



# Fluvanna County Public Library

## Spice of the Month Club

### Jamaican Jerk Seasoning

#### Flavor Profile: Allspice and heat



**Brand Name – Island Spice (Ingredients – Jamaican pimento, onion chips, garlic, paprika, ginger, celery, mustard, crushed pepper, salt, and sugar. No MSG.)**

**What is Jerk?** Some believe that “jerk” as in “Jamaican Jerk Chicken” – is a word that is always synonymous with spicy heat, and lots of it. But in fact, Jamaican jerk spice doesn’t have to be crazy hot. While the exact meaning of the word “jerk” is somewhat open for interpretation, most people agree that it’s more about a style of cooking than a set-in-stone flavor profile. In Jamaican culinary tradition, “jerking” refers to the practice of cooking meat over an open flame, and, historically, the beloved “jerk” flavor profile came from cooking over Jamaican pimento wood. This pimento tree wood – and, by the way, allspice berries grow on pimento trees – releases fragrant oils as it burns, and the smoke produced by its fire flavors the grilling meats. As time went on, people wanted to create faster and easier ways to enjoy the flavor of “jerk” and so a whole world of jerk spice blends – dry rubs and even wet sauces – was born.

**What is Jerk Seasoning?** So, if jerk is a style of cooking, what is an authentic Jamaican Jerk Seasoning recipe? These are recipes that celebrate the flavors of that gorgeous, sea-swept island, and that approximates the flavors produced by grilling over pimento woods as best it can. Though scotch bonnet peppers – also known as Caribbean red peppers – are traditional, many recipes blends rely on heat from a combination of cayenne and black pepper. Together they create a terrific, straightforward heat and they’re much easier to find than Scotch bonnets.

**History of Jerk Seasoning in Jamaica** The well-loved spice blend has been around for more than a century. It is said that both the jerk process and seasoning were designed by the Maroons (people who had escaped slavery and Native Jamaican Indians called Arawak Indians), who learned how to cook meat without the release of smoke and preserve meat with specific herbs and spices.

Early Europeans first attempted to find labor for coffee and sugar plantations in Jamaica by enslaving the local population of Arawaks. Arawak labor proved to be insufficient, which resulted in the colonists bringing in slaves from Africa. African slaves who escaped from the plantations learned about smoking meats with local pimento wood from native Arawaks and used it to prepare meat from wild hogs. The use of pimento wood is one of the factors that make it difficult to prepare anywhere outside the Caribbean as the wood is often used while green and is difficult to cultivate outside the tropics.

The Maroons would hunt and prepare wild boar by heavily coating the meat with the marinade to preserve it. Then, when it was time to cook, they dug holes, added firewood and placed the meat on top, then covered it all so no smoke would escape. This was done to avoid alerting the slave owners to their location.

The modern jerk cooking process is quite similar. Today, it includes smoking well-marinated meat over the greenwood of a pimento tree covered by big sheets of metal. But authentic jerk food spots in Jamaica will jerk the meat in a large “jerk pit” much like the Maroons did.

## How To Make Jerk Seasoning

- 2 tablespoons onion powder
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon thyme
- 1 tablespoon sea salt
- 2 tsp. ground allspice
- 1 tsp. ground cloves
- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 tablespoon brown sugar
- 2 tsp. black pepper
- ½ tsp. cayenne pepper (or to taste)



1. In a small bowl mix together all dry spices. Store in an airtight container – best used in 6 months. Makes ¾ cup.
2. To make this a marinade or wet rub – you can add 1 tablespoon olive oil, 1 tablespoon soy sauce and 1 tablespoon of white vinegar to 3 tablespoon of the dry rub.

<https://themodernproper.com/homemade-jamaican-jerk-seasoning-blend>

## Jamaican Jerk Chicken Salad Recipe (4 servings)

- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast (cooked and chopped)
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 2 celery stalks (chopped or sliced)
- 2 fire roasted red peppers (chopped)
- 2 tsp. Jamaican Jerk Seasoning
- Salt/pepper to taste (if needed)

1. Combine all ingredients and store in an airtight container.

<https://wonkywonderful.com/jamaican-jerk-chicken-salad-recipe/>



## Jerk Chicken Chili

- 1 pound ground chicken
- 1 can Hominy corn washed and drained
- 1 can yellow corn washed and drained
- 1 can black beans washed and drained
- 1 can red kidney beans washed and drained
- 1 bunch Cilantro (About 4 tablespoons – or substitute parsley)
- 1 can whole plum tomatoes smashed with liquid
- 3 cups chicken broth low sodium
- 2 tablespoons dry Jamaican Jerk Seasoning
- 1 large Onion chopped
- 1 clove garlic smashed



- 3 tri-color bell peppers chopped
1. In a Dutch oven add oil and onion. Sauté until the onions soften. Add the ground chicken and cook until lightly golden. Add the garlic. Continue to stir for 2-3 minutes.
  2. Add all the other ingredients. Stir to combine. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and cover the pot. Cook for 1 ½ hours. Stir & check every 30 minutes. Depending on how you like your chili you can add more broth/water.

<https://www.cookingmaniac.com/jerk-chicken-chili/>

### Jamaican Jerk Cauliflower (Serves 4)

- 1 10 ounce cauliflower flowerets or ¾ head of medium cauliflower
  - ½ tsp. cumin powder
  - 2 tablespoons Jamaican Jerk Seasoning
  - 3 tablespoons Extra Virgin Olive Oil
1. Pre-heat oven to 400F. Place cauliflower in a bowl with olive oil, cumin powder and Jamaican Jerk Seasoning, toss to coat.
  2. In a foil lined baking sheet, spread out mixture in a single layer, roast in oven for 25 minutes until golden brown. Enjoy with a little sour cream/yogurt.



<https://zestysouthindiankitchen.com/jamaican-jerk-cauliflower/>

### Jamaican Jerk Meatballs

- 1 small onion finely diced
- ½ medium red bell pepper finely diced
- Olive oil
- 3 clove garlic minced
- 1 lb. ground fresh pork
- 1 lb. ground beef
- ½ cup panko breadcrumbs
- 2 large eggs beaten
- ¼ cup milk
- ¼ cup pineapple juice
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro (or substitute parsley)
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 3 tsp. Jamaican Jerk Seasoning
- 1 tsp. salt
- Black pepper to taste
- 1 cup Spicy Caribbean Jerk Marinade & Sauce (i.e. KC Masterpiece) - optional



Jamaican Jerk Meatballs

1. Preheat the oven to 375F degrees and line a baking sheet with aluminum foil sprayed with cooking spray.
2. In a stovetop pan, sauté the diced onion and red pepper in a couple of tablespoons of olive oil, just until translucent. Add the minced garlic and continue to sauté for 2 minutes. Set aside to cool slightly.



3. In a medium mixing bowl, mix the sautéed vegetables, ground pork, ground beef, breadcrumbs, beaten eggs, milk, pineapple juice, cilantro, lime juice, Worcestershire sauce, jerk seasoning, salt and black pepper. Using your hands mix until combined.
4. Form into bite sized balls and place onto the baking sheet.
5. Bake at 375F for 20 minutes. Increase the temperature to 425F and cook for an additional 10 minutes or until browned.
6. Serve with the spicy Caribbean dipping sauce or other favorite sauce.
7. Notes: May add chopped scotch bonnet or habanero peppers to these meatballs for added kick, to your taste.
8. Optional Serving Idea: Spray the inside of slow cooker with cooking spray. Cook meatballs per recipe then chill or immediately arrange in slow cooker. In a small mixing bowl, mix together ½-cup Caribbean jerk marinade and sauce, ¾-cup chili sauce, and one 10-oz jar of pineapple preserves. Mix and pour over the cooked meatballs in the slow cooker. Simmer on low for 2 hours and then keep warm until serving.

<https://www.melissassouthernstylekitchen.com/jamaican-jerk-meatballs>

### **Jamaican Inspired Jerk Lentils (Serves 4)**

- 1 cup dry lentils
- ½ red onion (diced)
- 1 red bell pepper (diced)
- 1 inch fresh ginger (minced)
- 1 (15 oz.) can diced tomatoes
- 5 cloves garlic (minced)
- 1 ½ tablespoons jerk seasoning
- 2 tsp. brown mustard
- 2 tsp. maple syrup
- 3 cups mushroom or vegetable broth
- Juice of ½ a lime
- Zest of 1 lime

1. In a medium pot, add onion and sauté until softened, about 3 minutes.
2. Add in ginger, garlic and bell pepper and sauté until garlic and ginger become fragrant, about 2-3 minutes.
3. Add in lentils, tomatoes, jerk seasoning, mustard and maple syrup.
4. Stir to combine and then add broth.
5. Bring mixture to a boil and then reduce heat down to a simmer.
6. Cover lentils and allow to cook for 20-25 minutes or until most of the liquid is absorbed by the lentils and lentils have become tender.
7. Add in lime zest and lime juice, stir and remove from heat to serve.

<https://plantbasedrdblog.com/2019/11/jamaican-inspired-jerk-lentils/>



### **Other Resources**

- **The Barbeque Bible by Raichlen – 641.5784 RAI**
- **West Winds: Recipes, History and Tales from Jamaica by Riaz Phillips – 641.59 PHI**

## Rasta Pasta Recipe (serves 4)

What is Rasta Pasta? It is a colorful pasta dish made with a variety of bell peppers, creamy sauce and Caribbean seasonings, inspired by an original Italian recipe, but made with more traditional ingredients.

The name “Rasta” refers to “Rastafarianism”, the powerful social movement developed in Jamaica in the 1930s. It is usually served as a vegetarian dish, as Rastafarians do not eat shellfish or meat, but many non-Rastafarian cooks add a protein to round out the meal. Jerk chicken or shrimp are most popular.

Where did Rasta Pasta come from? While many Jamaican chefs claim to have invented this classic dish, one popular story is that a chef served a mix of tomato sauce and cheese sauce thickened with coconut milk over a bed of fettuccini to a group of guests. The guests quickly drew comparisons of the textures and colors of the dish to Jamaican culture, noting the colorful bell peppers represented the colors of Rastafarianism, and the shapes of the noodles representing dreadlocks. It has been added to menus ever since and has only grown in popularity.



- 2 tablespoons olive oil or vegetable oil
  - 1 small onion chopped
  - 1 green bell pepper, sliced
  - 1 red bell pepper, sliced
  - 3 cloves garlic, chopped
  - 1 tablespoon Jamaican jerk seasoning
  - Salt and pepper to taste
  - 14 ounces fire roasted tomatoes (you can substitute 1 can diced tomatoes or even fresh tomatoes)
  - 1 cup coconut milk (or substitute heavy cream – but you won’t get the coconut flavor)
  - 1 cup of grated Parmesan cheese or more as needed
  - 8 ounces fettuccine pasta
1. Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large pan and add the onion and peppers. Cook them down about 5 minutes to soften.
  2. Add the garlic and 1 tablespoon Jamaican jerk seasoning with salt and pepper to taste. Cook for 1 minute, stirring.
  3. Add the tomatoes and stir. Cook for 5 minutes to cook down the tomatoes.
  4. Add the coconut milk and simmer for 5 minutes to thicken up. If it gets too thick, swirl in a few tablespoons of water or chicken stock.
  5. Stir in the Parmesan cheese and remove from heat.
  6. While the Rasta Pasta is simmering, cook the fettuccine noodles according to the package directions. Drain and toss with the sauce.
  7. NOTE: You can use jalapenos instead of the green bell pepper to spice it up a bit or even add in a Scotch Bonnet for extra heat)

<https://www.chilipeppermadness.com/recipes/rasta-pasta/>

## Jamaican Jerk Chicken Tacos

### Jamaican Jerk Chicken

- 1 ½ lbs. chicken breast
- 2 tablespoon oil
- ¼ cup lime or orange juice
- 2 tablespoons Jamaican Jerk seasoning
- 1 tsp. salt

### Pineapple Orange Salsa

- 1 cup pineapple
- ½ cup fresh orange or mango peeled and diced
- ¼ cup cilantro diced (or parsley if preferred)
- ½ jalapeno diced (optional)

### Spicy Cream

- ¾ cup sour cream
- 2-3 tablespoons Habanero Hot Sauce or Sriracha
- 6 small flour tortilla fajita size

### Instructions

1. Place chicken breast, oil citrus juice, jerk seasoning, and salt in large Ziploc bag. Let marinate at least 30 minutes – 8 hours.
2. Heat grill to medium low. Once heated, cook chicken for 5 minutes per side, or until chicken is no longer pink.
3. Remove from grill and let rest for 5 minutes.
4. Place pineapple, orange or mango, cilantro and jalapeno (optional) in bowl and toss until mixed.
5. In small bowl, stir together sour cream and habanero hot sauce or Sriracha.
6. To make tacos:
7. Place sliced jerk chicken in flour tortilla and top with pineapple salsa. Drizzle with spicy cream.
8. Drizzle with a squeeze of lime or orange.

<https://www.modernhoney.com/jamaican-jerk-chicken-tacos/>

## Jamaican Jerk Chicken Pizza

This pizza, a copycat, has slices of jerk-seasoned chicken breast, a sweet and spicy sauce, crispy bacon, roasted red peppers, and onion

### Ingredients - Sauce

- ½ cup light brown sugar
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ cup ketchup



- ¼ cup light corn syrup
- ½ cup minced onion
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes (or to taste)
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 1/8 tsp. dried thyme
- 1/8 tsp. ground allspice

#### Remaining Ingredients

- 4 ¾ tsp. of Jamaican Jerk seasoning
- Olive oil
- 2 chicken breasts, pounded thin
- 1 red bell pepper
- 1 yellow bell pepper
- 1 pound pizza dough
- 2-3 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 4 slices bacon, cooked
- ½ cup thinly sliced onion, yellow or red
- 1 green onion, sliced

1. To make sauce, combine all ingredients in a medium saucepan. Simmer for 6 to 8 minutes. Let cool and then puree in a blender. (Sauce can be made a day in advance.)
2. Sprinkle chicken breasts with seasoning and drizzle with olive oil
3. Grill chicken for 4 to 5 minutes per side, or cook in a pan over medium heat. Let cool and then thinly slice.
4. Roast both peppers by setting them directly over the flame of a gas burner. Turn every few minutes until all sides are charred. Plunge them into ice water and remove the skins. Slice into thin slices. Alternately, you can roast the peppers in a 450F oven for 45 minutes.
5. Divide dough in half. Make 1 pizza at a time, roll or stretch dough into a 10-inch circle. Place on a lightly floured pizza pan or pizza peel.
6. Brush the dough with olive oil. Spread desired amount of sauce on dough. Sprinkle with 1-cup mozzarella cheese and half of all toppings. Sprinkle with a little more mozzarella cheese.
7. Slide pizza onto pizza stone and bake until crust is golden, about 9-10 minutes.
8. NOTE: Let the pizza dough sit at room temperature for 1 hour before shaping it. Preheat the oven to 500F with a pizza stone in it for 45 minutes.

<https://spicysouthernkitchen.com/jamaican-jerk-chicken-pizza/>

#### **FUN FACT - How to Tell If Your Spices are Still Fresh**

We all know spice blends can last a while, but they do go stale eventually. If you want to ensure both the spices you add to your seasoning and your seasoning itself is fresh just keep an eye on the color. If the pigment starts to fade and the spices begin to look dull, your blend may be starting to go stale.



## Island Spice Jerk Chicken Recipe

### Ingredients

- 5 boneless skinless chicken thighs
- 2 tablespoons Jamaican Jerk seasoning
- 2 chopped green onion stalks (green & white parts)
- ½ tablespoon garlic paste (5 peeled, crushed garlic cloves)
- 1/8 cup fresh squeezed lime juice
- ½ tablespoon olive oil

### Oil & Lime Juice Mixed Glaze

- ½ tablespoon olive oil
- 1/8 cup fresh squeezed lime juice

1. Season chicken thighs with jerk seasoning and other remaining ingredients. Cover and let marinade in the fridge for at least 3 hours.
2. Grill on medium heat fire until juices run clear.
3. Brush with olive oil and lime juice to keep them moist and juicy.

<https://islandspice.com/blogs/recipes>



## Jamaican Jerk Sweet Potato Fries

### Ingredients

- 2 large sweet potatoes, about 2 to 2 ½ pounds total weight
- 2 tablespoons olive or canola oil
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch, optional but recommended for crispness
- 2 tablespoons Jamaican jerk seasoning
- Fresh cilantro, for sprinkling (optional)

### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 450F.
2. Slice sweet potatoes into long strips, ¼ to ½ inch thick. Place into a large bowl or zipper bag. Add olive oil, cornstarch and Jamaican jerk seasoning. Toss until sweet potato strips are evenly coated.
3. Arrange sweet potato strips in even layers on baking sheets. Bake 10 minutes, gently flip, and bake 10 to 15 minutes more, until crisp.
4. Remove from oven and optionally sprinkle with fresh cilantro before serving. Serve with dipping sauce of choice.



[https://www.connoisseursveg.com/jamaican-jerk-sweet-potato-fries/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+connoisseursveg%2FNNPi+%28Connoisseurs+Veg%29](https://www.connoisseursveg.com/jamaican-jerk-sweet-potato-fries/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+connoisseursveg%2FNNPi+%28Connoisseurs+Veg%29)



### **Walkerswood Mild Jerk Seasoning (Liquid)**

Ingredients - Scallions, Hot Peppers, Black Pepper, Salt, Onion, Allspice, Nutmeg, Cane Sugar, Citric Acid, Thyme

SIMPLY RUB A SMALL AMOUNT - 1oz jerk seasoning: 2.2lbs / 1kg - into your meat or fish, for best results marinate overnight to absorb the spicy flavor and then cook until done on your barbeque or in your oven.

TIP: mix a small amount of Jerk Seasoning into mayonnaise to really spice up your hamburger and sandwiches

VERSATILE: Walkerswood traditional jerk seasoning is versatile and adds a Jamaican kick to chicken, lamb, pork, fish and vegetable dishes.

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