung beans
Enough water to cover the beans
1 tablespoon coconut oil
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
½ teaspoon yellow mustard seeds
1 red onions finely chopped
1 inch piece fresh ginger chopped
3 tablespoons shredded coconut
2 teaspoons coriander powder
1 teaspoon cinnamon powder
1 teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon fennel powder
Salt and black pepper to taste
Chopped coriander and sliced lemon to garnish (optional)

- Wash beans well and soak overnight or for 12 hours in plenty of water. Drain.
- Add the beans with just enough water to cover them, to a large saucepan and bring to the boil. Turn down heat and simmer until beans are soft and still whole. Keep an eye on the amount of water.
- Heat a small saucepan on medium heat, add the coconut oil, mustard and cumin seeds. Cook until the seeds pop and turn colour being careful not to burn the spices. 2 – 3 mins.
- Add the finely chopped onion and ginger and cook until onions turn glassy.
- Add shredded coconut, coriander, cinnamon, fennel and turmeric powders. Stir well and allow to cook for 2 mins. Add the cooked beans, salt and black pepper. Allow to simmer through for 5 minutes.
- Serve with rice, chopped coriander and a slice of fresh lemon.

Mung bean and coconut casserole: Green mung bean is sweet and astringent with a cooling energy. The mung bean is a high protein and energizer when eaten with a grain. It is light to digest and balances heat. People with indigestion can easily digest green mung beans as the combination of spices helps to remove the gas-forming effect of the beans.

Coconut is sweet and cooling, pacifies vata and pitta but may aggravate kapha in excess.



Sweet potato & red lentil dahl

serves 4

½ cup red lentils
1 cup water
1 tablespoon coconut oil
½ teaspoon yellow mustard seeds
1 small red onion chopped
1 inch piece fresh root ginger
chopped 1 small sweet potato diced
1 teaspoon cardamom powder
2 teaspoons cumin powder
1 teaspoon coriander powder
1 teaspoon turmeric
Salt and black pepper to taste

- Wash the lentils and soak overnight or for 12 hours in plenty of water. Drain.
- Add the lentils together with 1 cup water to a saucepan and bring to the boil. Turn down the heat and allow lentils to simmer until soft and broken and most of the water is absorbed. Remove from heat and set aside once cooked.
- Heat a small saucepan on medium heat; add the coconut oil and mustard seeds. When the seeds pop and turn colour add the onion, ginger and sweet potato. Cook until soft and glassy.
- Add cardamom, cumin, coriander and turmeric powders. Cook for 2 mins.
- Stir the spice & onion mix into the cooked lentils, add the salt and pepper to taste and blend with a hand blender for a smooth consistency.
- Serve with a grain.

Sweet potato and red lentil dahl: A good food to take during flu and diarrhea. Red lentils are a good source of iron, so are a good blood builder and liver cleanser.



Yellow mung dahl

serves 4

½ cup yellow mung dahl
1 - 2 cups water
1 tablespoon coconut oil
½ teaspoon yellow mustard seeds
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 inch fresh root ginger grated 1
teaspoon coriander powder
½ teaspoon garam masala
½ teaspoon turmeric
Salt and black pepper to taste
Garnish with chopped coriander

- Wash the lentils and soak overnight or for 12 hours in plenty of water. Drain.
- Add the lentils together with 1 cup of water to a saucepan and bring to the boil. Turn down the heat and allow lentils to simmer until soft and creamy. You may need to add a little more water. To aid cooking, wisk through a number of times. Once cooked, remove from the heat and set aside.
- Heat a small saucepan on medium heat, add the coconut oil, cumin and mustard seeds. When the seeds pop, turn down the heat and add the grated ginger, coriander, garan masala and turmeric powders. Be cautious not to let the mixture smoke and burn.
- Stir the spice mix into the cooked lentils, add the salt and pepper to taste as well as the chopped coriander.
- Serve with a grain.

Yellow mung dahl: Yellow mung dahl is sweet and cooling and mainly calms vata and pitta. It is very easy to digest and promotes strength. The spices in this recipe help to balance the drying, light and astringent qualities of the lentil that could aggravate vata. Good for fever, diarrhea, eye problems and skin conditions.



Creamy chickpea and spinach curry with baby marrow & sweet pepper

serves 4

½ cup chickpeas, washed and soaked 1
tablespoon coconut oil
½ teaspoon yellow mustard seeds
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 teaspoon fennel seeds
1 red onion finely chopped
1 inch piece fresh ginger, finely chopped
2 teaspoons coriander powder
1 teaspoon cumin powder

1 teaspoon garam masala powder
2 teaspoons turmeric
¼ cup desiccated coconut
1 tin coconut milk Spinach finely
chopped
Baby marrow thinly sliced or broccoli cut
into small florets Sweet red or yellow
pepper diced
Salt and black pepper to taste

- Wash and soak chickpeas for 12 hours or overnight.
- Rinse well and place soaked chickpeas into a saucepan, cover with plenty of water and bring to the boil. Chickpeas will take about 1 hour to cook so keep an eye on the water! If you are using tinned chickpeas they do not need pre-boiling. Cooking in a pressure cooking with take 15 - 20mins.
- Heat a large saucepan, add coconut oil, mustard, cumin and fennel seeds. Allow to pop and change colour.
- Then add chopped onion and grated ginger. Cook until onions are soft and glassy.
- Add powdered spice - coriander, cumin, garam masala, turmeric.
- Add desiccated coconut, stir well.
- Add chopped spinach together with tinned coconut milk.
- Turn down heat and simmer until spinach is tender.
- Blend using a hand blender. You may need to add a little water for the right consistency of the sauce.
- Add chopped vegetables to spinach and coconut mix. Simmer until vegetables tender.
- Add the cooked chickpeas together with salt and pepper to taste. Allow to simmer through for 5 mins.
- Serve with a grain and a wedge of fresh lemon.

Creamy chickpea and spinach curry with baby marrow & sweet pepper:

Chickpeas aggravate vata and are good for pitta and fine kapha. The coconut and spices help to balance the drying nature of the chickpeas, so vata can eat this once a week. Chickpeas are high in protein, low in fat and a helpful source of zinc, folate and phosphorous.



Cleansing Kitchari

serves 4

½ cup yellow mung dahl
½ cup white basmati rice
Seasonal vegetables of cooling nature – broccoli, carrots, kale 1 red onion finely chopped
1 inch piece fresh ginger, finely chopped
2 tablespoons shredded, unsweetened coconut
1 small handful fresh coriander, chopped
2 tablespoons coconut oil
1 teaspoon yellow mustard seeds
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
4 – 6 pieces cinnamon bark
2 teaspoons fennel powder
2 teaspoons turmeric powder
2 teaspoons coriander powder
1 teaspoon cumin powder
Salt and black pepper to taste

- Soak dahl and rice overnight or for 12 hours (phytic acid)
- Wash mung dahl and rice until water is clear.
- Heat a large pot on medium heat and add the coconut oil. Once oil has melted add mustard and cumin seeds. Allow the seeds to change colour and pop – this takes only a few minutes, being careful not to burn the spices. Then add the cinnamon bark.
- Add finely chopped onion and ginger. Turn down heat and allow onions to soften and turn glassy.
- Add powdered spice – fennel, turmeric, coriander, cumin as well as coconut and black pepper, sauté for a few minutes. Add washed mung dahl and rice mixing very well.
- Pour in 4 cups of water, bring to the boil and then turn down the heat and let it simmer. It is important not to stir!
- Wash and chop the vegetables into bite size pieces.
- When rice and dahl mix is nearly cooked, add the vegetables and salt, stirring lightly.
- Cook for another 5 mins until vegetables are soft.

Cleansing Kitchari: Kitchari provides solid nourishment while allowing the body to devote energy to healing. You can safely subsist on kitchari anytime in order to build vitality and strength as it helps balance all three doshas (constitutions). For restless Vata (Ether & Air) it is warming and grounding, for fiery Pitta (Fire & Water) its spices are calming and for chilly Kapha (Earth & Water), it provides healing warmth. It is very easy to digest and helps to clear toxins from the digestive system, blood and skin.

Ayurveda believes that all healing begins with the digestive tract, and kitchari can give it a much needed rest from constantly processing different foods while providing essential nutrients. The blend of rice and split mung beans offers an array of amino acids, the building blocks of protein. Its mixture of spices is believed to kindle the digestive fire, which can be weakened by poor food combinations.



Roasted vegetables with millet & homemade coriander pesto

serves 4

1 cup millet
2 cups water
1 tablespoon coconut oil
1 teaspoon coriander powder
1 teaspoon fennel powder
1 teaspoon cumin powder
1 red onion, cut into chunks
3 courgettes, diced
1 sweet red pepper, diced

Coriander Pesto

1 cup fresh coriander, chopped
Juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon
Plenty of olive oil
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dry roasted pumpkin or sunflower seeds
Salt and pepper to taste

- Wash the millet and soak overnight or for 12 hours. Rinse well.
 - Pre-heat oven to 200° Celsius
 - Melt oil in a baking dish. Once melted add powdered spice. Allow to sizzle.
 - Coat the diced vegetables with the oil and spice mix. Cook in the pre-heated oven until soft.
 - Dry roast millet in a medium sized saucepan for 2 – 3 minutes or until it releases a nutty aroma.
 - Add 2 cups water, bring to the boil and then turn down the heat and simmer until all the water is absorbed and millet is soft and swollen – about 20 mins.
 - Once oven roasted vegetables are cooked, stir into the millet. Add salt and pepper to taste.
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- Wash and chop the coriander.
 - Combine coriander, lemon juice, olive oil, salt, pepper and dry roasted seeds.
 - Blend with a hand blender until smooth. You may need to add more olive oil to get the right consistency.
 - Stir pesto into the millet and vegetable mix. Garnish with chopped coriander and serve with a wedge of lemon.



Akhni

serves 4

1 cup basmati rice – white, brown or any other grain

2 cups water

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon turmeric powder

$\frac{1}{2}$ sweet red pepper diced

Broccoli cut into florets

1 tablespoon coconut oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon yellow mustard seeds

3 – 4 cinnamon sticks

6 – 8 whole cardamom pods lightly crushed

6 – 8 whole black peppercorns

1 red onion finely chopped

1 inch piece fresh ginger, grated

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cumin powder

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon coriander powder

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon fennel powder

Juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon

Salt to taste

Garnish with sprouts, lemon juice and chopped coriander

- Wash the rice and soak overnight or for 12 hours. Rinse well.
- Place rice, 2 cups of water and turmeric in a saucepan on medium heat. Bring to the boil, turn down to low heat, and simmer until rice is light and fluffy. Place to one side.
- Heat another medium sized saucepan, add the oil, mustard seeds, cinnamon sticks, crushed cardamom and whole black peppercorns. Cook for a few minutes being careful not to burn.
- Add the chopped onion and grated ginger. Cook until onions are soft and glassy.
- Add the fennel, cumin and coriander powders.
- Add the vegetables.
- Allow to simmer on low heat, if necessary, add a dash of water.
- When the vegetables are cooked, add the cooked rice and stir into the vegetables carefully.
- Add the juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ a lemon and a little salt.
- Garnish with fresh coriander and sprouts



Vegetable stir steam

serves 4

1 tablespoon coconut oil

1 inch piece root ginger grated

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

1 teaspoon coriander powder

1 teaspoon fennel powder

Juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon

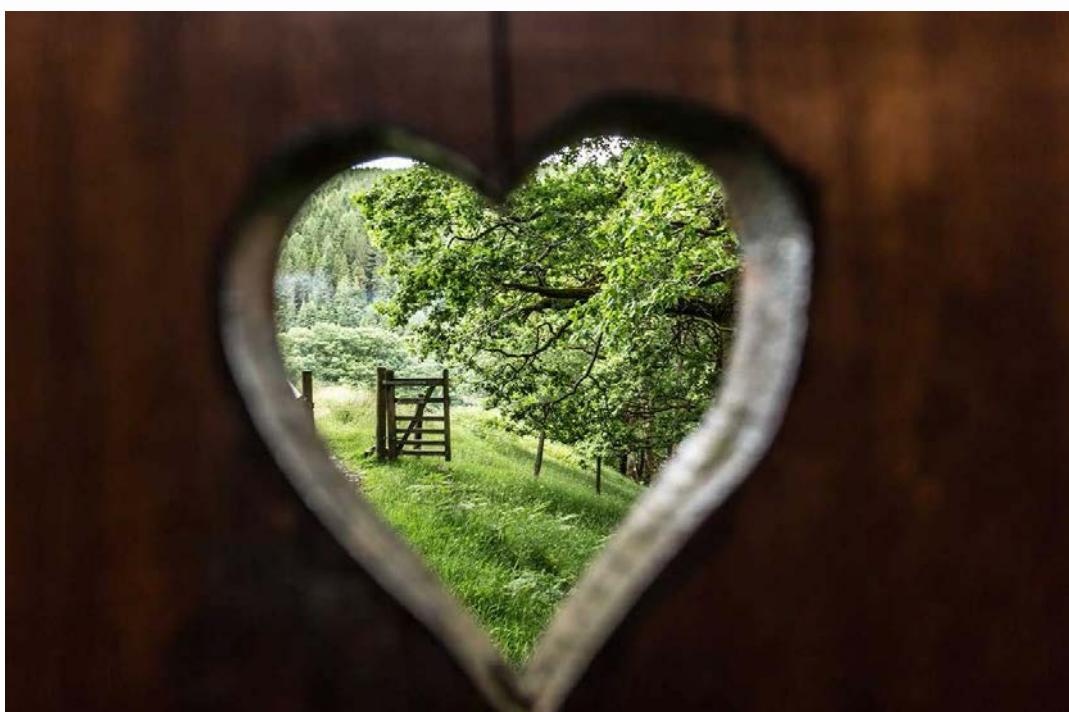
Salt and pepper to taste

Selection of seasonal vegetables with cooling energy - finely sliced
Toasted sunflower/pumpkin seeds

Freshly chopped coriander

Salt and pepper to taste

- Heat a frying pan on medium heat.
- Add coconut oil and cumin seeds.
- When cumin seeds have changed colour, add coriander and fennel powders. Allow to sizzle being careful not to burn.
- Add finely sliced vegetables, a dash of water and stir steam.
- Once vegetables are cooked and still slightly crunchy, add fresh lemon juice, salt and black pepper to taste.
- In a small fry pan, dry roast pumpkin and sunflower seeds for 5 mins until they change colour and pop.
- Serve with a grain, sunflower/pumpkin seeds and freshly chopped coriander.





Sweet potato & onion bake

serves 4

3 sweet potatoes, finely sliced
1 red onion, finely sliced
½ teaspoon cumin powder
½ teaspoon fennel powder
½ teaspoon coriander powder
½ teaspoon turmeric powder
1 tin organic coconut cream

- Pre-heat oven to 200° Celsius.
- Wash sweet potatoes, peel if non-organic.
- Finely slice sweet potatoes and onions.
- In a baking dish, layer sweet potatoes and onions alternately.
- In a separate bowl, mix coconut cream with cumin, coriander, fennel and turmeric powders.
- Pour the coconut & spice mix over the potatoes and onion.
- Bake in pre-heated oven for 20 – 30mins or until potatoes are soft.

Spinach / kale / cabbage subji (or any leafy green vegetable combination)

serves 4

Spinach/Kale/Cabbage
1 tablespoon coconut oil
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
2 teaspoons coriander powder
½ teaspoon turmeric powder

- Wash vegetables well and slice.
- Heat a saucepan on medium heat and add the coconut oil. Once hot, add cumin seeds. Once they have popped, add coriander and turmeric powders. Be very careful not to burn the spices.
- Then add the sliced vegetables. Stir well to coat the vegetables with the oil and spice mix.
- Turn off the heat and allow vegetables to steam through and remain crunchy.



Beetroot and carrot salad

serves 4

3 carrots
2 beetroots
1 tablespoon coconut oil
3 teaspoons cardamom powder
2 teaspoons coriander powder

- Wash, peel and grate beetroot and carrots.
- Heat a saucepan on medium heat, add coconut oil, coriander and cardamom powders.
- Allow to sizzle being careful not to burn.
- Add grated vegetables, stir through to coat, turn off heat and leave to lightly steam.

Cauliflower and green bean subji

serves 4

½ head cauliflower, cut into florets 1 cup green beans, diced

1 carrot, cut into small cubes
1 tablespoon coconut oil
1 inch piece fresh ginger, grated
½ teaspoon yellow mustard seeds
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 teaspoon coriander powder
½ teaspoon turmeric powder
Salt and black pepper to taste
Garnish with fresh chopped coriander

- Wash vegetables and drain well.
- Heat medium sized saucepan on medium heat. Add oil and once melted add mustard and cumin seeds. Cook spices until they pop and turn colour being careful not to burn.
- Add grated ginger, coriander and turmeric powders. Cook for 2 mins. Again watch out for burning.
- Add vegetables and stir well to coat the vegetables with the spice & oil mix.
- Add a dash of water, cover saucepan, lower the heat and cook until vegetables are soft.
- Garnish with fresh chopped coriander.



Cucumber raita

serves 4

1 cucumber
1 dessertspoon coconut oil
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon yellow mustard seeds
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cumin seeds
1 teaspoon coriander powder
1 small handful mint leaves finely chopped
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plain yoghurt
Salt and pepper to taste

- Skin and grate the cucumber. Squeeze off and discard any excess juice.
- Heat saucepan over medium heat, add coconut oil, mustard seeds and cumin seeds.
- Cook until the seeds pop and change colour.
- Add coriander powder and take the pan off the heat.
- Stir the yogurt, grated cucumber and chopped mint together in a bowel.
- Add the cooled spices to the yogurt mixture, mix well and serve.
- Add salt and pepper to taste

Cucumber raita: Cucumber is cooling and sweet, but the skin is bitter. Both cucumber and yogurt provoke kapha so kaphas can eat this occasionally with extra mustard seeds.

After dinner seeds for digestion

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup fennel seeds
1 tablespoon cumin seeds

- Check fennel seeds for any twigs.
- Heat frying pan on medium heat. Add fennel seeds and roast, stirring constantly, until slightly brown, about 2 minutes. Place to one side
- Roast cumin seeds, for a minute or so, until fragrant and slightly brown.
- Add to the dish of fennel and mix well.
- Store in a glass jar.



Coconut, coriander and mint chutney

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh coriander, chopped
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh mint, chopped
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup coconut unsweetened and shredded
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water
1 inch piece fresh ginger, grated
1 tablespoon coconut oil
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon yellow mustard seeds
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon fennel powder
Juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ a lemon
Salt to taste

- Wash coriander and mint and remove stems.
- Put into blender together with coconut, water and ginger.
- Blend until finely ground paste. May be necessary to stir down and add more water.
- Heat saucepan on medium heat, add coconut oil.
- Once oil has melted add cumin and mustard seeds.
- Cook until seeds turn colour and pop. Then add fennel powder and remove saucepan from the heat.
- Let it cool and add to coriander/mint/coconut paste.
- Squeeze in lemon juice, add salt and stir gently.

Homemade salad dressing

serves 4

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh lemon juice Dash of water
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup olive oil
1 dessertspoon honey
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon turmeric powder $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon coriander powder $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon fennel powder Salt & black pepper to taste $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cumin Powder



Mint chai

serves 4

- 1 inch piece fresh ginger, grated
- 4 - 6 cardamom pods, split open
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon licorice bark
- 2 pinches nutmeg powder
- 1 teaspoon coriander seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 teaspoon fennel seeds
- ¼ cup fresh mint leaves OR 1 tablespoon dried mint
- 4 cups water

Boil the water and add the spices. Turn off the heat and cover. Let stand for 5 mins.

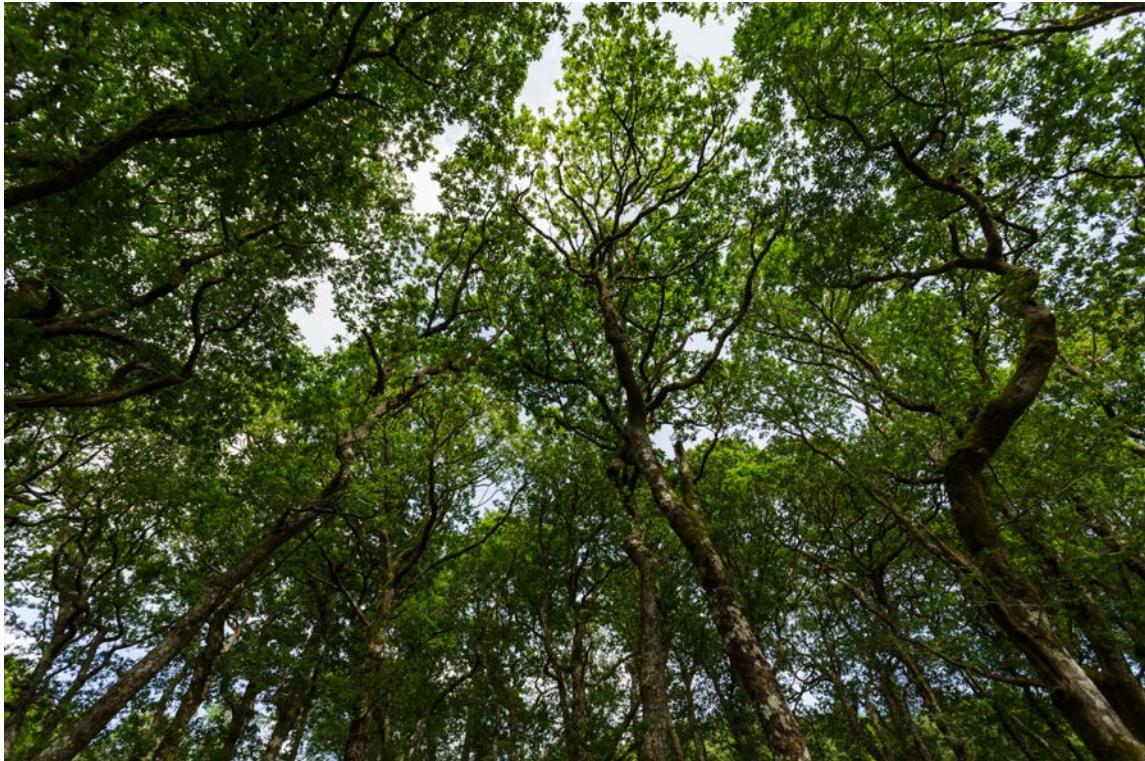
Strain and sweeten according to taste.

Mint chai: Ayurveda does not recommend ice cold drinks at anytime as the cold is a shock to the system and puts out agni – the digestive fire. The combination of spices helps clear acidity and inflammation from the digestive tract. They help balance pitta secretions thereby encouraging healthy digestion and absorption. This tea can be used when there are signs of acidity and hyperactive digestive system.





Spices and Ingredients



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AYURVEDIC COOKING: SPICES

Allspice is pungent, heating, balances K and V and unbalances P. It relieves gas, promotes peristalsis and stimulates metabolism. Best for autumn, winter and spring.

Anise is pungent, heating, balances K and V and unbalances P. It relieves gas and promotes digestion. Best for autumn, winter and spring.

Basil is pungent, heating, balances K and V and unbalances P if taken in excess. Basil is said to open the heart and mind to the Divine. Good for all seasons but less in summer.

Bay leaves are sweet, pungent, heating, balance K and V and unbalance P if taken in excess. They stimulate digestion and relieve gas. It promotes sweating and can be a diuretic. Best for autumn, winter and spring.

Black pepper is pungent, heating, balances K and V and is neutral to P, but unbalances P if taken in excess. It is a powerful digestive stimulant that relieves gas, neutralizes toxins, and burns up mucus and promotes health in the lungs and heart. It has been used in food and ceremonies since Vedic times in India. Good for all seasons.

Cardamom is pungent, sweet, heating and balances V. Its sweetness helps to alleviate P if not taken in excess and balances K. It is one of the best herbs for enhancing digestion, relieving gas and strengthening the stomach. It is good for coughing and breathlessness as well as burning urination. Good for all seasons.

Cayenne is very pungent and heating, balances K and V and unbalances P. Cayenne can be thought of containing a great deal of sun energy because of its dramatic heating effect. It has the ability to relieve internal and external chilliness. Cayenne also helps to alleviate indigestion, stimulates the digestion and burns up toxins in the digestive system. It is good for circulation. It is pleasantly warming on a cold winter day. Best for autumn, winter and spring.

Cinnamon is pungent, sweet, astringent and heating. It balances K and V but in excess may unbalance P. Cinnamon's sweet, astringent qualities make it suitable for Ps who are not in a state of excess. It stimulates digestion and circulation, relieves gas and balances blood sugar levels. It also helps to prevent heart attacks owing to its blood thinning properties. Good for all seasons.

Clove is pungent, heating, balances K and V and unbalances P. Cloves stimulate digestion and metabolism and eliminate gas. Acts on sinus and bronchial congestion. Best for autumn, winter and spring.



Coriander is bitter, astringent and cooling. It balances V, P and K (tridoshic). It helps to cool P aggravations and is good in general on a hot summer day. It can reduce fever and is a diuretic. Good for all seasons.

Cumin is bitter, astringent, pungent and cooling and balances V, P and K (tridoshic). It stimulates digestion and relieves gas. Wonderful medicinal qualities that can be used for all digestive complaints. Improves absorption of minerals in the intestines and can act as a mild pain reliever – stomach, nausea and diarrhea. Very restorative to the tissues. Good for all seasons.

Curry leaf (neem leaf) is pungent, sweet and heating. It balances K and V and unbalances P. Best for autumn, winter and spring.

Dill is pungent, bitter and cooling. It balances P and K and is neutral for V. Dill helps with digestion and is a good cooling herb from the summer. Good for all seasons.

Fennel is sweet, astringent and cooling. It calms and balances V, P and K (tridoshic). It is good for strengthening the digestive fire without unbalancing P. It helps to cool pitta, relieves gas and digestive slowness. Can help get rid of intestinal worms. Fennel is such a good digestive aid that in India it is used as an after-dinner ‘mint’. Good for all seasons.

Fenugreek is bitter, sweet, pungent and heating. It balances K and V and although it slightly unbalances P, it can be taken in small amounts by Ps. Fenugreek helps digestion. Fenugreek sprouts are good for indigestion. Good for all seasons.

Garlic is pungent, heating, balances K and V and unbalances P. It is a digestive stimulant, dispels gas and is a great general healer. It contains all the Ayurvedic tastes but sour. In its sun-dried form, garlic’s characteristic aroma and stimulating qualities are significantly diminished, so it can be considered more of a sattvic and balancing food than the heating and activating raw form. Best for autumn, winter and spring.

Ginger is pungent, sweet, heating, balances K, V and P. It stimulates digestion, improves absorption and assimilation of nutrients, relieves gas if not taken in excess and helps to detoxify the body, especially the liver. It improves circulation, relieves mucus congestion (has an affinity for the lungs); helps break down blood clots and may aid in preventing heart attacks. Good remedy for common cold, cough and breathlessness. Dry ginger is more balancing for K because of its drying qualities and fresh-squeezed ginger is slightly more balancing for vata because of its more fluid qualities. Its sweetness allows Ps to take it in minimal amounts. When ginger is organic, freshly picked and young, the skin does not need to be peeled. Good for all seasons, but less in summer.



Horseradish is pungent, heating, balances K and V and unbalances P. It helps to relieve mucus and stimulates digestion. Best taken in small amounts and can be used to help heal asthma.

Mustard seed is pungent, heating, balances K and V and unbalances P. It stimulates digestion and relieves gas. Black mustard seeds are slightly more heating than yellow mustard seeds. The most powerful action of the mustard seed is to help heal the bronchial system and to get rid of intestinal worms. Also a digestive. Best for autumn, winter and spring.

Nutmeg is astringent, pungent, heating and sweet. It balances K and V and unbalances P. It increases food absorption, particularly in the small intestine. It helps to relieve V in the colon. It is often used with cardamom. Too much nutmeg has been known to have a disorientating effect on the mind. Helps relieve cough, induces sleep and can reduce pain. Best for autumn, winter and spring.

Onion is pungent, sweet and subtly cooling to the digestive tract in its post-digestive effect. In its raw form it balances K, slightly unbalances V and unbalances P. Its sweetness, watery properties and post-digestive slowing of digestion may unbalance K if K is already in excess. Best for autumn, winter and spring.

Saffron is cooling, sweet, astringent and tonifying, aids digestion and is balancing to V, P and K (tridoshic) and has an affinity for the female reproductive system. It improves skin colour and complexion, is a blood cleanser, liver detoxifier, nerve tonic, blood thinner and heart tonic. Aphrodisiac and increases sperm count.

Salt is heating, increases P and K and decreases V. Salt is a digestive and improves flavor of food. It is a laxative and antiseptic and can be used to induce vomiting. Rock salt is rich in minerals and a strong digestive with a sweet post-digestive effect therefore not as aggravating to P and K.

Turmeric is bitter, astringent, pungent and heating. Is known as the best medicine in Ayurveda as it cures the whole person. Taken in small amounts it balances V, P and K (tridoshic). It may unbalance V and P if taken in excess. It is good for digestion, relieves gas and increases peristalsis and maintains the flora of the intestine. It has tonic properties and is an antibiotic. It improves and balances metabolism. It is said to purify the subtle nerve channels of the body helping to reduce anxiety and stress; is an anti-inflammatory used to treat arthritis and period pains. Good for all seasons.



INGREDIENTS

Oils are hot in nature. Animal oils are the hottest, then oil from nuts and seeds. Vegetable oils are the least warm in nature. Ghee, butter and coconut oil are best for summer as they possess strong cooling energy.

Coconut oil: The health benefits of coconut oil include hair care, skin care, stress relief, cholesterol level maintenance, weight loss, boosted immune system, proper digestion and regulated metabolism. It also provides relief from kidney problems, heart diseases, high blood pressure, diabetes, HIV, and cancer, while helping to improve dental quality and bone strength. These benefits of oil can be attributed to the presence of lauric acid, capric acid and caprylic acid, and their respective properties, such as antimicrobial, antioxidant, anti-fungal, antibacterial and soothing qualities.

Pulses are edible seeds of pod-bearing plants, such as peas, lentils and beans that have been sun dried. When the skins of the beans are removed and the beans are split, they are known as dhal. Pulses form an important source of protein, iron & potassium, complex carbohydrates and fibre in a vegetarian diet. They are also comforting, filling and low in fat (compared with animal sources of protein). They are gluten free and an excellent source of B vitamins. Recent research has established that beans have anti-aging agents or antioxidants that are found in the seed coat.

Pulses with cooling energy: aduki beans, black-eyed peas, chickpeas, red lentils, mung beans, mung dahl, white beans

Pulses with warming energy: kidney beans, brown lentils, chickpeas, mung beans, red lentils

Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel – the bran, germ and endosperm. Examples include sorghum, buckwheat, quinoa, spelt, barley brown rice, millet, rye, oatmeal, corn, oats and wild rice. Foods made from whole grains contain all the naturally occurring nutrients of the entire grain seed.

Refined grains have been milled, a process that removes the bran and germ. This is done to give grains a finer texture and improve their shelf life, but it also removes dietary fibre, iron, and many B vitamins. Examples of refined grains include white flour, cornmeal, couscous, white rice.

White basmati rice is the easiest to digest and most cooling energetically. Brown rice is more heating and heavier on the digestive system even though it has a higher nutritional value. Wild rice is a rich source of minerals and also slightly more heating.



Quinoa is a better quality of protein than meat and is rich in minerals, especially iron. Quinoa is sweet, astringent, cooling and grounding. It decreases Vata and Pitta and balances Kapha.

Millet is drying and also very good for the spleen and helps to ground and calm an anxious mind. It is light, sweet and heating, increases Vata, balances Pitta and decreases Kapha.

Buckwheat is a gluten free grain, helps to lower lipid levels therefore beneficial in controlling blood pressure and cholesterol and is high in magnesium which treats stress. It is astringent, sweet and heating which balances Vata, increases Pitta and decreases Kapha.

Most whole grains are good in the summer months, as they are strengthening and harmonizing but not overheating. Even those that increase heat do so only slightly so they should only be avoided as primary staple foods in the diet in acute inflammatory conditions.

Grains with cooling energy: amaranth, barley, millet, oats, pasta, quinoa, rice – basmati (brown & white), wheat

Grains with warming energy: buckwheat, corn, millet, short grain brown rice, brown basmati rice, rye, spelt

Benefits of eating grains: reduces the risk of coronary heart disease; reduce the risk of strokes and type 2 diabetes; improve weight maintenance; reduce the risk of inflammatory diseases; improve blood pressure levels; reduce constipation

Vegetables: The preferred method of preparing vegetables in Ayurveda is either to sauté them slowly in ghee/coconut oil and spices or to cook them with spices in a small amount of water. Ayurveda does not recommend eating raw vegetables in quantity, as they are heavy, rough and difficult to digest. Raw vegetables or salads are better eaten in hot weather rather than in winter, and preferably at the noon meal, when digestive fire is high. When 2 or more vegetables are cooked together they tend to 'learn how to get along together' making it easier for digestion.

When choosing your vegetables, remember simplicity in a meal and variety in the week and also to balance your selection of root and green vegetables.

Most vegetables are good for summer eating. Nightshades, particularly tomatoes, but sometimes also green and hot peppers, eggplant and potatoes can aggravate heat by their acid content, as can chard and spinach.



Vegetables with cooling energy: artichoke, asparagus, beetroot, broccoli, cabbage, cooked carrots, cauliflower, celery, coriander leaf, cucumber, dandelion greens, fennel fresh, green beans, kale, leeks cooked, lettuce, okra, red onions cooked, parsnips, peas, sweet peppers, sweet potatoes, spinach, sprouts, summer squash, zucchini.

Vegetables with warming energy: beans, beetroot, Brussels sprouts, butternut, carrots, corn, dandelion greens, eggplant, kohlrabi, leeks, mustard greens, olives, onions – white, sweet peppers, white potato, sweet potato, radish, spinach, winter squash, tomato, turnips.



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www.ecoretreats.co.uk

CONTACT



PHONE

01654-702-708



MOBILE

07377-459-672



EMAIL

margaret@.ecoretreats.co.uk

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