

Berbere Spice Blend

Ingredients

Sweet paprika	1/3 cup	Ground cardamom	1½ tsp.
Cayenne pepper	2½ Tbsp.	Ground cinnamon	1 Tbsp.
Fenugreek seeds	3 Tbsp.	Ground ginger	2 tsp.
Coriander seeds	2 Tbsp.	Ground turmeric	1½ tsp.
Cumin seeds	1½ Tbsp.	Ground cloves	½ tsp.
Black peppercorns	2 tsp.	Dried thyme	½ tsp.
Allspice berries	1 tsp.		

Directions

Yield: approximately 1 cup

1. Toast **fenugreek seeds** in a dry skillet over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, for *2-3 minutes* until fragrant and darkened one shade. Remove immediately when nutty, maple-like aroma develops. Transfer to a plate to cool.
2. Toast **coriander seeds** in the same skillet over medium heat, stirring frequently, for *3-4 minutes* until fragrant and slightly darker. Transfer to cool.
3. Toast **cumin seeds**, **black peppercorns**, and **allspice berries** together over medium heat, stirring constantly, for *2-3 minutes* until **cumin** becomes fragrant and darkens slightly. Transfer to cool.
4. Let all toasted spices cool for *5 minutes*. Grind each group separately in a spice grinder or mortar and pestle to a fine powder. **Fenugreek** is particularly hard—grind until no large pieces remain.

5. In a medium bowl, combine all ground toasted spices with **sweet paprika, cayenne pepper, ground cardamom, ground cinnamon, ground ginger, ground turmeric, ground cloves, and dried thyme**.
6. Whisk thoroughly for *2-3 minutes* to ensure even distribution of all spices. Optionally sift for ultra-fine texture.
7. Store in an airtight container in a cool, dark place. Peak flavor within *2-3 months*, still good for *6 months*. Flavor mellows and marries over the first week.

Usage Notes

For stews and braises, use *2-3 Tbsp.* per pound of meat. Bloom **berbere** in oil or butter over medium heat for *1-2 minutes* before adding liquids to fully develop aromatic compounds. The spices require fat and time to release their complete flavor complexity.