

FOOD

CORIANDER

main ingredients to flavour soups like shorba and rasam. The seeds have a sweet spicy taste and are used in many dishes to give a distinct flavour. The leaves when used in food does not only lend flavour but also gives freshness to the food.

“Coriander seed is used for pickling vegetables. In Russia and Central Europe, coriander seed is an important ingredient in bread making. The people in North America use them in their cuisine, by mixing the powdered seeds ground with chili and using it as a condiment with meat, and also eating leaves as a salad,” says Sidharth Bhardwaj, Executive Chef, Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel

Gachibowli. Rohan Malwankar, Executive Sous Chef, The Westin Hyderabad Mindspace adds, “It is the main ingredient of the two most popular South Indian dishes, sambhar and rasam. Dhania or coriander powder acts as a thickener when used in curries. It also makes for a great component in spice rubs for fish and chicken, and adds a robust flavour when used in making homemade pickles.”

Coriander acts as a spice in terms of lending the food its freshness and aroma. This brilliant spice also prevents food poisoning by being harmful to a range of bacteria. “Coriander has a strong aroma and if we want to have this aroma infused with the food it is wise to never cook for a longer time after adding fresh coriander to any dish. If this is added in the last minute to any dish being cooked and then kept covered after removing from the flame, the aroma is released into the dish and it tastes fresh and aromatic,” says Avijit Deb Sharma, Executive Chef Ibis Bengaluru Outer Ring Road.

Rahul Dhavale, Executive Chef, The



Chuzha Makhani

Westin Mumbai Garden City adds, “While cooking coriander leaves, they should always be used with the stalk because the stalk has more flavour than the leaves. It is always essential to wash the green coriander leaves before chopping since washing post chopping always spoils the flavour. Garnishing green coriander leaves in the end is always beneficial since it gives more flavour to the dish.”

Coriander has been part of many cuisines, enticing palates as both a spice and herb. “The leaves of coriander, popularly known in the US and Mexico as cilantro, are fragrant and refreshing with a prominent citrus note. It is used as a

garnish as well as in curries, chutneys and more. On the other hand, in the seeds the flavour of citrus is subdued by a warm and nutty aroma that works great in marinades especially when paired with cumin and cinnamon,” says G V Ramesh, Executive Chef, Novotel Kochi Infopark.

When using coriander in cooking, you need to understand that the seeds of the plant are considered a spice, rather than the plant. The seeds have a lemony citrus flavour when crushed and are warm, nutty and spicy. Hence you will need to use the fully ripened coriander seeds, which are greenish brown in colour which gives the best flavour and ensure that it is

KNOW YOUR CORIANDER

The coriander crop is ready for harvest in about 90 to 110 days depending upon the variety and growing season.

Harvesting has to be done when the fruits are fully ripe and start changing colour from green to brown.

In India, coriander is cultivated over an area of 5.30 lakh hectares with the production of 5.62 lakh tonnes and productivity of 943 kg/ha.

The main states cultivating coriander are Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

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