



FLAVA MI PLATE



JAMAICA'S TOP CULINARY HERBS AND SPICES





Healthy Food Can Be Flavaful

I grew up thinking that healthy food was bland and unsavory. Well, that was until I learned about all the savory culinary herbs and spices.

Today I use these herbs and spices to replace or reduce the amount of salt in my food, which helps prevent diseases such as heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes. These diseases contribute to death and disability in many communities of color.

Before I tell you more about some of my favorite culinary herbs and spices from Jamaica, let me share a little about the country of my birth.





JAMAICAN CULINARY HERITAGE

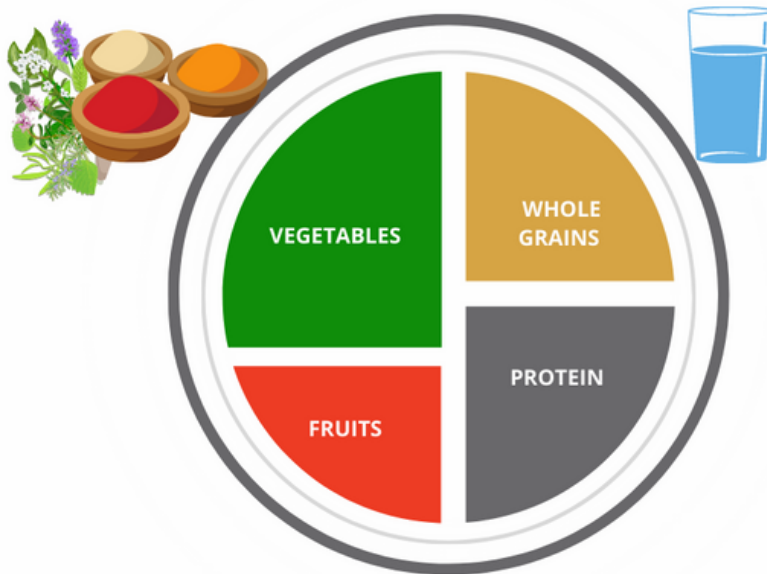


Jamaica is known throughout the world for its people, food, and culture.

- **People:** More than 90% of its residents (2.9 million) are of African descent, with a minority of East Indian, European, and Chinese ancestry.
- **Food:** The culinary heritage of Jamaica includes food with bold, rich flava and spices like jerk, curry, and oxtail seasonings. Each spice represents the preservation and fusion of the culinary traditions of its people.
- **Ital Culture and Flava:** In addition to reggae music, Jamaica has its own unique brand of healthy cuisine known as ital or vital food. Ital is vegan food that originated from the Rastafarian pan-African liberation movement, which began in the 1930s. Ital food is historically known for its low salt content and vegan dishes packed with flava.



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Jamaican plates include culinary herbs and spices, which give each meal a savory, warm, spicy, and comforting flava. Herbs and spices are great substitutes for salt.

20 Jamaican Culinary Herbs and Spices



Allspice
(Pimento)



Thyme



Scotch bonnet
pepper



Ginger



Onion



Cinnamon



Garlic



Scallion



Tumeric



Black pepper



Coriander



Cloves



Nutmeg



Bay



Annatto



Cumin



Fengreek



Vanilla



Mustard seeds



Paprika

3 Jamaican Spice Blends



Herbs and spices shine when combined together with other spices that have complementary flavor profiles. Below are three spice blends used in Jamaica. While typically associated with meats or poultry, these spices also go well with many vegetable and seafood dishes.



Jerk: warm, fruity, and spicy flavor profile. The key ingredients for jerk are pimento or allspice, thyme, scallion, and scotch bonnet pepper. Jerk seasoning combines the culinary expertise of West African and Arawak/Taino Indians.



Oxtail: similar flavor profile to jerk seasoning, but typically more fruity and is less spicy than jerk. Oxtail is a dish that is informed by West African culinary heritage, especially the one-pot stew.



Curry: musky, warm, and spice flavor, Jamaican curry is an East Indian contribution. Jamaican curry is known for the popular turmeric grown on the island.



Thank You!

I hope this brief overview was informative and inspires you to add some of these herbs and spices to your healthy eating plates. If you're looking for more helpful resources like this one, check out our website.

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