

# September Spice Club:

## BERBERE



### *Suggested Reading*

*available to request on the Minerva catalog or cloudLibrary app*

Yohanis Gebreyesus, *Ethiopia: Recipes and Traditions from the Horn of Africa*

Roseline NgCheong-Lum, *Eritrea*

Yotam Ottolenghi, *Ottolenghi Test Kitchen: Shelf Love*

Valentina Peveri, *The Edible Gardens of Ethiopia: An Ethnographic Journey into Beauty and Hunger*

Marcus Samuelsson, *The Red Rooster Cookbook*

Marcus Samuelsson, *The Rise: Black Cooks and the Soul of American Food*

Lura Rogers Seavey, *Ethiopia*

Barbara Sheen, *Foods of Ethiopia*

# Berberere

Berberere features hot chili pepper mellowed by warming, sweet notes – as many as 12 additional spices! It serves as the backbone for much of Ethiopia and Eritrea’s cuisines, East African countries that share a border. It is most utilized in stews and braises, and the moist, spongy, and slightly sour *injera* (Ethiopian flatbread) is used in place of utensils and compliments the flavor profiles of these dishes. Famed chef Yotam Ottolenghi writes: “It took a private tutorial with Shewa Hagos of the Blue Nile [...] for me to realize (yet again) that some foods are best left in the hands of experts. *Injera* is an art that involves tending a rather capricious mother batter on a regular basis, and relies on some serious experience (also, often reserved to mothers).” If you can’t make or buy injera, use another flatbread like naan, or go with rice or couscous.

Frontier Co-Op’s berbere spice blend includes all-organic paprika, sea salt, cayenne, fenugreek, coriander, cumin, black pepper, cardamom, cinnamon, clove, ginger, and turmeric. It does *not* include lesser known indigenous spices like *korarima*, *ajwain*, and Ethiopian holy basil seeds, all of which are grown or foraged and included in a family’s personal berbere spice blend recipe. Best by April 2025.

*Enjoy authentic Ethiopian and Eritrean cuisine at these local joints:*

Asmara Restaurant (Portland)

Baharat (Portland)

Red Sea Restaurant (Portland)

# Ethiopian-Style Sautéed Beef and Onion with Berbere

Christopher Kimball, *Milk Street: The World in Your Skillet*

- 1 ½ pounds flank steak, cut into 3" sections with the grain, then thinly sliced against the grain on the diagonal\*
- 2 tablespoons berbere
- 4 medium garlic cloves, minced
- 2 sprigs rosemary
- ½ teaspoon ground fenugreek (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom
- Kosher salt and ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons ghee or neutral oil
- 1 large red onion, halved and sliced ¼" thick
- ¼ cup dry white wine
- 2 jalapeños, stemmed and sliced into thin rings

\*Note: don't slice the flank steak with the grain or the meat will be tough and chewy. Be sure to slice each 3" section on the diagonal and across the fibers for the tenderest texture.

"This quick sauté is based on *zilzil tibs*, in which strips of meat (*zilzil*) are fried (*tibs*) with onion and peppers. At the end of cooking, we add a splash of white wine – a nod to *tej*, or honey wine, that's sometimes used in Ethiopian cooking – to blend with the meat's juices and make a light, simple sauce."

In a medium bowl, toss the beef with the berbere, garlic, rosemary, fenugreek (if using), cardamom and ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Let stand for about 10 minutes.

In a 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat, heat the ghee until barely smoking. Add the beef and cook, stirring just once or twice, until the meat is only just slightly pink and has released some of its juices, 2-4 minutes. Add the onion and wine, then cook, stirring often, until the onion is wilted but not fully softened, about 3 minutes. Add the jalapeños and continue to cook, stirring, until the beef is tender and slightly saucy, 1-2 minutes.

Off heat, remove and discard the rosemary, then taste and season with salt and pepper. Serves 4.

# Roast Berbere Vegetables and Chickpeas

Yotam Ottolenghi, TheGuardian.com

- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ¾ teaspoon cumin seeds
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 sweet potatoes, unpeeled and cut into 2cm dice
- 1 ½ cups cooked chickpeas or 1 can chickpeas, drained, rinsed, and patted dry
- 1 cauliflower, broken into 2-3cm florets
- 3 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
- 90 mL olive oil (slightly more than 1/3 cup)
- Salt
- 150g baby spinach (~ 5 cups)
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Heat the oven to 425°. Mix together all the spices in a bowl. Put the sweet potatoes and chickpeas in one large bowl and the cauliflower in another.

Put two-thirds of the spice mix, half the garlic, three tablespoons of oil and ½ teaspoon of salt in the sweet potato and chickpea bowl, toss to coat, then spread out on a 30cm x 40cm baking tray lined with greaseproof paper.

Put the rest of the spice mix and garlic, 2 tablespoons of oil and ½ teaspoon of salt in the cauliflower bowl, and toss to coat.

Roast the sweet potato and chickpeas for 10 minutes, then add the cauliflower to the tray, stir and roast for 15 minutes more, until all the vegetables are soft and golden brown, and the chickpeas are crisp.

Mix the spinach with the remaining tablespoon of oil and ⅛ teaspoon of salt and spread out on top of the vegetables. Return to the oven for a final 10 minutes, until the spinach is crisp, then leave to cool for about 5 minutes. Drizzle over the lemon juice, gently mix together one more time, transfer to a platter and serve. Serves 4 generously.