

Chai Tea

Or as it is called in India, Masala Chai or curried tea. Is an Ayurvedic (traditional Hindu system of medicine) preparation that is served all over India and is considered sattvic, which means not stimulating the senses but calming, mentally clearing and revitalising. Everyone has their tradition method of making chai. Some use milk, sweetened condensed milk, sugar, honey, black tea, cocoa and any assortment of spices. The choice of spices have added health benefits: warding off infections, infestations, stimulating the immune and circulatory systems + aiding digestion - the perfect warming winter beverage.

Some of the spices used in masala chai are common kitchen spices:

Black Pepper (racy and spicy)

Used to as a warming spice to help with circulation and metabolism.

Cardamom (uplifting and sweet)

The most exotic and fragrant spice, just smelling it is uplifting.

Cinnamon (sweetness and warmth)

Evidence based remedy for supporting sugar cravings and metabolism, also increasing the feeling go warmth.

Clove (musky and smokey)

Cloves have topical pain-relieving qualities as well as profound anti-microbial properties. This is a pungent spice used in moderation

Fennel (aniseed note)

It's the seeds of the fennel plant that are used an important medicinal plant in the royal herb gardens of medieval France and Germany, fennel is still widely used to treat both kidney and ocular problems, as well as laryngitis. Also used as a breath freshener.

Ginger (warming and spicy)

Whether use freshly grated or as a dry powder, ginger has circulatory and digestive properties - used for motion and morning sickness to aid with nausea. It is also a warming and immune system stimulating.

Nutmeg (strong base notes)

Nutmeg has been used for centuries to ease the digestive discomfort after eating heavy meals. It is also a warming and immune system stimulating.

Typical Recipe for Chai Tea - add spices to taste

Ingredients:

- 1 cup water
- 2 cups milk or soy milk
- sugar or honey to taste
- heaped teaspoon black tea - not green tea or flavoured herbal teas
- 1 pod cardamom
- 1 - 2 teaspoons fresh ginger (sliced)
- 2- 3 whole black pepper corns
- 5cm piece of cinnamon stick

Method:

- Grind cardamom & pepper in pestle and mortar, place in stainless saucepan with all other ingredients except sweetener.
- Simmer away but don't boil for about 20 minutes or until you have reduced the liquid to about 1 cup.
- Strain into a cup and add sweetener to taste and enjoy.

