

## Warm Masala Recipe

### Ingredients:

15 g or about 2 tablespoons cumin seeds  
50 g or about 11 tablespoons coriander (cilantro) seeds  
20 g or about 3 1/2 tablespoons fennel seeds  
15 g or about 2 tablespoons black pepper kernels  
15 g cinnamon stick pieces or about 3 tablespoons small pieces  
1/2 teaspoon whole cloves  
1/2 medium nutmeg  
2-3 star anise pods (whole)  
10 g or about 1 1/2 tablespoons cardamom pods

### Method:

Prepare the masala's mild spices. Clean and sort the cumin, coriander and fennel seeds and toss them separately in a wire strainer. Pour these spices on to a microwave-safe plate or tray and spread out into a thin, even layer. Roast on low in the microwave oven for 5-6 minutes, pausing three times to stir. Set aside. Prepare the strong spices. Clean and sort the black pepper, tossing the kernels in a wire strainer several times to sift out chaff and dirt. Break the cinnamon sticks into small pieces. Mix the cinnamon, black pepper and cloves on a microwave-safe plate or tray, and roast in one batch, as per earlier step. Prepare the sweet spices. Crush the nutmeg into small pieces in a mortar. Roast with the star anise and cardamom pods in one batch as earlier step (Caution: When roasting, cardamom seeds blister easily when overheated, and should never be roasted outside of their pods in the microwave, or beyond the 5-minute threshold. When roasting, always inspect the batch when you pause to stir it, checking to see if any pods have blackened or blistered. If so, stop roasting, and open a few 'good' pods to make sure the entire batch has not been affected. Never roast cardamom pods on any setting above 200W/low/defrost). Grind the roasted mild spices in two batches, pausing several times to stir, until mostly fine. Reserve in a small mixing bowl. Pound the roasted strong spices in the mortar until coarsely crushed, then grind in one batch until fine (The cloves will be coarser than the rest). Reserve. Pound the roasted sweet spices in the mortar until coarsely crushed and then grind until mostly fine. Mix all the spices together, stirring thoroughly.

Warm masala should be a reddish-brown, somewhat coarse powder with an aroma that is both savoury and sweet. Store in a spice jar in a cool, dry place. It will retain its strength for up to one year.