



A Spice for the Season – Ginger

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As the weather turns from warm to cool, we tend to change our eating patterns. Your body burns more calories trying to keep you warm, so we naturally tend to gravitate toward warm foods. Instead of craving fresh salads as in summer, we are drawn to foods like soups, teas, and root vegetables.

After spending time outdoors during cold weather, either playing or earning your living, you'll appreciate the foods that have a warming effect. Warming spices (cinnamon, curry, paprika, saffron and ginger) are not only more popular in the fall and winter months but have colors to mirror the associated colors of these seasons. Warming spices are known in Ayurvedic medicine to stimulate your "inner fire", allowing you to feel more energetic. These spices are also known in "Western" medicine to help joint pain and improving circulation.

My focus is on Ginger, a favorite warming spice. Ginger is the underground rhizome of the ginger plant, known botanically as *Zingiber officinale*. In other words we usually consume the root of the ginger plant, or ginger root. The plant's botanical name is thought to be derived from its Sanskrit name "singabera" which means "horn shaped," a physical characteristic that ginger reflects.

Fresh ginger can be stored in the refrigerator for up to three weeks if it is left unpeeled. Stored unpeeled in the freezer, it will keep for up to six months. Ginger is readily available at grocery stores in the produce section. Always try to use fresh ginger over dried because the benefits of this spice are much more useful in the fresh form.

Ginger has multiple benefits such as being useful for motion sickness, morning sickness, and arthritis. The anti-inflammatory compounds called gingerols have been shown to decrease pain and improve mobility in people suffering from joint pain. Ginger is also useful in liquid form for a sore inflamed throat either as a tea, elixir, or tincture. If you are interested in Ginger capsules and/or elixir, they are available at the Middle Path Medicine Supplement Shop.

Ideas for how to include fresh ginger on your plate:

- Add extra inspiration to your rice side dishes by sprinkling grated ginger, sesame seeds and nori strips on top.
- Combine ginger, tamari, olive oil and garlic to make a wonderful salad dressing.
- Add ginger and orange juice to puréed sweet potatoes.
- Add grated ginger to your favorite stuffing for baked apples.
- Spice up your healthy sautéed vegetables by adding freshly minced ginger.

Here's how to make the tastiest ginger tea you've ever had!

Ingredients

- 4-6 thin slices raw ginger
- 1 1/2 - 2 cups water
- juice from 1/2 lime, or to taste
- 1-2 tbsp honey, or to taste

Preparation

- Slice the ginger and slice thinly to maximize the surface area. This will help you make a very flavorful ginger tea.
- Boil the ginger in water for at least 10 minutes. For a stronger and tangier tea, allow to boil for 20 minutes or more, and use more slices of ginger.
- Remove from heat and add lime juice and honey to taste.
- The secret to making a really flavorful ginger tea is to use plenty of ginger - more than you think you will need - and also to add a bit of lime juice and honey to your ginger tea. You will also probably want to add more honey than you think you will need as well.

Your Journey to Health and Healing,
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References:

Upon Request

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