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



*We have a **monthly newsletter**! Keep up-to-date on
all the library's happenings and latest events!*



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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

Asafoetida

Asafoetida is the British word for an ingredient called hing in Hindi. It is the resin of a plant from the celery family, and when cooked smells strongly of a sulfur scent, though there are disagreements on what exactly it smells like. To bring out the flavor profile, it is recommended that it is tempered with oil, or some form of fat, along side the other spices in the dish, before being added into the dish for cooking.

Native to Iran and Afghanistan, this plant has a long history before it become a cornerstone of Indian vegetarian cooking. In Roman and Greek cuisine, asafoetida replaced a spice that went extinct, called silphium. In the Mahabharata, asafoetida is mentioned to be used to season meat dishes, and Assyrian clay tablets note its culinary and medicinal uses long before it became one of the staple seasonings of Indian cuisine.

Fun Facts

- Due to the funky smell, similar to boiled eggs, it has the nicknames devil's dung, Satan's Weed, and Merde du Diable!
- It has multiple names and spellings! Asafoetida, asafetida, and in Hindi, hing.
- For those who can't have garlic or onion, asafoetida is said to have a similar flavor.
- In 1918 people in the US wore sachets of asafoetida to ward off the Spanish Flu.
- It is said to help alleviate period pains and congestion.
- Mostly absent from western foods, it is found in Worcestershire sauce!
- It is normally cut with wheat or rice flour, so those looking to eat gluten free need to double check labels!

Information from the Bon Appetit, Taste Cooking, Serious Eats, and Medium.

Avoiding pitfalls when cooking

- Do not consume raw, as it needs heat to mellow out the taste
- Do not leave the container open, as the smell will stick around.
- Avoid refrigerating it, as the smell can seep into the fridge.
- Only use a small bit, as called for in a recipe or when replacing onion and garlic.



Popular theories on its travels

- In the 4th century BCE, Alexander the Great and his army mistook it for silphium, and brought it back to India.
- It was brought in by Persian traders.
- The Mughals introduced it to India after discovering it while in exile to Persia.
- Introduced to western cuisine via a british officer who returned from colonia India.



Instructions

7. Stir in coconut milk and bring to a boil.
8. Add spinach, stir and cook for 2 minutes. Turn off the heat.
9. Serve while warm in big bowls over rice or quinoa. Enjoy!



Crispy Indian Okra

🕒 Total Time: 30 mins

🍽 Servings: 4



Ingredients

- 2 ½ cups fresh okra, ends trimmed
- 5 tablespoons chickpea flour (besan)
- 1 teaspoon ginger paste
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon red chile powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 pinch asafoetida powder
- 1 pinch carom seeds
- salt to taste
- oil for frying
- 1 teaspoon chaat masala, or to taste (Optional)

Recipe from: Savory and Savy



<https://savoryandsavvy.com/recipe/fall-vegetable-coconut-curry/>

Recipe from: Allrecipes



<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/276153/crispy-indian-okra/>

Instructions

1. Cut each okra pod vertically into 4 long pieces.
2. Place in a bowl with chickpea flour, ginger paste, lemon juice, chile powder, turmeric, asafetida, carom seeds, and salt; toss to coat.
3. Heat 2 inches oil in a deep saucepan over medium heat. Lower okra carefully into the hot oil in batches. Fry until golden brown and crispy, about 5 minutes.
4. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate to drain. Repeat with remaining okra.
5. Serve sprinkled with chaat masala.



Fall Vegetable Coconut Curry

🕒 **Total Time: 40 mins**

🍹 **Servings: 4-6**

Ingredients:

- 1 large head cauliflower cut in medium florets
- 1 large white Japanese sweet potatoes cut in 1" cubes
- 2 cups pureed tomatoes 4~5 medium tomatoes
- 3 cups spinach roughly chopped
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 tsp asafoetida powder
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1/2 tbsp turmeric
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper

Instructions

1. Prepare all your ingredients.
2. In a dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat, about 30 seconds. Stir in asafoetida and let it sizzle for 30 seconds.
3. Add blended or chopped tomatoes to dutch oven and stir. (Tomatoes may splatter so use caution.)
4. Next add salt, cumin, coriander, cayenne and turmeric. Saute until oil glistens on top, about 4-5 minutes.
5. Add water and combine. Bring to a boil and reduce heat to medium. Add sweet potatoes and cook for 8 minutes covered.
6. Next, add cauliflower and cook for another 7 minutes covered or until they reach the desired doneness. Vegetables should be cooked but still have a bite.

Recipe from: Allrecipes

<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/276153/crispy-indian-okra/>



Recipe from: Savory and Savy

<https://savoryandsavvy.com/recipe/fall-vegetable-coconut-curry/>

