



Turmeric



Turmeric root is an easy growing super food that can be made into tea or used to flavor dishes. Being able to grow your own turmeric in a garden bed or in a container can save money and provide the freshest flavor and best nutrition.

Plant: Turmeric needs a sunny spot and well-draining soil to thrive, either in a bed or in a pot. The turmeric plant is grown from tuber rhizomes, fleshy root-structures that also serve as the edible portion of the plant. It is easy to get whole turmeric tubers from local grocery and specialty stores to use as your root stock. Turmeric takes 8-10 months to harvest from planting so it is best to count back 10 months from the anticipated first fall frost to determine when to put the tubers in the ground. In the Lowcountry, you can plant as late as February or March. Sprout your tubers and place 2-3 turmeric tuber sprouts in a 14- to 18-inch pot with fertile soil indoors. If there is more than 2 sprouts per tuber, cut the tuber so each section has one bud to encourage better growth. Lay the bud sections flat and cover with soil. Keep in a warm place indoors or under a good layer of mulch if outdoors.

Grow: Turmeric will grow like a weed and produce beautiful tropical foliage up to three feet tall. Water well and keep in warm, humid conditions, ideally 86-95 degrees. A warm full sun window will work well if you plan to grow your turmeric indoors. Check on the pot every few days and water as needed. When the plants are 6-8 inches tall, transplant them into the ground or larger pots. Feed with compost tea or fertilizer every 2-3 weeks during the growing season.

Harvest: The turmeric is ready to harvest when the leaves and stems start to turn brown and dry, or about 8-10 months after planting. If harvesting from a pot, tip over and remove tubers and brush off soil. Cut the stems off an inch above the tuber mass and wash them well. Wrap it in a paper towel and keep in the fridge for up to 2 weeks.

Nutrition Information:

Turmeric root has long been studied for its antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer properties from the distinctive phytonutrient that also imparts its color: curcumin.

How to Prepare:

Indian, Thai and Persian dishes and most curries are often defined by the color and flavor imparted by dried turmeric (also known as the "poor man's saffron"). The fresh root, however, is most commonly used in tea and for medicinal purposes. Peel the outside with a vegetable peeler or knife and mince as you would fresh ginger. Add a small amount to juices, smoothies, marinades or salad dressings or try in lentil and rice dishes, soups or curries.



Miso-Turmeric Dressing

Yields: 8 servings

Serving size: 2 Tbsp

Ingredients

⅓ cup unseasoned rice vinegar

¼ cup mirin

¼ cup canola oil

2 tablespoons finely grated carrot

2 tablespoons white miso

1 tablespoon finely grated peeled ginger

2 teaspoons finely grated peeled turmeric or ½ teaspoon ground turmeric

1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil

Preparation

1. Whisk vinegar, mirin, vegetable oil, carrot, miso, ginger, turmeric, and sesame oil in a small bowl. Cover and chill.
2. Use with fresh greens, warm soba noodles or over seared fish.
3. Dressing can be made 5 days ahead.

Nutrition Facts per Serving:

120 calories, 10 g fat, 4 g carbohydrates, 0 g fiber, 0 g protein