

Seasoning Beans & Grains

COOKING TIPS

On their own, grains and beans don't have much flavor. Make them more interesting by:

- Pairing them with fresh, flavorful vegetables or fruit.
- Adding spices, herbs or tea to the water while they cook.
- Using some vegetable broth or juice as the cooking water.
- Dressing them with a flavorful sauce.

SERVING IDEAS

- Grains, beans and bean dips make a great salad topper to turn a light salad into a meal.
- Cooked grains and beans absorb flavors if you leave them to marinate in a sauce or salad dressing for an hour or longer.
- Add grains or beans to a vegetable soup.
- Top cooked whole grains with your favorite pasta sauce.
- Make grains pilaf-style by toasting the spices and then sauteeing some onion and other veggies before adding the water.
- Pureed grains and beans make a great sauce, seasoned however you like.
- Bake a bean dip and serve it like a pate.
- Use cooked whole grains in cookies, muffins or press into a pie crust, and bake with fresh apples, pears and/or berries.
- Make whole grains into porridge, or cook ahead and eat as cold cereal with non-dairy milk and topped with berries or other fruit.
- Marinate cooked beans or lentils with spices to make a burrito or taco filling.
- Mix cooked beans with a grated vegetable or chopped fresh herbs, rolled oats and lots of seasonings and spices for a fantastic veggie burger, loaf or meatballs.

SEASONING IDEAS

- Beans and grains have very little flavor on their own, so they're very versatile in combination with vegetables and seasonings.
- The main difference is in texture: chickpeas are solid, kidney beans are very soft. Pair a soft bean with crunchy veggies, and the more solid ones with soft veggies.
- Salty asian flavors like tamari (soy sauce), toasted sesame oil and ginger are great with aduki beans and pair fantastically with broccoli, mushrooms and dark green leafy vegetables like kale or bok choy.
- Buckwheat meatballs seasoned with tamari/soy sauce/liquid aminos, along with a squirt of ketchup or tomato paste, nutritional yeast, onion powder, basil and oregano work really nicely with tomato sauce over pasta or cooked spaghetti squash.
- Dill, onion powder and nutritional yeast mix perfectly into a creamy white bean dip or dressing, maybe with some fresh garlic for a little kick. A thinner sauce is so tasty to toss with brown rice and steamed veggies, and a thicker dip works well to spread on toast or rice cakes topped with some cucumber and/or sprouts.
- Thyme, parsley and bay leaves will add rich flavor to a hearty vegetable soup with squash and barley.
- Cumin, coriander, ginger, turmeric and cayenne make a simple curry powder that's great with chickpeas, cauliflower, and lime juice.
- Cayenne, cumin, and allspice are the base of a great chilli with tomatoes, kidney beans, mushrooms and zucchini.
- Cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, ginger and molasses perfectly flavor steel cut oats for gingerbread porridge.
- Cook short-grain brown rice, then season with a splash of brown rice vinegar and sea salt to make sushi rolls or a sushi bowl.
- Heat coconut oil and whole grain flour in a pan, adding seasonings and non-dairy milk for a creamy vegan roux sauce.