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Spice of the Month

take and make kit

October's spice is: **Sumac**

Sumac is a small flowering tree native to Iran that grows wild in Western Asia, the Arabian peninsula, and most of the Mediterranean. There are many species of sumac, but *Rhus coriaria* is the species that produces our beloved spice. The name sumac means "red" in medieval French, Latin, and Syrian languages. In addition to popular use as a spice, sumac was used to tan hides and is sometimes referred to as tanner's sumac.

Sumac spice is harvested in the fall when berry clusters are fully developed. The berries are commonly sun-dried before they are finely ground for culinary use. The Spice House's sumac comes from Gaziantep, Turkey where it is finely chopped fresh before it is cured in salt. This gives our sumac a nice salty flavor and helps preserve its lemony tang.

There is another variety of sumac that grows native in North America called staghorn sumac, *Rhus typhina*. If you live in the midwest, you've likely seen groves of these sumac trees alongside the highway. The fuzzy purple-red berries of this variety are also edible and taste and appear similar to Turkish sumac. Staghorn sumac was used by Native Americans to flavor tart beverages. Steep the buds in water, add a little sugar, and you have "Sumac-ade," a popular American drink that was once marketed at traveling carnivals as pink lemonade.

How to Use Sumac:

Sumac is widely used as a condiment to finish dishes like hummus, baba ganoush, or fattoush salad. The spice is very popular in Turkish cuisine where it is sprinkled over rice, grilled meats, dips, and salads. The same way you find paprika replacing black pepper on the Hungarian dinner table, you will find sumac on the Turkish dinner table. Sumac is a crucial ingredient in Middle Eastern Za'atar seasoning.

For more information visit:

<https://www.thespicehouse.com/blogs/news/sumac-spotlight>

Register for future kits at:
tuxedoparklibrary.org/spice

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Baba Ganoush

Makes 6 servings | Time: 35 Minutes

Recipe from Suzy Karadsheh - The Mediterranean Dish

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 Italian eggplants or small globe eggplants
- 1/4 cup tahini paste
- 1 lemon, juice of
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 tablespoon plain Greek yogurt, optional
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 teaspoon sumac
- 3/4 teaspoon Aleppo pepper or red pepper flakes, (optional)
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Toasted pine nuts for garnish, (optional)
- Serve with pita wedges, pita chips, and veggies of your choice!



INSTRUCTIONS:

- First, smoke or grill the eggplant. Turn one gas burner on medium-high. Place the eggplant directly over the flame. Using a pair of tongs, turn the eggplant every 5 minutes or so until it is tender and the skin is charred and crispy on all sides (20 minutes.) The eggplant should deflate and become super tender, as supposed to. If you don't have a gas burner you can use a grill. You can also roast the eggplant in the oven (see notes).
 - To roast the eggplant in the oven instead: heat the oven to 425 degrees F. Trim the eggplant and cut them in half, then salt it and allow it to "sweat out" excess water for about 30 minutes or so. Wipe it off, and arrange the eggplant on a lightly-oiled baking sheet, flesh side down. Roast for about 40 minutes or until very tender and cooked through. Allow the eggplant time to cool a bit then using a spoon, scoop up the flesh and place it in a bowl. Follow the recipe from step #4.
- Remove the eggplant from the heat and transfer it to a large colander over a bowl. Allow it to sit and drain for a few minutes until fully cooled and all excess water has been drained (it helps if you open the eggplant up a bit and push on it with a knife or a spoon to help it release its juices).
- Once the eggplant is cool enough to touch, peel the charred crispy skin off (it should come right off). Discard the skin and the stem (don't worry if a few bits of the skin remain, that is just added flavor).
- Transfer the cooked and fully drained eggplant to a bowl. Use a fork to break it down into smaller pieces. Add the tahini paste, garlic, lemon juice, Greek yogurt (if using) salt, pepper, sumac, Aleppo pepper or crushed red pepper flakes. Mix gently with a wooden spoon or a fork until well-combined.
- Cover the baba ganoush and chill in the fridge for 30 minutes to an hour.



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Fattoush Salad

Makes 6 Servings • Time: 20 Minutes

Recipe from Suzy Karadsheh - The Mediterranean Dish

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pitas
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons sumac, divided, more as needed
- 1 Heart of Romaine lettuce, chopped
- 1 English cucumber, cut in half, seeds scraped, then chopped or sliced into half moons
- 5 Roma tomatoes, chopped
- 5 green onions, both white & green parts, chopped
- 5 radishes, stems removed, thinly sliced
- 2 cups chopped fresh parsley leaves stems removed
- 1 cup chopped fresh mint leaves, optional

For the Fattoush Dressing

- 1 lemon, juiced (or 1 1/2 limes)
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon pomegranate molasses, optional
- kosher salt
- black pepper
- 1 teaspoon sumac
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon ground allspice

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Crisp the pita: Line a plate with a paper towel and set aside. Break the pita bread into small bite-sized pieces. Let a large skillet over medium heat, and add 3 tablespoons of olive oil. Once the oil is shimmering, add the pita bread. Fry briefly until browned, tossing frequently. Using a pair of tongs, transfer the fried pita chips to the paper-towel-lined plate to drain. Season with salt, pepper, and sumac.
2. Combine the vegetables: In a large mixing bowl, combine the chopped lettuce, cucumber, tomatoes, green onions, radish, parsley, and mint, if you're using it.
3. Make the dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together lemon juice, olive oil, pomegranate molasses (if using), a pinch of salt and pepper, sumac, cinnamon, and allspice.
4. Put it all together: Pour the dressing over the vegetables and toss lightly. Add the crispy pita piece, and taste. Add more sumac, if you like, and toss one more time. Serve and enjoy!



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Sumac Chicken Recipe

Makes: 4-6 servings | Time: 1 hour, 5 minutes

Recipe from Sylvia Fountaine

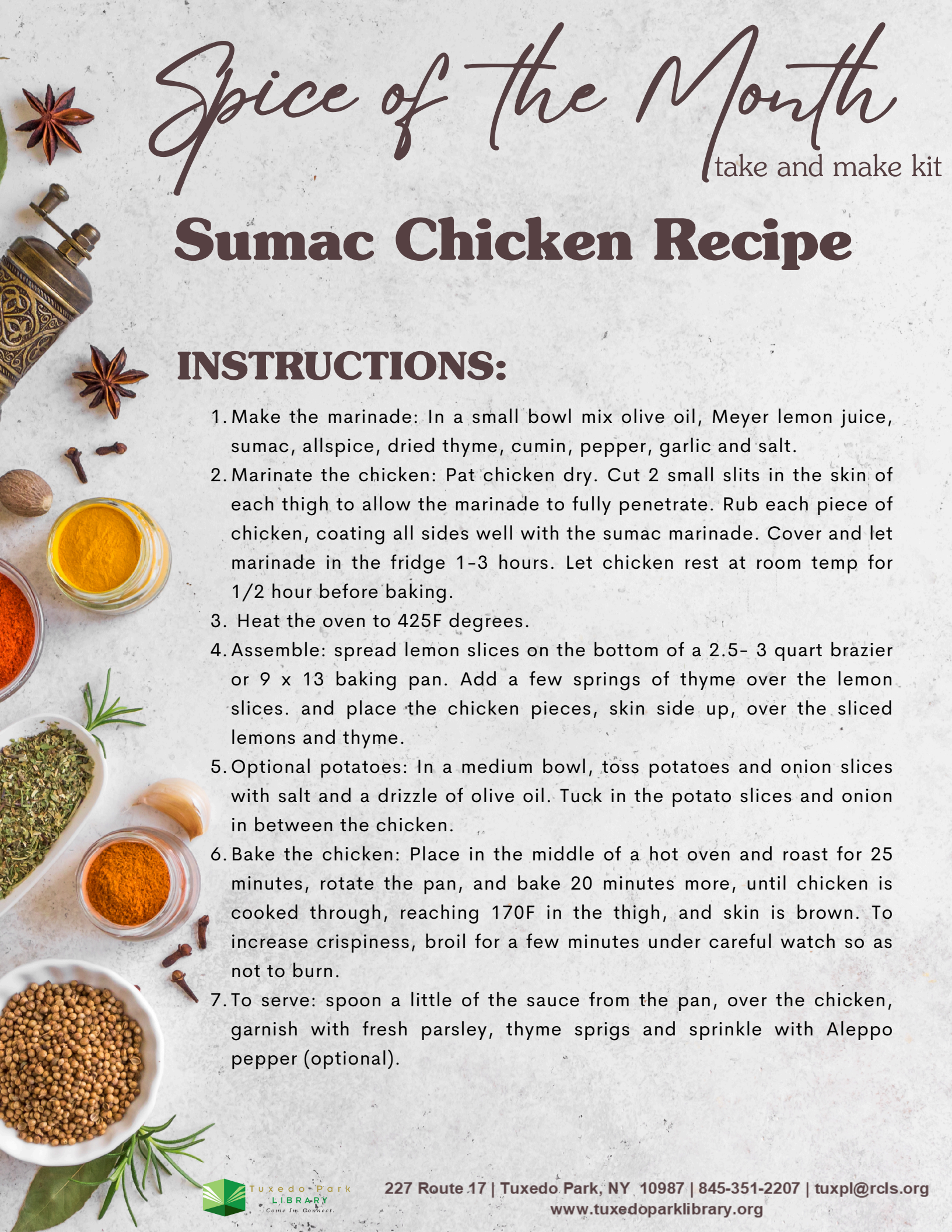
INGREDIENTS:

- 1/8 cup Meyer lemon juice, plus 1 Meyer lemon sliced thin (or use regular lemons)
- 1/8 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 and 1/2 tablespoons sumac
- 1/2 teaspoon allspice
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 5 cloves garlic- grated, pressed or finely minced
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 3 pounds chicken thighs, bone-in (about 6 thighs) or use legs
- 1 pound of potatoes, thin-skinned, sliced 1/8 inch rounds (potatoes are optional)
- 1 red onion, cut into thin slices
- 6-8 sprigs of fresh thyme
- Aleppo pepper- garnish (or chili flakes)
- Fresh parsley leaves coarsely chopped for serving



INSTRUCTIONS

continued on next page...



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Sumac Chicken Recipe

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Make the marinade: In a small bowl mix olive oil, Meyer lemon juice, sumac, allspice, dried thyme, cumin, pepper, garlic and salt.
2. Marinate the chicken: Pat chicken dry. Cut 2 small slits in the skin of each thigh to allow the marinade to fully penetrate. Rub each piece of chicken, coating all sides well with the sumac marinade. Cover and let marinade in the fridge 1-3 hours. Let chicken rest at room temp for 1/2 hour before baking.
3. Heat the oven to 425F degrees.
4. Assemble: spread lemon slices on the bottom of a 2.5- 3 quart brazier or 9 x 13 baking pan. Add a few springs of thyme over the lemon slices. and place the chicken pieces, skin side up, over the sliced lemons and thyme.
5. Optional potatoes: In a medium bowl, toss potatoes and onion slices with salt and a drizzle of olive oil. Tuck in the potato slices and onion in between the chicken.
6. Bake the chicken: Place in the middle of a hot oven and roast for 25 minutes, rotate the pan, and bake 20 minutes more, until chicken is cooked through, reaching 170F in the thigh, and skin is brown. To increase crispiness, broil for a few minutes under careful watch so as not to burn.
7. To serve: spoon a little of the sauce from the pan, over the chicken, garnish with fresh parsley, thyme sprigs and sprinkle with Aleppo pepper (optional).

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Hummus Recipe

Makes 8 servings | Time: 15 Minutes

Recipe by Suzy Karadsheh - The Mediterranean Dish

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups cooked chickpeas, peeled (from 1 to 1 1/4 cup dry chickpeas or from quality canned chickpeas.)
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda, (optional) use if peeling chickpeas
- 1 to 2 garlic cloves minced
- 2 ice cubes
- 1/3 cup tahini
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Arbequina extra virgin olive oil, to serve
- Sumac, to serve



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Soak the chickpeas: If using canned chickpeas, you can skip to step 4. Place dried chickpeas in a large bowl, cover with water, and soak overnight.
2. Cook the chickpeas: The next day, drain the chickpeas cover with 2 inches of water. Bring to boil over high heat, then reduce the heat so the chickpeas are at a simmer. Simmer for 1 1/2 to 2 hours.
3. Remove the skins: Add 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda to the water with the chickpeas. Leave for a few minutes. Turn off the heat. Drain the chickpeas into a colander. While rinsing the chickpeas under running water, take a handful of chickpeas and rub them to remove the skins. Place peeled chickpeas in a bowl.
4. Puree the chickpeas: Add cooked (or canned) chickpeas and minced garlic to the bowl of a food processor fitted with the S-blade. Puree until a smooth, powder-like mixture forms.
5. Finish the hummus: While the food processor is running, feed 2 ice cubes, tahini, salt, and lemon juice through the tube, and process for about 4 to 5 minutes. Check, and if the consistency is too thick, run the processor and slowly add a little water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until you reach the desired silky smooth consistency.
6. Garnish and serve: Spread in a serving bowl and add a generous drizzle of extra virgin olive oil. Top with a few chickpeas, if you like. Sprinkle with sumac. Enjoy with warm pita wedges and your favorite veggies.

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Zucchini Salad With Basil, Mint and Feta

Makes: 4-6 servings | Time: 15 Minutes

Recipe from David Tanis

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 small zucchini or other summer squash (about 1½ pounds)
- 1 teaspoon lime zest plus 2 tablespoons lime juice (from 1 lime)
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and black pepper
- ¼ cup torn or whole mint leaves
- ¼ cup torn or whole basil leaves
- A few squash blossoms, torn in strips (optional)
- Sumac, for sprinkling (optional)
- 2 ounces mild feta, crumbled



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Wash and trim zucchini. With a sharp knife or mandoline, cut crosswise into very thin rounds. Wrap slices with a damp towel until ready to use, up to several hours ahead in the refrigerator.
2. In a small bowl, stir together lime zest, juice and olive oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
3. Place squash slices in a shallow salad bowl and season lightly with salt and pepper. Add dressing and, using your fingers, coat all slices well. Add mint and basil, and the squash blossoms, if using. Toss everything together.
4. Sprinkle with a pinch of sumac, if using, and top with crumbled feta.