

Fluvanna County Public Library

Spice of the Month Club

Nigella Seeds



Flavor Profile: mix of fried onions and oregano

Black seed is the common name for the seeds of the *Nigella sativa* plant. This plant is a small shrub with green leaves and white and purplish flowers. It grows worldwide, but most commonly in southern and eastern Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and southwest Asia. It's also known as nigella, black cumin, fennel flower, black caraway, Roman coriander, Habbatul Barakah (Arabic), and Tikur azmud (Amharic).

Nigella seeds are found frequently in Indian, Middle Eastern, and North African cuisines. This means you can find these seeds in curries and lentil dishes alike. Nigella seeds also pair well with root vegetable dishes, as well as squashes such as spiced butternut squash. Many Southern Asia meals can be found with *Nigella sativa* garnished on top or incorporated into their stir-fry. It's also used in making pilafs, curries, vegetable dishes, and pickles.

A popular Bengal spice called panch phoron also includes nigella seeds along with other spices like fenugreek, mustard seed, fennel seed, and cumin seeds. A common use of nigella is in bread and pastries. Often in India, they mix nigella seeds into their traditional naan bread. There are many other unique ways to use nigella seeds; for instance, garnish on a salad for an extra crunch.

Black seeds come from the *Nigella sativa* plant. They're used in cooking, but black seed oil is often applied on the body as well as consumed for various health benefits. Black seed oil is extracted from these seeds. Capsules of the oil may be found in health stores and online. The oil and the seeds, which can be eaten raw or lightly toasted, have long been used as medicinal plants in the regions where *Nigella sativa* is grown. It even appears in the words of the Prophet Muhammad, who describes the seeds as "a remedy for every illness except death." Early herb specialists described it as "the herb from heaven." The seeds were also mentioned in the Holy Bible and ancient Greek medicine.

Black seed can be used in various forms -- whole, as an oil, in a capsule, and as a powder. Because black seed oil contains the compound thymoquinone, it's believed to have various properties that can support your health. Thymoquinone is:

- Hepatoprotective (prevents damage to the liver)
- Analgesic (eases pain)
- Anti-inflammatory
- Antioxidant
- Antibacterial
- Antiviral
- Antifungal
- Cytotoxic and anti-cancer (can attack cancer cells)

Still, more research is needed to confirm if thymoquinone in black seed oil products can actually treat certain conditions. It shouldn't be used as the sole treatment for any condition.

Black seed is a versatile natural product from the *Nigella sativa* plant, recognized for its healing and health-improving benefits. It's available in many forms, including powder, tablets, sprays, gels, creams, shampoos, soaps, oils, and masks. Speak with your doctor before using black seed regularly for any health issues. They can advise you on whether to take it and how to use it safely.

Zucchini Fritters with Nigella Seed (Makes 8 fritters)

- 1 small zucchini
- 4 heaped tbsp. white flour
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. nigella seed
- 1 tsp. taco spice mix
- 2 egg whites
- Chicken fat or ghee to fry the fritters in



1. Slice your zucchini into very thin slivers and place them into a bowl. Then add 1/2 tsp of salt and massage that into the zucchini. Set aside for about 40 minutes. For extra crisp zucchini fritters, make sure to remove as much moisture as possible from the sliced zucchini before mixing it with the other ingredients. After slicing, place the zucchini in a colander, then squeeze and wring out the excess water. This step prevents the batter from becoming too watery and ensures a crispier result when frying.
2. When the liquid has come out of the zucchini, squeeze them hard until all moisture is removed and place the zucchini slivers into a clean bowl. Then sprinkle on the flour, spice, and salt. Mix with a spoon until all the zucchini slivers are covered with flour and spice.
3. Whisk 2 egg whites until they are stiff and then fold those whites into the zucchini mix. Gently fold the egg whites, trying not to push out too much air.
4. In a deep-frying pan, add a layer of ghee or chicken fat that is deep enough (2-3 cm) to fry the fritters. Get the fat hot enough so that when you place the first dollop of zucchini fritter batter into it, it starts to sizzle. Don't let the fat get hotter than 180 degrees Celsius (use a thermometer if you have one). Fry the zucchini batter for about 2 minutes on each side, or until dark golden and crisp.

<https://thefarmingchefs.com/zucchini-fritters-with-nigella-seed/>

Nigella Seed Naan (6 servings)

- 1 (7g) sachet fast-action dried yeast
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 2 cups strong white flour, plus extra for dusting
- 1 tsp. salt
- 3 tbsp. natural yogurt
- 2 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- vegetable oil, for greasing
- 1 tsp. nigella seeds
- chilli oil, to serve (optional)



1. Mix the yeast and sugar with 125ml lukewarm water. Set aside for 5 mins, or until frothy and starting to bubble.
2. Mix the flour with the salt in a large bowl. Make a well in the center and add the yeast mixture, yogurt and 1 tbsp of the butter. Quickly mix with a fork to make a soft dough, adding a splash more water if necessary.
3. Lightly grease a large bowl with oil. On a lightly floured surface, knead the dough for 8 mins, or until smooth. Put the dough in the oiled bowl, cover with clingfilm and leave in a warm place for about 1 hour, or until doubled in size.

4. Once risen, knock back the dough with your fist and knead briefly, then cut into 6 pieces. Roll each piece out into an oval measuring roughly 1cm in thickness. 5 In a nonstick frying pan set over a high heat, cook each naan for 6 mins, turning halfway, until cooked through and browned in places. Brush with the remaining butter and sprinkle with the nigella seeds. Transfer to a plate and cover with foil to keep warm while you cook the remaining naans. To serve, drizzle with the chilli oil, if using.

<https://realfood.tesco.com/recipes/nigella-seed-naans.html>

Warm Potato Salad with Nigella Seeds (8 servings)

- 3 pounds small red potatoes, scrubbed
- Kosher salt
- ¼ cup white wine vinegar
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup whole-grain Dijon mustard
- 2 tsp. nigella seeds
- ¼ cup minced chives



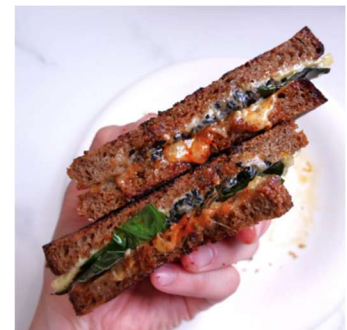
1. If the potatoes are the size of ping-pong balls, halve them. If they're much larger, quarter them so that all the potato chunks are about the same size. Put the cut potatoes in a large saucepan and add two tablespoons kosher salt and enough cold water to cover by one inch. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to simmer until tender, 10 to 12 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, whisk the vinegar, oil and mustard in a large bowl until well blended.
3. Drain the potatoes, shake gently in the colander to dry, then pour into the bowl with the dressing. Fold gently until evenly coated. Sprinkle with the nigella seeds and chives, then fold again until well mixed.

<https://www.latimes.com/recipe/warm-potato-salad-with-nigella-seeds>

Grilled Cheese with Nigella Seed (1 serving)

- ½ tsp. nigella seed
- 2 slices rye bread
- 1 tbsp. butter, softened
- 1 slice Gouda
- 1 slice cheddar
- 1/8 tsp. paprika
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp. grated pecorino
- 4 leaves fresh basil

1. In a medium skillet over medium heat, toast nigella seeds, stirring occasionally, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Transfer to a bowl.
2. Return skillet to medium heat. Spread butter evenly over one side of each slice of bread and place bread buttered side up. Let bread toast until hot, 1 minute, then flip. Immediately place Gouda and nigella on one slice, and cheddar, paprika and pepper on the other. Sprinkle pecorino over both slices.
3. Reduce heat to low and continue cooking until bread is golden and cheese has melted. Add basil, then close the sandwich and transfer to a plate. Let cool slightly before serving!



https://www.burlapandbarrel.com/blogs/recipes/grilled-cheese-with-nigella-seed?srsId=AfmBOop2_AJQYRKPFrKIFODYkqXbJYxn7rMePkq2DTV7u9ArEsew7LTV

No Knead Turkish Bread (Ramazan Pidesi) (4 servings)

Turkish bread, also known as Ramazan Pidesi, is a classic no-knead flatbread topped with a generous mix of nigella and sesame seeds. This fluffy, chewy bread is incredibly easy to make and perfect for any time of day. Enjoy it with tea, cheese, or your favorite dips and spreads.

For the Dough

- 1 ¼ cups warm water
- 1 tbsp. instant yeast
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. salt

For the Topping

- 1 egg, yolk only
- 1 tbsp. water
- 2 tsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ tbsp. sesame seeds
- 1 tbsp. nigella seeds



1. Start by mixing together the warm water, instant yeast and sugar in a large bowl. Add in the flour and salt. With a wooden spoon, mix well until there is no more visible flour and the dough looks cohesive, about 2 minutes. The dough will be sticky. Cover with plastic wrap and allow it to rise for 1 hour or until double in size.
2. On your working countertop, place two large pieces of parchment papers and dust heavily with flour. Dump the dough on to the parchment paper and divide into 2 equal parts, placing each dough ball on a separate piece of parchment. With your hands dusted with flour, gently press down on each dough to form a 24 cm circle. Cover lightly with a tea towel and let it rest for 40 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, centre your oven racks and place two 12 by 17 inches baking trays, one on each rack, in the oven. Preheat the oven to 428°F with the baking trays inside.
4. Prepare the topping by whisking together the egg yolk, water and flour in a small bowl. Brush the rested dough rounds with the egg yolk mixture. Using your fingertips, make a circular indentation 2-3 cm from the edge of the dough creating an inner circle. Then fill in the centre of the inner circle with your fingers making criss-crossed diagonal lines, about 2-3 cm apart, making sure not to tear the dough or pop the air bubbles that may have formed. Sprinkle each dough evenly with the sesame and nigella seeds.
5. Carefully transfer the dough by sliding the parchment onto the back of another large sheet pan or on to a pizza peel. Slide the dough on top of the preheated baking trays, one on each tray. Bake for 15-20 minutes, switching the trays halfway until lightly golden brown. Remove from the oven and allow the breads to cool on a wire rack for a few minutes, slice into pieces and enjoy.

<https://www.hungrypaprikas.com/turkish-bread/>

Nigella Seed Onion Rings (2 servings)

- 1 large onion, peeled and sliced into ½" rounds, separated into rings
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 tbsp. white wine vinegar, optional
- ½ tsp. turmeric
- 1 tsp. kosher salt, separated plus additional for sprinkling
- ¼ tsp. cayenne
- ¾ cup, all purpose flour
- 2 tbsp. cornmeal
- 2 tsp. nigella seeds
- ½ tsp. salt
- 2 cups neutral oil, for frying
- kosher salt



1. In a large bowl, mix together buttermilk, vinegar, turmeric, ½ tsp salt and cayenne. Add in the onion rings, toss well to combine. Allow the onions to marinate for at least 15 minutes (the onions can stay in the buttermilk for a few hours). In another bowl mix together flour, cornmeal, nigella seeds, and the remaining ½ tsp salt.
2. When you are ready to fry, preheat the oven to 300°. Line a baking sheet with paper towels. Heat the oil to 350° in a large pot or dutch oven.
3. In batches, dredge the onion rings into the flour mixture. Place the onion rings separately on a couple of plates until ready to fry. Fry the onion rings in 3-4 batches being careful not to crowd them. Fry for 2-3 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from the oil and place on the baking sheet and sprinkle with salt. Place the baking sheet in the warm oven. Repeat the process with the remaining onions rings, placing them in the oven to keep warm. Serve hot.

<https://cooksandkid.com/nigella-seed-onion-rings/>

Kalonji Pulao (4 servings)

Kalonji pulao (nigella seed infused rice) is the simplest of recipes on the Indian home menu.

- 2 cup rice cooked, preferable long grain like Basmathi
- 1 tbsp. butter oil if you would like to change
- 2 cloves
- ½ stick cinnamon crushed
- salt to taste
- 1 tsp. black cumin nigella seeds, kalonji
- 1 tsp. cumin seeds
- 2-3 pieces fresh ginger root crush to add
- 2 tbsp. almonds cut pieces (optional)



1. Fluff the cooked rice and keep ready in a mixing bowl
2. In a small pan melt the butter and add all the seeds and spices. Keep on a low heat and sauté for the nice aroma.
3. Pour this over the rice, add salt and mix well

<https://mildlyindian.com/kalonji-pulao-nigella-seed-rice/>

Mediterranean Hummus with Nigella Seeds (Serves 4)

- 1 cup cooked chickpeas (also known as garbanzo beans)
- 2 tbsp. tahini
- 2 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. ground cumin
- 2 tbsp. water
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. nigella seeds

1. In a food processor, combine the cooked chickpeas, tahini, lemon juice, garlic, salt, and cumin. Process until smooth.
2. With the food processor running, slowly add the water and olive oil until the hummus reaches the desired consistency.
3. Transfer the hummus to a serving bowl and sprinkle with the nigella seeds.
4. Serve the hummus with pita bread, crackers, or vegetables for dipping.
5. This recipe makes about 1 cup of hummus, and it can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.



<https://thamesorganic.com/blogs/organic-recipes/mediterranean-hummus-with-nigella-seeds-a-delicious-and-healthy-snack?srltid=AfmBOOr2e0BGUoUH366L0MQod0p8Txh5zp2WEiqXHImvSJTqI6ROZXdj>

Nigella Caesar Dressing

For the Dressing:

- 1 ½ tsp. Worcestershire
- 1 ½ tbsp. nigella seed
- 1 tsp. mustard powder
- ½ tsp. granules garlic
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 ½ tsp. peppercorn
- 1 tsp. citric acid
- 1/3 cup water
- 1 cup avocado oil
- 1 ½ tsp. white granulated sugar
- ½ tsp. Kosher Salt

Croutons (Make your own or buy some)

- 2 cups of old sour dough cubed, small
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 ½ tsp. Provencal Seasoned Salt



1. For the Dressing: Add all of the dry ingredients in a tall 1 quart container with a wide base, like a Mason jar.
2. Pour in the water and blend well with an immersion blender. With the immersion blender running and immersed in the liquid, slowly pour in the oil, and continue blending until emulsified and thick. The result should be creamy.
3. Croutons: Toss your bread in a bowl with olive oil and evenly sprinkle the Provencal Seasoned Salt.
4. Spread croutons evenly on a sheet pan lined with parchment and bake for 15-20 minutes at 325°.
5. Notes: For crunch, add thinly sliced radishes to the salad. For added umami, sprinkle nutritional yeast on the salad as a vegan substitute for parmesan cheese.

<https://worldspice.com/blogs/recipes/nigella-caesar-dressing?srltid=AfmBOoq3PNvA5XR-PjRzMJOSMS2EY5aXIwBLSw4XFhZB4ANTK3ZWLiOL>

Carrot Salad with Feta + Nigella Seeds (Serves 2-4)

- 6-10 carrots, peeled
- 4 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 tbsp. lemon juice (about ½ a lemon)
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and ground to a paste
- 1 tsp. nigella seeds
- 2 tbsp. chopped parsley
- 1/3 cup feta, crumbled



1. Peel carrots and cut into desired shape (thin sticks, coins, or other).
2. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil (use enough water to submerge carrots by 1 inch).
3. Cook carrots in boiling water for 3-4 minutes, or until easily pierced with a fork but not yet mushy (cooking time will depend on size of your cuts).
4. Drain carrots, let cool.
5. Grind garlic in mortar + pestle until you have a thick paste (adding a pinch of salt helps this along).
6. Place carrots in serving dish, dress with lemon juice, a few glugs of olive oil, garlic and nigella seeds.
7. Give it all a stir, top with chopped parsley and feta.
8. Serve at room temperature.

<https://food52.com/recipes/32710-carrot-salad-with-feta-nigella-seeds>

Kachumber Salad

- 1 red onion (small dice)
- 4 large tomatoes (de-seeded and small dice)
- 1 Large English cucumber (peeled, de-seeded and small dice)
- 2 tbsp. cumin seeds (dry toasted)
- 2 tsp. nigella seeds (dry toasted)
- 1 lime (juice and zest)
- ¼ cup Chopped Cilantro Leaf
- Salt & black pepper.



Combine all of the ingredients in a bowl, toss well to combine, cover with cling film/plastic wrap and chill for one hour.

<https://www.simonmajumdar.com/kachumber-salad>

Punjabi Gajar Ka Achar (4 servings)

Punjabi gajar ka achar recipe is actually an instant gajar ka achar which is a North Indian carrot pickle.

- 1 cup carrot strips, cut into thin slices
- ½ tsp. nigella seeds
- 2 tsp. split fenugreek seeds
- 2 tsp. split mustard seeds
- ¼ tsp. asafoetida (hing) (substitute: equal parts of garlic powder and onion powder)
- 1 tsp. chilli powder
- ¼ tsp. turmeric powder
- salt to taste
- 1 ½ tbsp. mustard oil



1. Combine all the ingredients, except the oil, in a bowl and mix well. Keep aside.
2. Heat the mustard oil in a small pan, add it to the carrot mixture and mix well.
3. Serve the punjabi gajar ka achar immediately or keep refrigerated till use.
4. Handy tips: This punjabi gajar ka achar stays fresh for 3 to 4 days.

<https://www.tarladalal.com/punjabi-gajar-ka-achar-30928r>

Nigella Seed Cookies

- 1 cup margarine (or butter)
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 1 egg (yolk separated for brushing on top)
- 2-3 tbsp. nigella seeds
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 packet baking powder (standard 15g packet equals 3 tsp.)
- ¼ cup powdered sugar
- 3-3.5 cups flour (added gradually)
- Optional: 1 tbsp. vinegar for extra crispiness

1. Melt the margarine and let it cool.
2. Mix vegetable oil, egg whites, nigella seeds, baking powder, salt, and powdered sugar.
3. Gradually add flour until the dough is soft but not sticky.
4. Shape into small rounds and place on a baking sheet.
5. Brush with egg yolk and bake at 175°C until golden brown.

https://bestdessertrecipe.com/nigella-seed-cookies-a-savory-delight/?utm_source=Pinterest&utm_medium=organic



Library Resources

Pretty Delicious by Alia Elkaffas – 641.5956 ELK / Zaytinya by Jose Andres – 641.5918 AND