



asia

latin america

mediterranean

spicing up alaska seafood

				form	flavor	where used	notes
HERBS [derived from the leaves of annual and perennial plants]							
BASIL				Fresh leaf	Sweet and subtle, with a clove-like aroma	Italy, France	There are more than 50 varieties of basil, including lemon basil, Thai basil, etc.
BAY LEAF				Fresh or dried leaf	Pungent, with a pleasantly sharp almost bitter flavor	Italy, France	California bay leaf is stronger in flavor than Turkish/Mediterranean bay leaf
CHERVIL				Fresh leaf	Delicate, with hints of parsley and anise	France	Used in the French <i>fines herbes</i> mixture
CHIVES				Fresh leaf	Mild onion flavor	France, North Africa, China	Includes milder garlic chives
CILANTRO				Fresh leaf and stem	Sharp and tangy, with a peppery, earthy bite	Mexico, Latin America, SE Asia, Spain, Portugal, Middle East	A.k.a. coriander leaf, Chinese parsley; the seeds of cilantro are called coriander
DILL				Fresh leaf	Sweet, yet slightly astringent	Vietnam, France, Greece	
EPAZOTE				Fresh leaf; dried	Pungent, pine-like flavor, with notes of licorice and mint	Mexico	
HOJA SANTA				Fresh stem and leaf	Similar to tarragon, with an anise or saffrafras flavor	Mexico	A.k.a. Mexican pepperleaf; the leaves are often used for wrapping food
HOLY BASIL				Fresh leaf	Hot, spicy, clove-like	Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia	
LAVENDER				Fresh leaf; dried	Sweet, floral, with citrus notes	France	Most often used in <i>herbes de Provence</i> ; the flowers can be used as a garnish
LEMONGRASS				Fresh or dried stalk	Lemony and aromatic	Caribbean, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, the Philippines	
MARJORAM				Fresh leaf; dried	Mild oregano taste, slightly piney	France, Middle East	Used in <i>herbes de Provence</i> and the Middle Eastern spice mix Za'atar
MINT				Fresh leaf; dried	Warm, fresh, aromatic, sweet flavor with a cool aftertaste	Mexico, South America, SE Asia, Italy, Middle East	There are more than 25 different kinds of mint, including spearmint and pineapple mint
OREGANO				Fresh leaf; dried	Aromatic, warm, slightly bitter (Mexican oregano is stronger)	Mexico, Greece, Italy	Includes Mexican oregano
PARSLEY				Fresh leaf and stem	Fresh, cool, mild	Italy, France, Middle East	An essential ingredient in tabbouleh
PERILLA				Fresh leaf; seed (India)	Lemony, minty, reminiscent of basil	Japan, Thailand, Korea, India, Vietnam	A.k.a. shiso (Japan); red and green are the most common varieties
ROSEMARY				Fresh leaf and branch; dried	Bold, piney, almost resinous	Italy, France	
SAGE				Fresh leaf; dried; ground	Pleasantly musty, somewhat bitter	France	
TARRAGON				Fresh leaf; dried	Sweet, savory, with a hint of licorice	Mexico, France	
THAI BASIL				Fresh leaf	Sweet, with anise overtones	Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia	Thai basil is stronger than sweet basil, with a subtle licorice taste
THYME				Fresh leaf and sprig; dried; ground	Spicy, slightly sweet	Argentina, Chile, France	
SPICES [Derived from the bark, root, fruit or berry of perennial plants]							
ALLSPICE				Whole dried berry; ground	Complex, with notes of cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves	Caribbean, Mexico, Central America, Middle East	Essential in Jamaican jerk seasoning
ANISE				Whole fruit (seed); ground	Sweet and very aromatic, similar to licorice	Mexico, Italy	
ANNATTO				Whole seed; paste	Slightly sweet and peppery	Latin and Central America, Mexico	A.k.a. achiote; often used as a coloring, as well as a flavoring
CARAWAY				Whole fruit (seed); ground	Warm and strongly aromatic	Turkey, India, North Africa	Indispensable in harissa
CARDAMOM				Whole pod; ground	Aromatic, sweet, spicy	Mexico, Central America, India	Member of the ginger family
CINNAMON				Stripped dried bark (sticks); ground	Mild to bittersweet	Caribbean, Mexico, India, Middle East	Cassia, native to Southern China and Indochina, is a close relative of cinnamon
CLOVES				Whole dried bud; ground	Strong, but sweet, aromatic	Caribbean, India, North Africa, Middle East	
CORIANDER				Whole fruit (seed); ground	Warm, mild, sweetish, with lemony undertones	Latin America, India, SE Asia, China, Middle East, North Africa	The leaves of coriander are called cilantro
CUMIN				Whole fruit (seed); ground	Spicy and lemony	Latin America, Mexico, India, SE Asia, Middle East, North Africa	
CURRY				Blend of dried ground spices	Spicy and complex; often includes fenugreek, turmeric, cumin, coriander, etc.	Caribbean, India	Although curry powder is associated with Indian food, it is an American invention
FENNEL POLLEN				Plant pollen	Subtle fennel flavor, somewhat piney	Italy	
FENNEL SEED				Whole fruit (seed); cracked; ground	Aromatic and sweet, similar to anise but less pungent	India, Italy, Portugal, Turkey	
FIVE SPICE				Blend of dried ground spices	Can include cinnamon or cassia, star anise, clove, Sichuan peppercorn, and/or fennel	China	
GALANGAL				Whole fresh or dried rhizome or pieces; ground	Similar to ginger, with a somewhat piney flavor	SE Asia	
GARAM MASALA				Blend of dried ground spices	May include cinnamon, toasted cumin, cloves, nutmeg, cardamom, etc.	India	Garam masala means "warm spices"; there are many variations
GINGER				Whole fresh or dried rhizome or pieces; ground	Fresh ginger is juicy, spicy and aromatic, with lemony undertones	Caribbean, Latin America, India, China, Japan, SE Asia, North Africa	Dried ground ginger is much more mild in flavor
JUNIPER				Dried whole berry	Aromatic, bittersweet, piney	France, Italy, Spain	Gin gets its characteristic flavor from juniper berries
MACE				Flat, branchlike pieces; ground	Warm and intensely aromatic, somewhat resinous	Caribbean, India, Tunisia, Morocco, Italy, France	Mace is the outer covering of a nutmeg kernel
MUSTARD SEED				Whole seed; ground	Pungent and spicy	India, France, Middle East	Seeds can come from 3 different plants, affecting the color
NUTMEG				Whole kernel (seed); ground	Aromatic, earthy, nutty	Caribbean, India, SE Asia, Middle East, Italy, France	
PAPRIKA				Dried, ground capsicum (pepper)	Ranges from sweet and mild to fiery hot	Spain, Portugal, Turkey	
PIMENTON				Smoked, ground capsicum (pepper)	Three varieties: sweet, bittersweet, hot	Spain	
RAS AL HANOUT				Blend of dried ground spices	Complex; can contain as many as 30 different spices, such as cumin, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, etc.	Morocco	The name translates to "top of the shop"—the spice shop
SAFFRON				Dried stigma (style) of a crocus-like flower; ground	Fragrant, warm, slightly bitter	Caribbean, South America, India, Spain, Greece, Morocco	Usually steeped in warm liquid before being added to a recipe, to release its flavor
SICHUAN PEPPERCORNS				Whole outer pod of a fruit; ground	Aromatic, lemony, tingly-hot	China, Japan	Despite its name, Sichuan peppercorn is not related to either pepper or chiles
STAR ANISE				Dried star-shaped fruit	Reminiscent of anise, but a little less harsh	China, India, Vietnam	A major component of both 5-spice powder and garam masala
SUMAC				Whole dried berry; ground	Sour, fruity and astringent	Turkey, Lebanon	
TURMERIC				Ground rhizome	Warm and aromatic, with a slight bitterness	SE Asia, India, Middle East	
VANILLA BEAN				Whole fruit or seed pod (bean) of an orchid	Rich, full, aromatic and powerful	Mexico	Other forms include powder (blended with sugar or starch); extract