

HEALTHY RECIPE

"Chai Tea"

Herbal and spice teas are taking the country by storm and no wonder – they are healthful, delicious and cure a variety of ailments!

At the top of the list is Chai tea - one that is getting a lot of attention lately. Now Chai tea is made mostly of spices, while herbal teas are made mainly of herbal leaves (or flowers, in which case they are called tisanes).

Chai tea is expensive to buy, and today I'm showing you how to make your own. Making your own blend of Chai allows you to be creative and "customize" the blend.

Here's a basic recipe, and I will tell you that mixing the spices is like blending a perfume. You decide what to add to make it more to your taste, whether it is some dried orange peel, fennel seeds, nutmeg, or even dried rose petals or lemon herbs.

INGREDIENTS:

5 tablespoons cardamom pods (I'm using green cardamom)
2 tablespoons whole cloves
1 tablespoon coriander seeds
Cinnamon sticks – about 6-8 sticks, 2" long each
1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon black peppercorns
2 whole star anise
1-1/4 teaspoons ground ginger



MIXING DIRECTIONS:

Combine all of the ingredients except the ginger in a non-stick ungreased heavy skillet. Over low to medium heat, toast the spices for about 3 minutes, until fragrant.

Add the ginger and blend. Now you have to pound everything briefly, just enough to crush the spices coarsely. I like to do this with a mortar and pestle, but you can do it in a spice/coffee grinder, or put the spices in a plastic bag and pound with a mallet or rolling pin. Transfer to an airtight container where they'll keep nicely for about 4 months.

BREWING DIRECTIONS:

Combine 1 cup milk with about 2 teaspoons Chai mix and brown sugar or honey to taste (start with 1 teaspoon). You could also use a sugar substitute. Simmer and then turn off heat. Cover and let steep for 10 minutes while you brew a pot of Assam or Darjeeling (these are Indian teas – you could also use regular tea) using 2 cups boiling water and 2 teaspoons or 2 bags of tea. Reheat the spiced milk if necessary and strain it into 2 large tea-cups. Pour in the hot tea and enjoy!

Recipe found @ <http://www.abouteating.com/chai-tea.shtml>