

An Unusual Culinary Column: Turmeric Isn't Just Trendy, It's Delicious!

By Karen Kain

Turmeric root is being talked about for many different reasons. It is estimated that more than 100 million people live with chronic pain. Many of us are open to trying other types of pain management rather than prescription drugs, which can have many different side effects. Turmeric has come into the lime light for being an inexpensive alternative with some benefits that will aid in your overall health.

Turmeric is the new rage in nutritional supplements. If you are not taking it in pill form many of you are adding it to your meals in one way or another. Turmeric has been used in India for thousands of years as a medicinal herb. Curcumin is the main active ingredient in turmeric and is being called a powerful anti-inflammatory. Curcumin is poorly absorbed into the bloodstream and has an increase in absorption by 2000% when taken with black pepper. Turmeric is full of free radicals which is also said to be beneficial in decreasing the aging process by stimulating the body's own antioxidant enzymes. It is also said to help brain function, lower your risk of heart disease, prevent and treat cancer, helps with arthritis and depression.

The only warning I would have for you in cooking with turmeric is that it stains your clothing or dishtowels, but a few washes will get it out. I think I am like many of you when it comes to cooking with turmeric, not very experienced. To be totally honest, I did not expect to enjoy the recipes as much as I did. I loved making and eating each of these dishes, my favorites were the soup and the pineapple ice cream, which I made a few times, I first made the soup with chicken and then again with tofu. I like a lot of broth in my soup, so I added an additional can of coconut milk and some extra veggies to the tofu soup. I have to say that both soups were a hit.

If you are unable to find fresh turmeric you can use 1 teaspoon dried turmeric for 1 tablespoon fresh.

As a general rule 1-inch fresh turmeric equals 1 tablespoon freshly grated turmeric, I always grate it first then measure. Fresh turmeric looks very similar to ginger root being a close relative, both are said to have livelier flavors when dried. You should peel the outer layer of thick skin off fresh turmeric just as you would ginger. Once peeled, the easiest way to chop it is to cut into coins, then into matchsticks and then chop fine or you can grate with your cheese grater on the microplane side. When purchasing fresh turmeric it is best to look for a firm root. It should be stored in the refrigerator in a sealed container; it will last in the freezer for several months.

I hope you give one or all these recipes a try. I would love to hear about how you are staying sane in this winter melt and what recipes you are cooking.

Turmeric and Beet Juice

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ Inches of fresh ginger root
- 1 Tablespoon fresh turmeric root
- 3 Large carrots
- 1 Large beet
- 1 Large apple

Directions:

Throw all the ingredients into a juicer and serve immediately.

Spinach & Avocado Salad with Sweet Turmeric Dressing

Ingredients:

- 3 Ounces baby spinach
- 1 Avocado
- ½ Orange, peeled and sliced
- 2 Tablespoons pomegranate seeds

Dressing:

- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 2 Tablespoon fresh lime juice
- 2 Teaspoons maple syrup
- ½ Teaspoon ground turmeric
- ⅛ Teaspoon salt
- ⅛ Teaspoon pepper



Directions:

Top the spinach with avocado slices and orange slices then sprinkle with pomegranate seeds. Whisk the dressing and pour over the salad.

Turmeric & Coconut Soup

Ingredients:

- 2 Tablespoons coconut oil
- 2 Shallots, finely chopped
- 6 Cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tablespoon ginger, grated or minced
- 1 Tablespoon fresh turmeric, grated
- 2 Cups chicken broth or vegetable broth
- 1-14 Ounce can coconut milk
- 2 Lemon grass stalks
- 1 Teaspoon fish sauce
- 2 Teaspoons sugar
- ⅛ Teaspoon salt
- ⅛ Teaspoon pepper
- ½ Teaspoon ground turmeric
- ⅛ – ¼ Teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 Cup sliced mushrooms
- 8 Ounces shredded cooked chicken, or tofu, cubed
- 1 Tablespoon fresh lime juice, about ½ a lime
- ¼ Cup fresh cilantro, chopped

I also made this recipe using firm tofu instead of chicken and vegetable broth. I added an additional can of coconut milk to the soup, both recipes were a big hit.

Directions:

In a large soup pot, heat up the coconut oil on medium high heat. Add the shallots and sauté until golden brown, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic, ginger and grated turmeric

then sauté for a few more minutes. Add the broth, coconut milk, lemon grass, fish sauce, sugar, salt, pepper, ground turmeric, cayenne pepper and simmer for 15 minutes. Add the mushrooms and chicken then cook for an additional 5 minutes. Just before serving add the lime juice and cilantro and enjoy.

Pineapple & Turmeric Ice Cream

Ingredients:

- 8 Ounces fresh pineapple, cut into small pieces
- 1 Teaspoon fresh grated turmeric or ½ teaspoon powdered
- 1 Tablespoon maple syrup, more for drizzling
- Vanilla ice cream

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Mix together the pineapple, turmeric and syrup. Bake the pineapple on a baking sheet covered in parchment paper for 20 minutes. Flip the pineapple over and cook for an additional 10-25 minutes, until the pineapple is a golden brown, and the sides are a bit crunchy. Serve the warm pineapple over vanilla ice cream with a drizzle of maple syrup over it.

Karen Kain can be reached at karenkain8@icloud.com.

**Owned and Operated by
Don & Kim Wallace**

DON WALLACE, PLS
Professional Land Surveying
1224 E. Alder St.
Vernonia, OR 97064
Phone: 503-429-6115
FAX: 1-866-297-1402
Email: DWallace_KLS@msn.com

CORPORATE MEMBER

Mariolino's Pizza & Grill

Open for
breakfast, lunch & dinner

Daily Specials

We have ice cream!
Cones-Shakes-Sundaes

721 Madison Avenue, Vernonia
(503) 429-5018

Serving Vernonia since 1970

ABSOLUTE MARBLE

QUALITY FABRICATION & INSTALLATION

MARBLE GRANITE TRAVERTINE

FREE ESTIMATES
Kitchen Countertops
Fireplace & Furniture
Tubs & Vanities

CCB#204480
Phone 503-429-2617
AbsoluteMarble@frontier.com