

# Staples of an Ayurvedic Kitchen

*from Dr Naina Marballi's Ayurvedic Nutritional Counselor Training*

## ESSENTIAL PANTRY ITEMS:

\*Organic, sustainable, natural and cruelty-free is always preferred, as much as possible.

### Legumes (protein)

- Split Mung D[h]al (beans/lentils), Yellow or Green -- these are the easiest to digest of all beans, they provide protein and the Astringent Taste, and they balance all the doshas. Whole mung beans are also good, but the term "split" means the beans are split open and their green skins are removed for easier digestion.

### Grains

- Basmati rice
- Quinoa
- Amaranth
- Barley (omit this for a gluten-/wheat-free diet; millet could be a substitute here)
- Wheat flour (omit this for a gluten-/wheat-free diet; many non-wheat flours are now easily available - consider your dosha when choosing an alternative)

### Fat / Oil / Dairy

- Ghee
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Yogurt

### Spices

- Coriander
- Cumin
- Ginger
- Turmeric

#### BASIC PREPARATION METHOD OF AN AYURVEDIC MEAL:

1. Begin by combining a grain and a legume (bean/pea/lentil) with water in a pot and bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer.
2. While that's cooking, wash and chop the vegetables.
3. Sautee spices in warm ghee in a pot or saucepan. (Be careful not to burn them.)
4. When you can smell or hear the spices cooking, add the chopped vegetables and stir together so the spiced-oil mixture is well-combined with the vegetables.
5. Add a couple spoonfuls of water to prevent sticking.
6. Cover and cook on low heat until the vegetables are "fork-friendly", i.e., not mushy.
7. When the rice and lentils are cooked to the consistency of a porridge, sautee spices in ghee and stir into the porridge.
8. Add salt to taste at the end, and garnish with some fresh cilantro or mint leaves.
9. Additions: warm fresh chapati, a chutney, or a lassi (lassis are better after lunch, not in the evening).

#### BEST PREP METHODS (TIPS):

- ❖ Prep your vegetables (wash and chop into attractive, chewable-sized pieces) while cooking the grains and beans.
- ❖ Be sure to have at least two different, complementary vegetables at each meal; use whatever is in season (for example, carrots and broccoli; or zucchini and yellow squash).
- ❖ Dark leafy greens (e.g., kale, spinach, collard greens) can be cooked with the other vegetable(s), or prepared separately.
- ❖ Spices should be gently "fried" or sauteed in ghee to release their volatile oils (which hold the therapeutic benefits of the spice) into the ghee.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- ❖ Grains and legumes are best kept in tightly-closed glass jars, away from light and heat. A wide mouth can help with measuring and pouring.
- ❖ For Kapha types, dry-roast grains before adding water (this makes the grains lighter).
- ❖ Pre-mix beneficial spice combinations and store in a container to save time.
- ❖ Vegetables should be as pure and farm-fresh as possible, and a substantial part of each meal; they are best taken sauteed in spiced ghee (see above).
- ❖ Include all 6 Tastes, and at least two different vegetables, in every meal.
- ❖ Dark leafy green vegetables have minerals that other vegetables don't, so it's important to eat them several times a week, even daily if possible.
- ❖ Eat with the sun, and drop into a positive head-space before entering the kitchen - and before eating.