

# Add a Little Spice to Your Life!

## Grab & Go Spice Kits for Adults: **Ginger**

Do you love to cook? Do you like to try new flavors and recipes? Or maybe you are in a cooking rut and don't know how to start expanding your cooking repertoire. Let us help you get spicy in the kitchen. Your kit includes a pre-measured packet of ground ginger and a few recipes.

**What is ginger?** Ginger, whose scientific name is *Zingiber officinale*, is a herbaceous perennial plant in the Zingiberaceae family making it a close relative of cardamom and turmeric. It originally grew in Southeast Asia but is now widely available from growers around the world. The ginger plant grows from a large, knobby underground stem known as a rhizome. Both fresh and ground ginger come from the rhizome which is often called ginger root. Gingerol, the main bioactive compound in ginger, plus shogaol and zingerone, which are produced when ginger is dried or cooked, have powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects. Some of the many health benefits associated with ginger are improving immunity, relieving nausea and upset stomach, lowering blood sugar levels, reducing swelling, and aiding in weight loss.

**Easy ways to add ginger to your diet.** Fresh ginger which is pungent, spicy, and sweet can be grated, steeped, pickled, sliced and candied. Ground ginger, also known as ginger powder, is made from pulverized, dried ginger root and is less pungent than fresh ginger. Ground ginger can be used to lend a spicy, warm flavor to carrots, sweet potatoes, cake batter, smoothies or fruit salad.

- It can be used to make ginger tea. Measure ¼ tsp ground ginger into a heat proof mug. Pour 1 cup of boiling water over it, cover, and let sit until cool enough to drink.
- Ginger tea can be used to make ginger herbal jello by adding ¼ cup of cooled ginger tea to a ¼ box of jello powder, stir until dissolved, then add ⅛ cup more tea. Pour into a dish or mold, refrigerate until firm.
- Make ginger syrup by starting with a strong ginger tea, ½ tsp ground ginger to 1 cup boiling water. While the tea is still warm, gently stir in two to three times as much honey as tea. Once the ingredients are fully incorporated, pour into a sterilized jar, and store in the refrigerator.

**See below for these recipes featuring ground ginger:**

*Ginger Almonds*

*Fluffy Pumpkin Pancakes*

*Cranberry Harvest Muffins*

*Chicken Tagine with Apricots and Almonds*

**Need more inspiration?**

You can watch a six-part Great Courses class called ***The Everyday Gourmet: Essential Secrets of Spices in Cooking*** for free with your library card by using a [Hoopla Great Courses BingePass](#) or streaming on [Kanopy](#).

# Ginger Almonds

By Alton Brown

Yield: 1 pound or approximately 4 cups

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon dark sesame oil
- 1 dried arbol chile, stemmed and broken into small pieces
- 1 pound whole natural almonds
- 1 tablespoon less-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

## Preparation

1. Heat oven to 250 degrees F.
2. Combine the ginger and salt in a large mixing bowl and set aside.
3. Heat the olive oil and sesame oil in a 12-inch saute pan over medium-low heat. Add the arbol chile and cook, stirring frequently, until the chile begins to give off an aroma, 30 to 45 seconds. Add the almonds and cook, stirring frequently until lightly toasted, approximately 5 minutes. Add the soy sauce and Worcestershire sauce and cook until reduced slightly and the pan looks dry, approximately 1 minute. Immediately remove the nuts to the large bowl and toss with the ginger mixture.
4. Spread the coated nuts into a single layer on a half sheet pan lined with parchment paper and bake in the oven for 20 minutes. Remove the pan to a cooling rack for at least 30 minutes or until completely cool. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

# Fluffy Pumpkin Pancakes

By Yossy Arefi

Yield: 12 to 14 pancakes

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 ½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- ⅛ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 ½ cups buttermilk
- ¾ cup pumpkin puree
- 2 eggs
- 3 tablespoons melted butter, plus more for greasing the skillet
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

## Preparation

1. In a large bowl, whisk the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt and spices until well combined.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk the buttermilk, pumpkin puree, eggs, melted butter, and vanilla extract until well combined.
3. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and gently fold with a rubber spatula until just combined. (A few small lumps are O.K.)
4. Heat a lightly greased griddle or nonstick skillet over medium-low heat. Drop the pancakes into the pan by the ¼ cup, making sure to leave plenty of room in between for the batter to expand.
5. Cook for a minute or two, until the batter bubbles at the edges and browns on the bottom, then carefully flip. Cook another minute or two, until the batter is completely cooked through and the pancakes are puffy and deep golden brown. Repeat until all of the batter is used. Serve the pancakes as you make them or keep the pancakes warm as you cook them by setting them on a baking sheet in a 250- degree oven.

# Cranberry Harvest Muffins

By Ina Garten

Yield: 18 large muffins

## INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 ¼ cups whole milk
- 2 extra-large eggs
- ½ pound unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 1 ½ cups coarsely chopped fresh cranberries
- ½ cup medium-diced Calimyrna figs
- ¾ cup coarsely chopped hazelnuts, toasted and skinned
- ¾ cup brown sugar, packed
- ¾ cup granulated sugar

## Preparation

1. Heat oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Line 18 muffin cups with paper liners. Sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, and ginger in a large bowl. Make a well in the center of the mixture and add the milk, eggs, and melted butter. Stir quickly just to combine. Add the cranberries, figs, hazelnuts, and both sugars and stir just to distribute the fruit, nuts, and sugar evenly throughout the batter.
3. Spoon the batter into the paper liners, filling each one to the top. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until browned on top and a toothpick inserted in the center of the muffins comes out clean.

# Chicken Tagine With Apricots and Almonds

By Baija Lafridi

Yield: 4 servings

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 ¼ teaspoons salt
- 3 tablespoons plus ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 (3-lb.) chicken, cut into 6 pieces, wings and backbone discarded
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 medium red onion, halved, then sliced ¼ inch thick
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 5 sprigs fresh cilantro
- 5 sprigs fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 ½ cups water
- 2 tablespoons mild honey
- 1 (3-inch) cinnamon stick
- ½ cup dried Turkish apricots, separated into halves
- ⅓ cup whole blanched almonds

## Preparation

1. Stir together ground cinnamon, ginger, turmeric, pepper, 1 teaspoon salt, and 2 tablespoons oil in a large bowl. Add chicken and turn to coat well.
2. Heat butter and 1 tablespoon oil in a base of tagine (or in a skillet), uncovered, over moderate heat until hot but not smoking, then brown half of chicken, skin sides down, turning over once, 8 to 12 minutes. Transfer to plate. Brown remaining chicken in the same manner, adding any spice mixture left in the bowl.
3. Add onion and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt to tagine and cook, uncovered, stirring frequently, until soft, about 8 minutes. Add garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, 3 minutes. Tie cilantro and parsley into a bundle with kitchen string and add to

tagine along with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water, chicken, and any juices accumulated on the plate. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, 30 minutes.

4. While the chicken cooks, bring honey, remaining cup water, cinnamon stick, and apricots to a boil in a 1- to 2-quart heavy saucepan, then reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, until apricots are very tender (add more water if necessary). Once apricots are tender, simmer until liquid is reduced to a glaze, 10 to 15 minutes.
5. While apricots cook, heat remaining  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup oil in a small skillet over moderate heat and cook almonds, stirring occasionally, until just golden, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer with a slotted spoon to paper towels to drain.
6. Ten minutes before the chicken is done, add apricot mixture to tagine. Discard herbs and cinnamon stick, then serve chicken sprinkled with almonds on top.