



Fluvanna County Public Library

Spice of the Month Club

Jamaican Jerk Seasoning

Flavor Profile: Allspice and heat



Brand Name – Island Spice (Ingredients – Jamaican pimento, onion chips, garlic, paprika, ginger, celery, mustard, crushed pepper, salt, and sugar. No MSG.)

What is Jerk? Some believe that “jerk” as in “Jamaican Jerk Chicken” – is a word that is always synonymous with spicy heat, and lots of it. But in fact, Jamaican jerk spice doesn’t have to be crazy hot. While the exact meaning of the word “jerk” is somewhat open for interpretation, most people agree that it’s more about a style of cooking than a set-in-stone flavor profile. In Jamaican culinary tradition, “jerking” refers to the practice of cooking meat over an open flame, and, historically, the beloved “jerk” flavor profile came from cooking over Jamaican pimento wood. This pimento tree wood – and, by the way, allspice berries grow on pimento trees – releases fragrant oils as it burns, and the smoke produced by its fire flavors the grilling meats. As time went on, people wanted to create faster and easier ways to enjoy the flavor of “jerk” and so a whole world of jerk spice blends – dry rubs and even wet sauces – was born.

What is Jerk Seasoning? So, if jerk is a style of cooking, what is an authentic Jamaican Jerk Seasoning recipe? These are recipes that celebrate the flavors of that gorgeous, sea-swept island, and that approximates the flavors produced by grilling over pimento woods as best it can. Though scotch bonnet peppers – also known as Caribbean red peppers – are traditional, many recipes blends rely on heat from a combination of cayenne and black pepper. Together they create a terrific, straightforward heat and they’re much easier to find than Scotch bonnets.

History of Jerk Seasoning in Jamaica The well-loved spice blend has been around for more than a century. It is said that both the jerk process and seasoning were designed by the Maroons (people who had escaped slavery and Native Jamaican Indians called Arawak Indians), who learned how to cook meat without the release of smoke and preserve meat with specific herbs and spices.

Early Europeans first attempted to find labor for coffee and sugar plantations in Jamaica by enslaving the local population of Arawaks. Arawak labor proved to be insufficient, which resulted in the colonists bringing in slaves from Africa. African slaves who escaped from the plantations learned about smoking meats with local pimento wood from native Arawaks and used it to prepare meat from wild hogs. The use of pimento wood is one of the factors that make it difficult to prepare anywhere outside the Caribbean as the wood is often used while green and is difficult to cultivate outside the tropics.

The Maroons would hunt and prepare wild boar by heavily coating the meat with the marinade to preserve it. Then, when it was time to cook, they dug holes, added firewood and placed the meat on top, then covered it all so no smoke would escape. This was done to avoid alerting the slave owners to their location.

The modern jerk cooking process is quite similar. Today, it includes smoking well-marinated meat over the greenwood of a pimento tree covered by big sheets of metal. But authentic jerk food spots in Jamaica will jerk the meat in a large “jerk pit” much like the Maroons did.

How To Make Jerk Seasoning

- 2 tbsp. onion powder
- 1 tbsp. garlic powder
- 1 tbsp. thyme
- 1 tbsp. sea salt
- 2 tsp. ground allspice
- 1 tsp. ground cloves
- 1 tbsp. ground ginger
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 tbsp. brown sugar
- 2 tsp. black pepper
- ½ tsp. cayenne pepper (or to taste)



1. In a small bowl mix together all dry spices. Store in an airtight container – best used in 6 months. Makes ¾ cup.
2. To make this a marinade or wet rub – you can add 1 tablespoon olive oil, 1 tablespoon soy sauce and 1 tablespoon of white vinegar to 3 tablespoon of the dry rub.

<https://themodernproper.com/homemade-jamaican-jerk-seasoning-blend>

Jamaican Jerk Chicken Salad Recipe (4 servings)

- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast (cooked and chopped)
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 2 celery stalks (chopped or sliced)
- 2 fire roasted red peppers (chopped)
- 2 tsp. Jamaican Jerk Seasoning
- Salt/pepper to taste (if needed)

1. Combine all ingredients and store in an airtight container.

<https://wonkywonderful.com/jamaican-jerk-chicken-salad-recipe/>



Jerk Rubbed Grilled Corn on the Cob (4 servings)

- 4 ears of corn soaked in cold water for 1 hour
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 tbsp. Jamaican Jerk seasoning
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Juice from 1 lime
- 4 tbsp. Jamaican Jerk Sauce Optional - use store bought, or try our recipe for Homemade Jerk Sauce

1. Heat grill to medium-high heat.



2. Remove the corn stalks from the ears of corn and discard. Rub the ears of corn down with olive oil. Make sure they are evenly coated.
3. Rub each ear of corn down with the Jamaican Jerk rub.
4. Grill the corn for 20 minutes, flipping every 5 minutes or so, until they get a nice char and your corn turns a vibrant golden yellow.
5. Toss with the Jamaican Jerk sauce, if desired. Adjust with salt and pepper to taste.
6. Drizzle with freshly squeezed lime juice and serve them up!

<https://www.chilipeppermadness.com/chili-pepper-recipes/side-dishes/jerk-rubbed-grilled-corn-on-the-cob/>

The Best Jamaican Mac and Cheese (4 servings)

- 1 lb. elbow macaroni
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 cup evaporated milk
- 2 tbsp. butter
- 2 cloves garlic minced
- 1 small onion finely chopped
- 1–2 tsp. jerk seasoning adjust to taste
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Fresh thyme leaves optional garnish
- Scotch bonnet pepper optional, for extra heat



1. Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. Bring a large pot of salted water to a rolling boil. Add the macaroni and cook until it is firm to the bite. Drain the pasta well and set aside.
3. In a light-colored saucepan, place the butter over medium heat.
4. Add finely chopped garlic and onion, cooking until they become tender and translucent.
5. Pour in the evaporated milk, stirring continuously.
6. Gradually incorporate shredded cheddar cheese, stirring until a smooth, creamy sauce forms.
7. Season with jerk seasoning, thyme, and allspice to infuse the sauce with rich Caribbean flavors.
8. Gently fold the cooked pasta into the sauce, ensuring each piece is thoroughly coated.
9. Transfer the mixture into a lightly greased baking dish.
10. Sprinkle additional cheddar cheese and a light dusting of jerk seasoning on top for an extra layer of flavor.
11. Place the dish in the preheated oven and bake for 20–25 minutes, until the top is bubbly and golden. Once done, remove from the oven and let it sit briefly before serving, allowing the dish to set and making it easier to serve.

<https://www.essencecheese.com/jamaican-mac-and-cheese/>

Library Resources

East Winds : Recipes, History and Tales from the Hidden Caribbean by Phillips, Riaz – 641.59 PHI

Gran cocina latina : the food of Latin America by Presilla, Maricel E. – 641.5972 PRE

Rasta Pasta Recipe (serves 4)

What is Rasta Pasta? It is a colorful pasta dish made with a variety of bell peppers, creamy sauce and Caribbean seasonings, inspired by an original Italian recipe, but made with more traditional ingredients.

The name “Rasta” refers to “Rastafarianism”, the powerful social movement developed in Jamaica in the 1930s. It is usually served as a vegetarian dish, as Rastafarians do not eat shellfish or meat, but many non-Rastafarian cooks add a protein to round out the meal. Jerk chicken or shrimp are most popular.

Where did Rasta Pasta come from? While many Jamaican chefs claim to have invented this classic dish, one popular story is that a chef served a mix of tomato sauce and cheese sauce thickened with coconut milk over a bed of fettuccini to a group of guests. The guests quickly drew comparisons of the textures and colors of the dish to Jamaican culture, noting the colorful bell peppers represented the colors of Rastafarianism, and the shapes of the noodles representing dreadlocks. It has been added to menus ever since and has only grown in popularity.



- 2 tablespoons olive oil or vegetable oil
 - 1 small onion chopped
 - 1 green bell pepper, sliced
 - 1 red bell pepper, sliced
 - 3 cloves garlic, chopped
 - 1 tablespoon Jamaican jerk seasoning
 - Salt and pepper to taste
 - 14 ounces fire roasted tomatoes (you can substitute 1 can diced tomatoes or even fresh tomatoes)
 - 1 cup coconut milk (or substitute heavy cream – but you won’t get the coconut flavor)
 - 1 cup of grated Parmesan cheese or more as needed
 - 8 ounces fettuccine pasta
1. Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large pan and add the onion and peppers. Cook them down about 5 minutes to soften.
 2. Add the garlic and 1 tablespoon Jamaican jerk seasoning with salt and pepper to taste. Cook for 1 minute, stirring.
 3. Add the tomatoes and stir. Cook for 5 minutes to cook down the tomatoes.
 4. Add the coconut milk and simmer for 5 minutes to thicken up. If it gets too thick, swirl in a few tablespoons of water or chicken stock.
 5. Stir in the Parmesan cheese and remove from heat.
 6. While the Rasta Pasta is simmering, cook the fettuccine noodles according to the package directions. Drain and toss with the sauce.
 7. NOTE: You can use jalapenos instead of the green bell pepper to spice it up a bit or even add in a Scotch Bonnet for extra heat)

<https://www.chilipeppermadness.com/recipes/rasta-pasta/>

Caribbean Beef Burgers with Mango Salsa (4 servings)

- 1½ pounds Louisiana lean ground beef
- 2 Tbsp. Caribbean jerk seasoning
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 1 large mango, peeled and coarsely chopped (about 1 cup)
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 Tbsp. finely chopped seeded jalapeño
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 4 hamburger buns

1. Spray grill rack with nonflammable cooking spray. Preheat grill to medium heat (300° to 350°).
2. In a large bowl, gently combine beef and jerk seasoning. Divide mixture into 4 portions, and shape each into a ¾-inch-thick patty.
3. Grill patties, covered with grill lid and turning occasionally, until an instant-read thermometer inserted horizontally in center registers 160°, 11 to 15 minutes. Season to taste with salt.
4. In a medium bowl, combine mango, cilantro, jalapeño, and lime juice.
5. Top buns with patties and salsa. Serve immediately.



<https://louisianacookin.com/caribbean-beef-burgers-mango-salsa/>

Jerk Black Beans

- 1 tsp. olive oil
- ½ red onion, chopped
- 3 cups cooked Camellia Brand Black Beans
- 1 ½ Tbsp. Jamaican Jerk Seasoning Blend
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- Fresh lime juice, to taste
- 6 Tbsp. water or bean-cooking liquid



1. Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add red onion and cook for 4-5 minutes.
2. To the skillet, add cooked beans, jerk seasoning blend, garlic powder, lime juice and water or bean-cooking liquid. Cover and simmer for 7-8 minutes.
3. Taste and adjust seasonings, and add more water or bean-cooking liquid if necessary.

<https://www.camelliabrand.com/recipes/jerk-black-beans/>

Creamy Jerk Dip (4 servings)

- 2 tbsp. lime juice
- 4 tsp. Knorr® Chicken flavor Bouillon
- 2 cups sour cream
- 1 ½ cup mayo
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped



- 1 ½ tsp. Jamaican jerk seasoning
1. Microwave lime juice and Knorr® Chicken flavor Bouillon in small microwave-safe bowl at HIGH 30 seconds or until hot.
 2. Combine bouillon mixture with remaining ingredients in medium bowl. Serve, if desired, with tortilla chips or your favorite dippers.

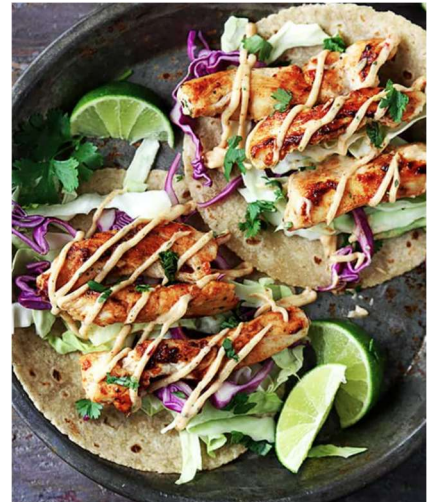
<https://www.bestfoods.com/us/en/r/creamy-jerk-dip.html/68972>

Jamaican Jerk Chicken Tacos (4 servings)

- 1 tbsp. Jamaican jerk seasoning
- 3 large chicken breasts, pounded to ½ inch thickness
- 2 cups slaw, or shredded lettuce
- 2 tbsp. fresh cilantro leaves, roughly chopped
- 8 taco sized soft tortillas
- lime wedges, for serving

Sauce

- ½ cup mayo
 - 2 tsp. Jamaican jerk seasoning
1. Season chicken breasts with jerk seasoning, rubbing into both sides. Cook over medium heat on the stove for 4-5 minutes on each side until cooked through. Slice into strips.
 2. Whisk together mayo and 2 teaspoons jerk seasoning.
 3. Assemble tacos. Place slaw/lettuce on each tortilla. Top with chicken, then drizzle with sauce. Top with chopped cilantro. Serve with fresh lime wedges for drizzling on tacos.



<https://www.lecremedelacrumb.com/jamaican-jerk-chicken-tacos/>

Jamaican Jerk Popcorn

- 1 ½ tsp. Jamaican Jerk seasoning
 - 3 tbsp. of butter
 - 1 lime - ½ lime zested and ¼ lime juiced
 - 10 cups of popped popcorn
1. In small saucepan, combine butter, lime juice (from 1/4 of lime) and Jerk Dry Rub. Melt over low heat 1-2 minutes.
 2. In large bowl, toss popcorn with jerk butter mixture and zest (from 1/2 of lime) until evenly coated.



<https://thejerkman.com/jamaican-jerk-popcorn/>

Library Resources

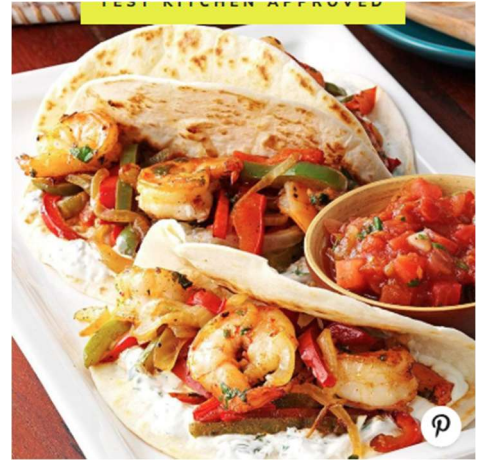
West Winds: Recipes, History and Tales from Jamaica by Riaz Phillips – 641.59 PHI

Shrimp Fajitas (4 servings)

- 1 pound uncooked medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 4 tbsp. minced fresh cilantro, divided
- 1 tbsp. plus 2 tsp. olive oil, divided
- 3 tsp. Caribbean jerk seasoning
- 1/8 tsp. chili powder
- 1/8 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 cup fat-free sour cream
- 1 large onion, halved and thinly sliced
- 1 medium sweet red pepper, cut into thin strips
- 1 medium green pepper, cut into thin strips
- 8 flour tortillas (6 inches), warmed
- ½ cup salsa

1. In a large bowl, toss shrimp with 2 tablespoons cilantro, 1 tablespoon oil and spices; let stand 10 minutes. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, mix sour cream and remaining cilantro.
2. In a large nonstick skillet, heat 1 teaspoon oil over medium-high heat. Add onion and peppers; cook and stir until crisp-tender. Remove from pan.
3. In same pan, heat remaining oil over medium-high heat. Add shrimp; cook and stir until shrimp turn pink. Return onion mixture to pan; heat through. Serve with tortillas, salsa and sour cream mixture.

<https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/shrimp-fajitas/>



Jamaican Jerk Garden Salsa (6 servings)

- 3 large tomatoes chopped
- ½ red onion chopped
- 1 white onion chopped
- 2 jalapeno seeds removed & chopped
- 3 cup multi-colored cherry tomatoes
- 3 tbsp. garlic minced
- 1 scotch bonnet pepper sliced, optional
- 2 tbsp. Jamaican jerk seasoning
- 1 lemon juiced
- 2 tbsp. coriander
- ¼ cup cilantro
- ¼ cup parsley
- ⅛ teaspoon sea salt
- ⅛ teaspoon pepper



Roughly chop the tomatoes, onions, jalapenos, cherry tomatoes, garlic, and scotch bonnet (if using). Finely chop the cilantro and parsley. Combine everything in a large bowl. PRO TIP: Use latex gloves while chopping the peppers to avoid making contact with the spicy juices. Stir in the lime juice, lemon juice, Jamaican jerk seasoning, coriander, sea salt, and pepper to taste. Chill for at least one hour for full flavor. Enjoy!

<https://thestarvingchefblog.com/jamaican-jerk-garden-salsa/>

Jamaican Jerk Sweet Potato Fries

Ingredients

- 2 large sweet potatoes, about 2 to 2 ½ pounds total weight
- 2 tablespoons olive or canola oil
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch, optional but recommended for crispness
- 2 tablespoons Jamaican jerk seasoning
- Fresh cilantro, for sprinkling (optional)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 450F.
2. Slice sweet potatoes into long strips, ¼ to ½ inch thick. Place into a large bowl or zipper bag. Add olive oil, cornstarch and Jamaican jerk seasoning. Toss until sweet potato strips are evenly coated.
3. Arrange sweet potato strips in even layers on baking sheets. Bake 10 minutes, gently flip, and bake 10 to 15 minutes more, until crisp.
4. Remove from oven and optionally sprinkle with fresh cilantro before serving. Serve with dipping sauce of choice.



https://www.connoisseursveg.com/jamaican-jerk-sweet-potato-fries/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+connoisseursveg%2FNNPj+%28Connoisseur+Veg%29

Island Spice Jerk Chicken Recipe

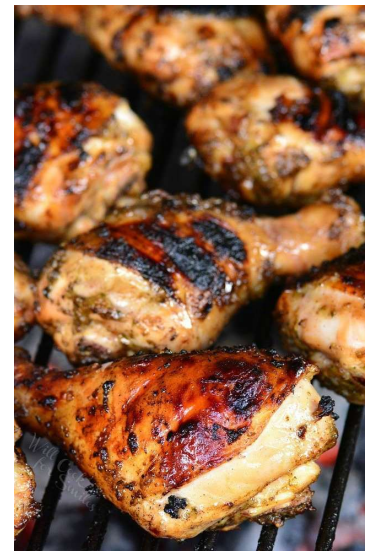
Ingredients

- 5 boneless skinless chicken thighs
- 2 tablespoons Jamaican Jerk seasoning
- 2 chopped green onion stalks (green & white parts)
- ½ tablespoon garlic paste (5 peeled, crushed garlic cloves)
- 1/8 cup fresh squeezed lime juice
- ½ tablespoon olive oil

Oil & Lime Juice Mixed Glaze

- ½ tablespoon olive oil
- 1/8 cup fresh squeezed lime juice

1. Season chicken thighs with jerk seasoning and other remaining ingredients. Cover and let marinate in the fridge for at least 3 hours.
2. Grill on medium heat fire until juices run clear.
3. Brush with olive oil and lime juice to keep them moist and juicy.



<https://islandspice.com/blogs/recipes>