

Jerk Seasoning

Jamaican jerk seasoning is thought to have come with escaped Koromantee African slaves to the mountains of Jamaica. The story is that while the Tainos (indigenous Jamaicans) developed the style of cooking and seasoning, the Koromantee introduced the marinade and the cooking pits. Over time this mix became what we call today the Maroon culture. Many Black Nova Scotians proudly claim Maroon ancestry.

Jamaican jerk flavour comes from cooking over pimento wood, which is native to Jamaica. This aromatic and handsome tree of the myrtle family grows 7-15 meters in height and has light-coloured bark that peels easily from the trunk. Pimento trees grow elsewhere but Jamaican pimento is regarded as best, and up to recently, had a virtual monopoly on world markets.

Allspice and Pimento are the same thing. The name Allspice came from the fact that the pimento berry is said to combine the flavours of Cinnamon, Clove, and Nutmeg.

Jerk cooking has followed the Caribbean resettling all over the world, and forms of jerk can now be found at restaurants anywhere. Traditionally used with chicken, it works great over shrimp and other seafood and on vegetables, like grilled corn on the cob.



Instructions

Measure each ingredient into the bowl. Go slowly one at a time leaving a little on the plate to taste on the way.

We will pause on each spice to discuss it before blending it all together for a final taste and packaging.

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons cayenne pepper
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 teaspoons ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons dried thyme
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground allspice - pimento tree nuts
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon ground clove
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin

Usually red pepper flakes and cayenne would be added. For us we will start with just cayenne and keep our heat on the cool side.