



FROM PLANT TO PLATE

Recipes Across Continents and Cultures

Nutritional benefits and recipe suggestions
researched by Bangladeshi-American
environmentalist and author Samiha Hoque.

Fenugreek

From plant to plate

Benefits of Fenugreek

- ✓ Helps lower blood sugar levels
- ✓ Helps reduce menstrual cramps
- ✓ Helps prevent heartburn symptoms

Source: Healthline

Fenugreek



Ingredients:

- 1 cup fenugreek seed
- 1 cup nigella black seed
- 1 cup cumin seed
- 1 cup wild celery seed (or mustard seed)
- 1 cup fennel seed

Pan Phuron Spice Mix with Fenugreek

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Place an equal quantity of each into a bowl. Mix well.
 - Transfer and store in a seal-tight glass jar.
 - Use as a spice mix for any curry, dal, or protein-based dish.
- TIP: This is pronounced as “faas furon” in parts of Bangladesh. It literally translates to “five spice in oil.”

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Longbean

From plant to plate

Benefits of Longbean

- ✓ Good source of protein and iron
- ✓ Good source of vitamins A and C
- ✓ Contains zero cholesterol and low fat

Source: Foodstruct

Longbean



Ingredients:

- 1kg chicken
- 500g long beans, cut in ¼ inch
- 5 cardamom pods
- 4-5 garlic cloves, sliced
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 cup of water
- 1½ tbsp ginger paste
- 1 tbsp coriander powder
- 1 tbsp of 5 spice mix ("panch phoron")
- ½ tbsp turmeric powder
- ½ cup water
- ½ cup of healthy oil (any)
- 1 tsp whole cumin seeds
- Salt to taste
- Optional: 1 tbsp red chili powder

Chicken Curry & Longbean

INSTRUCTIONS:

- In a large pot, heat oil and onions. Fry until golden brown.
- Add ginger, garlic, cardamom, cinnamon sticks, and cumin seeds. Stir well.
- Add chicken and mix. Cover with a lid and cook under medium heat for 10 minutes.
- Add remaining dry spices (coriander, panch phoron, turmeric, bay leaf, and salt) and stir.
- Mix in the longbeans and keep covered for 5 minutes.
- Add water and stir. Place lid and cook until chicken is tender.
- TIP: Use high heat at the beginning of the cooking process and lower it once the onions begin to color so they don't burn. Maintain that heat until the end.

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Bitter Melon

From plant to plate

Benefits of Bitter Melon

- ✓ Great source of vitamins A and C
- ✓ Contains powerful antioxidants
- ✓ Low in calories

Bitter Melon
(Bitter gourd)



Source: Healthline



Ingredients:

- 1 bitter melon
- 1/4 cup of healthy oil (any)
- Salt (any)
- Turmeric
- 1 tablespoon of black cumin
- Optional: sliced onions

Stir Fry Bitter Melon

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Wash and dry the bitter melon.
- Remove one to two inches off both ends.
- Chop the bitter melon into slices; depending on its size, it should end up with 15-40 pieces.
- Prepare a pan (cast iron preferable) and warm it for a few minutes before pouring oil.
- Place the bitter melon slices into a bowl. Add salt and turmeric. Mix well.
- In the pan, add black cumin. Add the bitter melon. Cook until golden brown.
- Serve with rice or eaten plain.
- TIP: Expect it to taste bitter! That is where its medicinal properties lie. Drinking water afterward can help clear the strong flavor.
- TIP: Bitter melon is best eaten at the start of the meal due to its bitterness.

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Red Malabar

From plant to plate

Benefits of Red Malabar

- ✓ Contains more than 3x the amount of vitamin C than other spinach
- ✓ Roots can be used to treat diarrhea
- ✓ Can be used for natural color dyes

Source: University of D.C.
College of Agriculture

Spinach (Red Malabar)



Ingredients:

- 1 box or two handfuls of Red Malabar spinach
- 1 ½ tbsp of unsalted butter (or 1 tbsp of ghee)
- ½ tbsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp paprika
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Red Malabar Gaute

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Wash the Red Malabar spinach.
- Cut the stems off, but save them for later.
- In a heated saucepan, saute spinach for 5-10 minutes or until the water has evaporated from the pan.
- Once the spinach has wilted, add butter and stir until evenly coated.
- Add garlic powder, paprika, salt, pepper and mix well.
- Serve warm.
- TIP: The stems of Red Malabar spinach are edible like its leaves. You can saute them, too.

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The nutritional benefits and recipe suggestions in this edition of *FROM PLANT TO PLATE* were researched by Samiha Hoque a Bangladeshi-American environmentalist and author. Samiha is a Climate Justice Fellow for the Center for Engagement, Environmental Justice, and Health (CEEJH) at the University of Maryland at College Park, Maryland. She holds a B.S. in the Earth and Environmental Sciences with an English minor. She is passionate about the environment and the role literature and culture play in tackling climate-related issues. Samiha is the author of the picture books *A Country of Beautiful People* (2023) and *Brave Is the Tiger* (2027), both of which are inspired by her Bengali Muslim upbringing.

Samiha Hoque's work with the University of Maryland and CEEJH in 2024 brought her to promote food sovereignty through South Asian cuisines and native vegetation in collaboration with the Ujamaa Cooperative Farming Alliance and Ujamaa Seeds. Samiha is proud to celebrate culture-specific practices and recipes for the sake of a healthier community.