



Spice it Up!!

Keep the love flowing on Valentine's Day and all year long... If you start feeling sluggish and just *blah*, there are certain ingredients that can actually help boost your mood. Check out these power-packed herbs and spices that can help you get back to your happy place. (And PS, YES, **spices can really spice up your sex life.**)

We tried to narrow it down to 10ish to talk about (our talk is available on replay at www.wearewelltogether.com), but it was so fun to research this. We tried to pick some predictable and some lesser known ingredients to stir your senses. Add these to your mix and ignite your smell (olfactory), taste (gustation), chemical properties/science and sensation.

Turmeric: Turmeric is an antioxidant and anti-inflammatory that can stimulate the release of serotonin, a natural mood enhancer- add to soup, salad dressing, milk, roasted veggies

Cinnamon: Just smelling cinnamon can stimulate the brain! Including cinnamon in your diet can help increase attention and enhance cognitive processing, which are both mood lifters. Sprinkle on anything or even in your coffee.

Cloves: Cloves are thought to be a natural stress reliever, stimulating the mind and decreasing fatigue- not just in desserts- try spicy white chili- calming and firing at same time.

Nutmeg: The magnesium in nutmeg can help you sleep, plus it acts as a mild antidepressant. Try cozy bread pudding with nutmeg: With the mood-boosting

benefits of nutmeg and pure delicious comfort, it might just be the perfect ending to your meal.

Ginger: is loaded with healthful benefits. You can eat ginger fresh (easy to grate), powdered, dried or even candied (which I found at Jimbos). Two of the many nutrients found in ginger are vitamin B6- for energy, and magnesium- which can help improve your mood, sleep, exercise performance, blood sugar regulation, and more. A cup of ginger tea is a rejuvenating drink anytime! Also add to juice, soups, and salad dressing.

Garlic: Garlic helps boost the immune system and contains powerful antioxidants to help keep our brains and emotions healthy. Forget the rumors- scientific studies show that we are *attracted* to people who eat garlic!

Saffron: Saffron is nicknamed the "sunshine spice." It's high in antioxidants, and has been linked to improving mood, treating depression, reducing PMS symptoms, and as a weight loss aid. It's also been cited to improve libido and sexual function. So, anyone up for paella?!

Thyme: Besides being loaded with phytonutrients, minerals and vitamins, thyme is thought to have a calming effect and can even help you fall asleep. Add to pasta, soup, roasted vegetables and protein dishes.

Honey: Honey, while not a spice, has a lot of medicinal qualities packed with nutrients such as amino acids, enzymes, iron, magnesium, and zinc. Not only is it a perfect sweet treat, it's packed with quercetin and kaempferol, which have been shown to help reduce inflammation. It's also a great substitute for sugar, which is often mood-deflating. Even one of our favorite doctors recommended a spoonful of honey!

Pure Vanilla Extract or Bean: Vanilla offers an abundance of health benefits including being a good source of potassium, calcium, and manganese. Just the simple smell of vanilla alone is proven to trigger happy, relaxed, and even sensuous feelings. (Ever wonder why those vanilla candles make you so darn happy? Now you know!)

Cayenne: Heat things up with cayenne to add vitamin C, A, B6, and K! It's an antioxidant that protects your heart, aids digestion, clears congestion and revs metabolism and libido. Sprinkle it on or chop and add to the pan!

Of course this just scratches the surface! But we hope you will have fun and add some spice! We have lots of recipe suggestions as well as information on other "mood foods" to include!

hot pho you!



well together