

Saffron (Crocus sativus)

Use 1/2 sachet for 4 servings

Description

Saffron, the world's most expensive spice, is the dried red stigmas of the autumn-flowering crocus.

It has a unique and distinctively pungent, honey-like flavour and aroma.

Saffron complements - rice, chicken, fish, cakes, buns, curries, potatoes, yoghurt, cream.

Use sparingly as a little goes a long way.

For an even flavour and colour, steep a pinch of crushed Saffron strands in a little hot water before adding both to the dish.

Add crushed Saffron strands directly to the water when cooking rice.

Did you know?

More than 75,000 crocus are needed to produce a pound (450g) of Saffron. The word 'Saffron' comes from the Arabic 'Za'faran' meaning yellow. Saffron Waldon in Essex was so named because of its cultivation of Saffron for over 400 years. The spice has always been expensive and, therefore, open to adulteration. In the Middle Ages, punishment for this crime was extreme. In 1444, a German named Findeker was ordered to be burned at the stake for adulterating Saffron. The use of Saffron in Cornish cooking is believed to have originated from trade with the Phoenicians for Cornish tin.

Quality

Saffron can easily be adulterated; there is no such thing as cheap Saffron. The stigmas should be a deep vibrant red colour and have a strong clinging aroma.

Usage

Cornish Saffron buns are made with yeast and include currants and candied peel.

Paella, a rice and seafood dish from Spain, is seasoned and coloured with Saffron.

Italian risotto á la Milanese is a deliciously rich and creamy rice dish cooked with Arborio rice, bone marrow, Saffron and Parmesan cheese.



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Bouillabaisse, the famous French fish stew, served with creamy aioli and hot rouille sauces, is flavoured with Saffron.

Lamb tagine with dates, a Moroccan dish, is a fragrantly spiced casserole mundane mashed potato with Saffron, Garlic and olive oil, served in the traditional domed dish, with accompanying couscous. Saffron adds a gentle colour and flavour.

A modern recipe enhances mundane mashed potatoes with Saffron, Garlic and virgin olive oil.