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*Spice of the Month Kits are free, but supplies are limited. Please, only one kit per household.*



# Spice of the Month

## sesame seeds

*Spice up your life!*

The library will have take-and-make kits to pick up at the beginning of every month.

Each kit includes:

- Packet of the featured spice
- Information and fun facts
- Recipes to try at home

## DIY Acrylic Bookmarks

**FEBRUARY 17TH**

**Drop-in between 4:30-6:30pm**



## The Garden Buzz

February 21<sup>st</sup> from 1-2pm | Learn how to start from seeds!

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# sesame seeds

Sesame (*Sesamum indicum*) is a plant in the genus *Sesamum*, also called benne. Numerous wild relatives occur in Africa and a smaller number in India. It is widely naturalized in tropical regions around the world and is cultivated for its edible seeds, which grow in pods. World production in 2018 was 6 million tonnes, with Sudan, Myanmar, and India as the largest producers.

Sesame seed is one of the oldest oilseed crops known, domesticated well over 3,000 years ago. *Sesamum* has many other species, most being wild and native to sub-Saharan Africa. *S. indicum*, the cultivated type, originated in India. It tolerates drought conditions well, growing where other crops fail. For this reason, it has been called a 'survivor' crop. Sesame has one of the highest oil contents of any seed. With a rich, nutty flavor, it is a common ingredient in cuisines around the world. Like other foods, it can trigger allergic reactions in some people and is one of the nine most common allergens outlined by the Food and Drug Administration.

## Fun Facts

- Archaeological remnants of charred sesame dating to about 3500–3050 BC shows that sesame was domesticated in the Indian subcontinent at least 5500 years ago.
- Japan is the world's largest sesame importer. Sesame oil, particularly from roasted seed, is an important component of Japanese cooking.
- Sesame became widespread in China with the introduction of Buddhism as it was used for ritual lamp oil.
- Sesame seeds offer a variety of health benefits, including lowering cholesterol, helping fight infections, supporting oral health, and aiding in diabetes treatment.

Information from *The Nut Market* and *Wikipedia*

## Instructions

1. In a large bowl mix milk, water, olive oil, sugar, salt, instant dry yeast and egg white.
2. Add the flour in batches and mix with a wooden spoon until the dough comes together. The dough will be tacky and there is no need to knead it.
3. Cover and let it sit in a draft free space such as an off oven for 40 minutes to rise.
4. Sprinkle your surface with flour. Transfer the dough from the bowl to the surface and shape it into a ball. Cover it with a kitchen towel and let it sit for 20 minutes.
5. Preheat the oven to 400°F and line a baking sheet with a parchment paper.
6. Mix the egg yolk, yogurt and water in a small bowl and set aside. This will be your glaze.
7. Place the dough on the baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Brush with some of the glaze and using your fingers, spread the dough into an oval shape with 1/2 inch thickness.
8. Using your fingers, make indentations on the dough about 1 inch from the edge to make a circle. Then with your fingers make diagonal indentations in two different directions to make diamonds inside that circle. Top with sesame seeds and nigella seeds.
9. Bake for 25 minutes until the bread is golden.

*This bread is perfect for breakfast with cheese, butter, or jam, and pairs well with egg dishes like menemen, çilbir, or nargesi. It also complements main dishes such as ground beef stew or red lentil soup. Most famously, it's the bread used for İskender kebab—day-old pide torn, topped with döner kebab and tomato sauce.*



# TURKISH PIDE BREAD

🕒 Total Time: 40 mins

🍽 Servings: 6



## Ingredients

- 1/2 cup milk, warm
- 1/2 cup water, warm
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 teaspoons instant dry yeast
- 1 large egg white
- 2 1/3 cup bread flour

## Yogurt Egg Glaze

- 1 large egg yolk
- 1 tbsp plain yogurt
- 1 tbsp water
- **2 tbsp sesame seeds, to top**
- 2 tbsp nigella seeds (also called black seeds, or black cumin seeds)

Recipe from: Unicorns in the Kitchen

<https://www.unicornsinthekitchen.com/turkish-pide-bread-ramazan-pidesi/>



# Sesame Chicken Dumplings

🕒 Total Time: 50 mins

🍽 Servings: 6



## Ingredients

- 1 pound ground chicken or pork
- 2 tablespoons fresh grated ginger
- 1 clove garlic, minced or grated
- 2 cups roughly chopped spinach or bok choy
- 2 tablespoons plus, 1/4 cup low sodium soy sauce or tamari
- Black pepper
- 24-26 round dumpling or wonton wrappers
- **1/4 cup plus, 1 tablespoon raw sesame seeds**
- 3-4 medium shallots, thinly sliced
- 3 cups low sodium chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 5 tablespoons sesame or olive oil
- 1/2 cup Panko breadcrumbs
- 4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced or smashed
- Crushed red pepper flakes use to your taste
- Green onions for serving



Recipe from: Half Baked Harvest

<https://www.halfbakedharvest.com/sesame-chicken-dumplings/>





### Instructions

1. In a medium bowl, combine the raw chicken, bok choy, 1 tablespoon ginger, garlic, 2 tablespoons soy sauce, and a pinch of black pepper.
2. To assemble, spoon 1 tablespoon of filling onto each wrapper. Brush water around the edges of the wrapper. Fold the edges of the wrapper up and around the filling and pinch in the center to seal. Repeat with the remaining wrappers. Place the sesame seeds in a shallow bowl. Brush the bottoms of the dumplings with water and then dredge them in the sesame seeds.
3. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a medium pot. When the oil shimmers, add the shallots and cook until fragrant and caramelized, about 4 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon ginger and cook another minute. Add the broth, 1/4 cup soy sauce, and the rice vinegar. Season to taste with pepper. Bring to a simmer over medium heat. Keep warm.
4. Heat a few tablespoons of oil in a large skillet set over medium heat. When the oil shimmers, add the dumplings and cook until the bottoms are golden brown, about 2-3 minutes. Carefully pour 1/4 cup of water into the skillet, it will splatter, so stand back. Immediately cover with a tight-fitting lid. Turn heat to medium-low and let the dumplings steam for 5-6 minutes. Remove the dumplings from the skillet to a plate.
5. In the same skillet, add the remaining 2 tablespoons oil, the Panko, thinly sliced garlic, 1 tablespoon sesame seeds, and a large pinch of red pepper flakes. Cook until lightly toasted, 3 minutes. Watch closely. Spoon the crumbs out of the skillet onto a plate.
6. Arrange the dumplings in shallow bowls. Ladle the broth over top. Top with garlic crisps, green onions, and chili oil.

# TAHINI

🕒 **Total Time: 15 mins**

🍵 **Servings: 1/2 cup**



### Ingredients

- **1 cup (140g) sesame seeds**
- 2 to 4 tablespoons light flavored oil such as sesame oil (not toasted), avocado, grape seed, vegetable, or a light olive oil
- Pinch of salt, *optional*

### Instructions

- **Toast the sesame seeds:** Add sesame seeds to a wide, dry saucepan over medium-low heat and toast, stirring constantly, until the seeds become fragrant and turn light golden, 3 to 5 minutes. Stay close and keep stirring, as the seeds can burn quickly.
- **Make tahini:** Add the toasted sesame seeds to the bowl of a food processor, then process until a crumbly paste, about 2 minutes. Add 2 tablespoons of the oil, then process for 2 to 4 minutes more, stopping to scrape the bottom and sides of the food processor a couple of times.
- **To finish:** Check the consistency. It should be smooth, not gritty, and should be pourable. You may need to process for another minute and add 1 to 2 more tablespoons of oil. Taste the tahini for seasoning, then add salt to taste and process for 5 to 10 seconds to mix.



**Recipe from: Inspired Taste**

<https://www.inspiredtaste.net/26901/easy-tahini-recipe/>

