

GRAINS OF PARADISE

Aframomum melegueta is a species in the ginger family and closely related to cardamom. Its seeds are used as a spice (ground or whole); it imparts a pungent, black-pepper-like flavor with hints of citrus. It is commonly known as **Grains of Paradise**, **melegueta pepper**, **Guinea grains**, **ossame**, or **fom wisa**, and is confused with alligator pepper.



It is native to West Africa, which is sometimes named the Pepper Coast (or Grain Coast) because of this commodity. It is also an important cash crop in the Basketo district of southern Ethiopia.

Melegueta pepper is commonly used in the cuisines of West and North Africa, from where it has been traditionally transported by camel caravan routes through the Sahara desert and distributed to Sicily and the rest of Italy. Mentioned by Pliny as "African pepper" but subsequently forgotten in Europe, they were renamed "grains of paradise" and became a popular substitute for black pepper in Europe in the 14th and 15th centuries.

Today the condiment is sometimes used in gourmet cuisine as a replacement for pepper, and to give unique flavor in some craft beers, gins, and Norwegian akvavit. Grains of paradise are starting to enjoy a slight resurgence in popularity in North America due to their use by some well-known chefs. Alton Brown is a fan of the condiment, and he uses it in okra stew and his apple-pie recipe on an episode of the TV cooking show *Good Eats*. Grains of paradise are also used by people on certain diets, such as a raw food diet, because they are considered less irritating to digestion than black pepper.

APPLE PIE OVERNIGHT OATS

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup old fashioned oats
- 1 tbsp chia seeds
- 1 tsp ground flax seed
- 1/2 cup milk (any kind is fine)
- 1/4 cup vanilla Greek yogurt
- 1/4 tsp apple pie spice
- 1/4 tsp grains of paradise
- 1/2 apple, chopped

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a clean mason jar or container, layer the oats, milk, chia seeds, flax seeds, vanilla Greek yogurt, apple pie spice and grains of paradise. Don't stir, just layer them in.
2. Cover the container and place in fridge for 6-8 hours.
3. Add 1/2 of an apple, diced on top. Stir & enjoy!

*Overnight oats can be eaten cold or warmed up.



AFRICAN PEANUT SOUP WITH GRAINS OF PARADISE



INGREDIENTS

- 2 tsp whole coriander seed
- 1 tsp grains of paradise
- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 onion, chopped fine
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 tsp brown sugar
- 3 garlic cloves
- 2 lbs sweet potatoes, peeled, quartered & sliced thin
- 3 1/2 cups vegetable broth
- 2 cups water
- 3 tbsp peanut butter
- Fried shallots or onions for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a heavy skillet over medium-high heat, toast the coriander and Grains of Paradise, stirring occasionally, until fragrant and lightly browned, about 3-4 minutes. Transfer to a small bowl and allow to cool. Grind in a mortar & pestle or electric mill.
2. In a large Dutch oven, melt the butter over medium heat. Stir the onion, salt and sugar and allow to cook about 5-7 minutes until translucent and aromatic. Add the garlic and 2 tsp of spice mix and cook about 30 seconds more.
3. Add the sweet potatoes, vegetable broth, water and peanut butter and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and simmer until the sweet potatoes are fork tender, about 25 minutes.
4. Turn off the heat and allow the soup to cool slightly. Working in batches so the blender is never more than half full, transfer the soup to a countertop blender and puree until smooth.
5. Return the soup to the pot and warm gently before serving. Garnish with a sprinkle of fried onions and a sprinkle of the remaining spice mix.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH & FARRO SALAD



INGREDIENTS

- 23 oz butternut squash, peeled, seeded & cut into 3/4 inch cubes (1 small squash)
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 tsp salt
- Pinch of black pepper
- 1/2 cup farro
- 2 cup vegetable stock
- 1/4 tsp whole allspice
- 1/4 tsp coriander seed
- 1/4 tsp grains of paradise
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2/5 oz preserved lemons
- 1 oz pine nuts, toasted
- 1 oz red onion, minced (1/4 small onion)
- 1/5 oz flat-leaf parsley, leaves only

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put the cubed butternut squash in a bowl and toss with olive oil, salt and pepper. Dump the squash onto a non-stick baking sheet in a single layer.
2. Roast the butternut squash at 350° until tender and slightly browned around the edges (about 30-40 minutes).
3. While the squash roasts, put the farro in a saucepan along with the vegetable stock. Bring to a boil and then turn down the heat to maintain a gentle simmer. Cook the farro based on the packaging instructions. When the farro is cooked, drain in a sieve.
4. To make the dressing, put the allspice, coriander seed, grains of paradise and cumin in a blender. Grind the spices into a powder. Add the olive oil and preserved lemons and blend to a puree. The mixture will be thick.
5. When the squash and farro are done, put them in a large bowl with the toasted pine nuts and red onion. Toss with the dressing. Finish by tossing in the parsley. Serve warm or at room temperature.

APPLE SPICE BUNDT CAKE WITH RUM GLAZE



CAKE INGREDIENTS

- 2 Granny Smith apples
- 3 cups all-purpose flour (plus extra for the pan)
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 tsp grains of paradise (ground)
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp ground cardamom
- 1/4 tsp ground allspice
- 1/4 tsp rosemary
- 1/8 tsp ground star anise
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- 3 sticks unsalted butter (at room temperature, plus extra for the pan)
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 3/4 cup pecans (chopped)
- 1 1/2 oz crystallized ginger (finely chopped)

GLAZE INGREDIENTS

- 2 3/4 cups confectioners sugar
- 4 tsp dark rum
- 1 tbsp water
- Turbinado sugar (for sprinkling)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 325°. Lightly butter a bundt pan and dust with flour, tapping out the excess.
2. Chop one apple into 1/4 inch pieces, leaving the peel on. Grate the other apple on the large holes of a box grater. Set both aside.
3. Whisk the flour, baking soda, salt and spices together in a large bowl.
4. Combine the butter, granulated sugar and brown sugar in the bowl of a stand mixer using the paddle attachment. Beat on medium until the mixture is pale and fluffy, about 3 minutes.
5. Whisk together the eggs and vanilla. With the mixer on low speed, slowly add to the butter and sugar.
6. Add the flour 1/3 at a time and beat on low until just combined after each addition.
7. Stir in the apples, pecans, and ginger.
8. Transfer the batter to the prepared bundt pan. The batter is thick and will fill the pan. Bake for 75 minutes, rotating the pan after 30 minutes. The cake is done when it pulls away from the sides of the pan. Cool completely on a rack before glazing.
9. Combine the powdered sugar, rum, and water in a small mixing bowl and whisk until smooth. Pour the glaze onto the bundt cake and sprinkle with turbinado sugar. Let the glaze set for at least 30 minutes before serving.

Instructions on the back