



SPICE OF THE MONTH

AT THE CROTON FREE LIBRARY

November's spice is turmeric!

This ancient warming spice is one of our favorites, just in time for the truly cold weather to set in here in Croton.

Turmeric is grown as a root or tuber (much like ginger) and then boiled, ground, and crushed into a powder. It has a mild but distinctive flavor, and an even more distinctive yellow color; small amounts of it are responsible for the color of curry blends and even French's Classic Mustard. It will stain clothes and hands, so beware!

It's also used in healing and Ayurvedic medicine as a warming agent, an antioxidant, and an anti-inflammatory, used to treat heart or circulatory problems.

Although we read several different accounts of the "official" oldest recorded mention of turmeric, its use in northern and central India is well documented for over 2,000 years. It spread around the world, to Indonesia and carried across the southern Pacific, and into China by the 7th century at least. It made its way to Rome and other Western cultures around the same time, and it was sometimes used as an inexpensive substitute for saffron.

It's been cultivated for so long that the plants are no longer around in their wild state, and turmeric root must be specifically grown by humans. It's even possible to grow it indoors in containers.

Sources - turmeric

All the books listed here are available to check out from the Croton Free Library.

- Gardener's Path.com: <https://gardenerspath.com/plants/herbs/growing-turmeric/>
- *Dangerous Tastes: The Story of Spices* by Andrew Dalby
- McCormick.com and Penzeys.com

These recipes are from:

- *Bollywood Kitchen: Home-Cooked Indian Meals Paired with Unforgettable Bollywood Films* by Sri Rao
- *India's Vegetarian Cooking: A Regional Guide* by Monisha Bharadwaj
- *Milk Street: Cookish: Throw It Together* by Christopher Kimball
- *The Moosewood Restaurant Table: 250 Brand-New Recipes from the Natural Foods Restaurant That Revolutionized Eating in America* by The Moosewood Collective
- *Morocco: A Culinary Journey with Recipes from the Spice-Scented Markets of Marrakech to the Date-Filled Oasis of Zagora* by Jeff Koehler

What did you cook with your
turmeric?

Post it on social media with the hashtag
#CrotonSpiceClub and tag us, or send a
photo & description to
gglazer@wlsmail.org!

Turmeric purchased from Penzey's Spices.