

THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

As president of Outlander Spices, I would like to thank you, our customer, for your support. We endeavor to provide you with the highest quality spices on the market today, and to be your number one resource for exciting and inspiring cooking advice.

The following comments are fairly typical of the letters and e-mails people send us every day:

Outlander Spices has been great for my restaurant! Our customers love our new recipes and keep coming back. Thanks!

—Bob Gardner, Phila., PA

I love to cook, but often felt like I was using spices incorrectly. Thanks to your Web site and newsletter, I'm always assured the foods I cook taste great!

—Jan Salinsky, Dayton, OH

This newsletter is unique, because we're sending it to both our commercial clients, such as restaurants and grocers, and to our customers who use our products at home. We're sure that many people cooking at home will be interested in our tips for professional chefs. Likewise, the professionals will be interested to learn more about what people outside their industry think about cooking and spices.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter, and that you learn something new. And if you ever have a comment, positive or negative, please contact us. Reaching out to every kitchen - that's Outlander Spices!

Jake O'Connell, President

Outlander Spices

OUTLANDER SPICE COLLECTION

Need a great way to start a collection of spices for either yourself or someone you know? Check out our new Outlander Spice Collection on sale now through the end of the year. The set includes:

- Ten popular spices such as oregano, basil, bay leaves, and cinnamon. We've also included some of our personal favorites, such as cardamom, cumin, and star anise.
- Two stackable storage trays
- Quick reference sheet with tips using spices
- *Spice it Up with Outlander*, a 24 page recipe book

If you would like Southwestern or Asian cooking, you might also like our Deluxe or Complete Collections. The Deluxe Collection includes your choice of either five spices for Southwestern cooking, or five spices for Asian cooking. With our Complete Collection, you get them all!

The Outlander Spice Collection makes the perfect gift for those hard-to-shop-for relatives and friends. With the mouth-watering spices and the quick reference sheet, it's a unique way to let those you care about improve their culinary concoctions. Order yours today on our website!



SPICES OF THE MONTH

Each month, we'll highlight two or three spices. We'll include background information on each spice, along with practical tips for using these spices in your own cooking.

Bay Leaves

Bay leaves come in many varieties. The popular American variety, also known as sweet bay and laurel, is a kitchen staple used widely to flavor meats, soups, stews, gravies, and vegetable dishes. The elliptical leaves are green, glossy, and generally grow to about 3 inches in length.

By themselves, bay leaves are very bitter and hard to chew. Rarely will you find them as the main flavor in a dish. Instead, bay leaves are typically used with other spices to bring flavors together, give depth, and add richness to many types of cooking. You can add them to fish dishes, meats, vegetables, soups, stews, marinades, sauces, and even custards. The key to getting the most out of bay leaves is to always use them sparingly. A little goes a long way!

One of the most flavorful uses for Bay leaves is in the classic herb combination Bouquet Garni, with parsley and thyme. Traditionally, these fresh herbs are tied together, added to a dish, allowed to simmer, and then lifted out at the end of cooking. Dried herbs can be substituted and tied in a bit of cheesecloth. Add other herbs as the nature of the dish and your whims dictate. Try adding lemon, sage, and tarragon with chicken; rosemary and mint with lamb; green peppercorns, orange, and savory to beef.

Cilantro/Coriander

What many people don't realize is that cilantro is actually the leaf of the young coriander plant. Coriander is an herb in the parsley family, similar to anise. It is typically grown in California, although its origins trace back to the southern Mediterranean.

Chinese, Thai, and Indonesian cuisines are well known for their use of both cilantro and coriander. Chopped, the leaves, and the more pungent roots, add zest to most Thai curries, and the ground coriander seeds also give depth to the flavors. India curry powders owe a lot of their aromatic, citrus quality to ground coriander. The Chinese, quite accurately, call cilantro "fragrant greens," adding it to stir fries and sauces to enliven them and add a fresh, pungent taste. The whole plant, roots and all, is often boiled and eaten as a vegetable. Many dishes, even if they don't list cilantro as one of the ingredients, will call for it as a garnish to give the food a more appealing look.

Cilantro is also a perfect addition to Mexican dishes. It makes a great addition to salsas and bean dips. Mix crushed cilantro into sour cream and use it as a topping for chili, tacos, or enchiladas. Sprinkle cilantro over stir-fried vegetables for color and Asian flavor. Add cilantro to sesame ginger dressing when making Chinese chicken salad.

Before it is used, cilantro should be crushed, either by hand or with a mortar and pestle. Cilantro's taste is a fragrant mix of parsley and citrus. When cooking with cilantro, add it at the very end, as overcooking can muddy the taste.

OUTLANDER COOKING

Outlander Spices is proud to present our new cookbook for 2013! The cookbook, titled *Outlander Cooking*, not only contains hundreds of great recipes, but is also a guide for incorporating our spices into your everyday cooking.

Outlander Cooking contains useful sidebars on special topics, such as “The Best Basils” and “Using Thyme Wisely” together with many lists grouping spices for different uses.

The cookbook contains suggestions and recipes for just about every spice we sell. We take those classic dishes you most love and spice them up with new ingredients and combinations of flavors. Each new idea or technique in the book is accompanied with full color pictures and easy-to-follow instructions. *Outlander Cooking* also contains a large assortment of specialty recipes sent in to us from readers all over the country.

There are recipes for parsley jelly, salad dressings, and a wide variety of sauces and gravies. For appetizers, there are numerous dips, patés, breads, and caviar, as well as a number of excellent main courses of beef, pork, turkey, and quail. All dishes are for home cooks who want food that is both good and healthy.

Whether you want to simply spice up your everyday meals or go beyond the usual, it's all here. This is an excellent resource we guarantee you will turn to again and again. Purchase yours today online!

FOUR NEW LOCATIONS

After a very successful year with our east coast retail stores, Outlander Spices is proud to announce the grand opening of four new stores out West! Until now, our west coast shoppers could only order items online, but the strategically placed new stores will offer shoppers direct access to our many fine products.

The new stores, located in Seattle, Portland, Reno, and Santa Barbara, sell our full line of products and provide in-house cooking classes taught by some of the most well-known chefs in the business. The Portland and Santa Barbara locations also include our world-renowned Outlander Café. The cafés, which maintain both lunch and dinner hours, provide a full menu of mouth-watering entrées, many of which we recommend in our cookbooks. If you're in the area, check us out!

COOKING WITH CHILE PEPPERS

Ever wonder just how hot certain chile peppers are? Or what foods are most commonly prepared with them? In 1912, a chemist by the name of Wilbur Scoville developed a method to measure the heat level of chile peppers that is still commonly used today.

The pungency, or heat factor, of chile peppers is caused by the amount of Capsaicin they contain. Scoville developed a subjective taste procedure by mixing ground chiles with sugar water, and using a panel of testers to repeatedly sip the solutions until they were diluted enough that the liquid no longer burned their mouths. His system rates chiles in multiples of 100 units. Below is a list of commonly used chile peppers, their Scoville heat rating, and some common ways they are used in cooking.

SPICE TIPS

Store spices in a cool, dark place. Humidity, light, and heat will cause herbs and spices to lose their flavor more quickly. Although the most convenient place for your spice rack may be above your stove, moving your spices to a different location may keep them fresh longer.

As a general rule, herbs and ground spices will retain their best flavors for a year. Whole spices may last for 3 to 5 years. Proper storage will result in longer freshness times.

When possible, grind whole spices in a grinder or mortar & pestle just prior to using. Toasting whole spices in a dry skillet over medium heat before grinding will bring out even more flavor. Be careful not to burn them!

Because the refrigerator is a humid environment, you shouldn't refrigerate herbs and spices. To keep large quantities of spices fresh, store them in the freezer in tightly sealed containers.