



# RILEY'S RAINFOREST

"Send down... from the clouds of Thy mercy the rains of Thy healing..." —Bahá'u'lláh

## The Spice of Life

Did you know there's a whole world to explore right in your own kitchen? Whether you sprinkle cinnamon in your oatmeal or oregano on your pizza, you use herbs and spices from around the world.

Since ancient times, herbs and spices have been used for food, medicine, and perfume. As people traveled to other lands, they began to share and trade spices. This led to explorations around the globe.

Spices come from the seeds, bark, and fruits of plants, while herbs are the leaves. It's often a mix of herbs and spices that give food their unique flavors. A rice dish in India might be made with garam masala, a blend with cardamom, cloves, and cumin. Rice in Liberia might use red and black pepper and thyme.

Ever notice how some countries' foods tend to be spicy? In one study, scientists found that places with hotter climates use more spices than cooler lands—and health may be the reason. Since herbs and



spices such as garlic, oregano, and cinnamon can kill harmful bacteria, they believe people used spices through the ages to stay well.

Herbs and spices support health in other ways, too. Cloves have been used by dentists to numb pain. Ginger is used to ease nausea and help digestion. Garlic is high in antioxidants, substances that can protect your body's cells. Studies have even shown that people who eat more garlic seem to have a lower risk for some types of cancer.

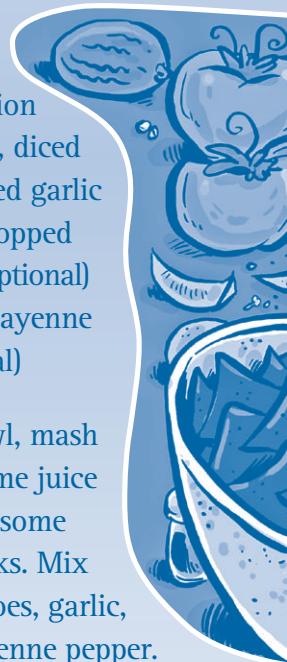
Try exploring your spice cabinet. With so many flavors at your fingertips, you can enjoy the unique tastes around the world, and add a little more spice to your life.

## Explore and Soar Yummy Guacamole!

Avocados have been a staple food in Mexico and Central and South America since 500 BCE. They're also full of nutrients. Spices help give this guacamole recipe its distinct flavor.

- 3 avocados—peeled and pitted
- 1 lime, juiced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup diced onion
- 2 small tomatoes, diced
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro (optional)
- 1 pinch ground cayenne pepper (optional)

In a medium bowl, mash avocados with lime juice and salt, leaving some avocado in chunks. Mix in onions, tomatoes, garlic, cilantro, and cayenne pepper. Serve with tortilla chips, veggies, or salad. ¡Buen provecho!



## Fruit for Thought

"Human tastes differ; thoughts, native lands, races and tongues are many . . . It is possible, however, for all to become unified through one spirit, just as all may receive light from one sun."

— 'Abdu'l-Bahá



## Curiosity Canopy

What spice is known as the "king of spices"?

Answer: Black pepper. It's the best-selling spice in the U.S., and it's used in dishes all over the world. Most pepper is grown in Vietnam, India, Brazil, and Indonesia. Although it's common now, peppercorns were once so valuable they were used as money!