



Savory Grilling Spices for Spring and Summer

Exploration and Adventure Through Spices

According to [Perfumer & Flavorist](#), consumer hunger for exciting flavors will continue, “as 47% of consumers expect to continue buying interesting new offerings following the pandemic.” Bold and hot flavors such as chipotle, black pepper, and chile verde are [trending](#). **People are looking to travel through their taste buds.** Za’atar blends, sumac, turmeric, and other global flavors such as paprika, harissa, and yuzu kosho are popular choices.

Sweet/spicy and sour/spicy combinations are also [becoming more prevalent](#). These include hot honey, habanero mango, and mango and tamarind, which all provide complex sensory experiences. The combination of fruit and spice is becoming more familiar, with the popular chili-lime spice mix Tajin leading the way. According to a recent report from [Mintel](#), 45% of U.S. fruit users say they would like to see more seasoned fruit for grilling.

Interested in trying grilled fruit with a touch of sumac this season? We’ve found a delicious recipe for you. Try this **sumac spice-dusted stone fruit and halloumi cheese salad**. Pass it on to your customers or development teams as well!

Recipe

INGREDIENTS:

- 8 cups of stone fruit (nectarines, white peaches, yellow peaches, apricots and cherries) cut into chunks of different sizes.
- 2 cups loosely packed watercress, large stems removed or substitute arugula
- 1 block of halloumi cheese (about 8 oz), sliced into large planks for grilling
- 2 tbsp toasted pine nuts
- coarse sea salt
- fresh cracked black pepper
- extra-virgin olive oil
- balsamic vinegar
- 1 pinch of sumac

DIRECTIONS:

1. Place prepared fruit in a mixing bowl and chill until cheese is ready.
2. Brush halloumi cheese with olive oil and season with cracked black pepper. Grill until lines appear on the cheese (or pan fry). Let the cheese come back to room temperature and dice in bite size pieces.
3. Add the cheese to the mixing bowl with the fruit. Add the watercress or arugula. Add 3 tablespoons of olive oil to the bowl. Season with cracked black pepper. Right before you’re ready to serve, toss the salad to incorporate everything (you can keep in the fridge un-tossed until ready).
4. Place in a serving bowl and finish with a few dashes of the aged balsamic vinegar—add as much or as little to this depending on the sweetness or tartness of the fruit.
5. Garnish with the toasted pine nuts, sumac, and coarse sea salt to taste.

Recipe source: <https://thechalkboardmag.com/sumac-stone-fruit-salad-recipe>

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Spotlight on Sumac

Sumac is a spice that comes from dried and ground berries from the *Rhus Coriaria* shrub. This wild plant is found in the Mediterranean in Italy, Turkey, and Iran.

Across the Mediterranean and Middle East it's common for people to keep sumac in shakers on their tables to season their favorite foods in much the same way that salt and pepper shakers are used in the West.



Flavorful

Sumac's red or burgundy color can be deceiving since this spice isn't actually spicy at all. Sumac has a lemon-like flavor with sour, tangy, bright, earthy, and fruity notes. This versatile spice has many cooking applications. It's used worldwide to compliment the flavors of everything from hearty grilled meats to fresh vegetables and even delicate desserts.

It tastes great as a spice rub for lamb, fish, and chicken and can be sprinkled on hummus, roasted vegetables, eggs, salads, and soups to add both a zesty flavor and vibrant color.

More than just a flavor enhancer, sumac has a myriad of uses including as a color enhancer and for its health boosting properties.

Functional

Sumac has been shown to have both medicinal and nutritional benefits. Sumac berries are packed with vitamin C and antioxidants and have a long history as an herbal remedy. It's been studied for its use as an antibacterial, antioxidant, colorant, and food supplement.

Its antibacterial, anti fungal and antioxidant properties even make sumac an efficient food preservative and natural, harmless food additive. Sumac contains anthocyanins, tannins, flavonoids, and other antioxidant compounds that have anti-inflammatory effects. Anthocyanins have been used to treat a variety of health conditions, including high blood pressure, colds, and viruses. In a 2014 study, sumac was found to be effective in treating patients with type 2 diabetes, helping to lower blood sugar levels.



We have another healthful recipe for you and your customers to try. This **grilled lettuce and sumac summer vegetables recipe** pairs sumac's health benefits with an assortment of nutrient-packed vegetables—and it's perfect for grilling season!

Recipe

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 romaine lettuce heart
- 1 large tomato
- 1 handful garlic flower stems
- 2 zucchinis
- 1 bunch large, fresh scallions or young green onions
- ½ cup olive oil
- 1 cup garlic yogurt (see recipe)
- 2 tbsp ground sumac
- salt, to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Remove any wilted leaves from the lettuce and make a cross incision at the bottom. Tear the heart into four pieces, using your fingers; this avoids leaves becoming loose during grilling.
2. Cut the tomato and zucchinis into thick slices.
3. Remove tough edges from garlic flower stems. Remove green stems from shallots, then cut the large bulbs in two.
4. Lightly oil vegetables and grill on high heat, beginning with zucchinis and shallots which require about 3 minutes on either side. Grill the garlic flower stems, followed by the lettuce quarters.
5. Place on a large platter and garnish with olive oil, a little garlic yogurt, and sumac. Salt and serve accompanied by the remaining garlic yogurt.

Recipe source: <https://spicetrekking.com/recipes/grilled-lettuce-and-sumac-summer-vegetables>

Our Top 3 Favorite Grilling Spices

Other than sumac, our top three favorite spices for grilling this season include turmeric, paprika, and our Moroccan Tandoori Seasoning spice blend. Flavorful and functional, these spices add a pop of color on any dish, but are especially suited for grilled vegetables and meats.



Turmeric

Turmeric is a perennial flowering plant in the ginger family native to India and Southeast Asia. The rhizomes, or underground stem, yield this traditional Indian spice when boiled, dried, or ground. You may recall turmeric from our feature on botanical adaptogens in Volume 1 of our newsletter.

Turmeric has been used to flavor food for centuries and is known historically for its anti-inflammatory and immune-supporting benefits, particularly from the compound it contains called curcumin.

Turmeric has a slightly bitter, warm taste. Add root pieces to soups or grate and use in egg dishes or marinades. Sprinkle turmeric powder onto vegetables and meats before grilling, or incorporate it into sauces and marinades.

Paprika

Paprika is a spice made from dried and ground red peppers that have a mild spice. The variety of peppers descended from North America in Central Mexico, but paprika was introduced to the rest of the world in the 16th century when the peppers were brought to Spain. Paprika as we know it was first used in Hungarian cuisine in the early 1800s. Hungary is a major source of commonly used paprika today.

Just one teaspoon of paprika provides 21% of the daily value of vitamin A.

Paprika can be sprinkled on raw vegetables or cold dishes as a garnish, but the flavor is brought out more effectively by heating it in oil. This mild spice brings a hint of sweetness to grilled and other dishes.



Moroccan Tandoori Seasoning

Our Moroccan Tandoori Seasoning is an Indian seasoning with a twist! It's infused with the spiciness of cumin, coriander, garlic, and black pepper. The blend also features fenugreek, cinnamon, ginger, cardamom, cloves, and nutmeg.

This spicy-sweet blend gives a bold flavor perfect for grilling. It can also be a great companion to soups, casseroles, sauces, marinades, lentils, vegetable bakes, and delicate egg dishes.

Let's Get Started

How can you incorporate trending spices into your product lineup to take advantage of their many benefits while meeting this growing consumer need?

Our team at Starwest is here to help you incorporate trends such as these into your product development. Contact us at info@starwest-botanicals.com to get started.

Leadership Corner

Dear Starwest Community,

Can you believe it's almost Summer? As you know from the last editions of the newsletter, we've been working towards several impactful new launches for Summer '22. We can't wait to share them with you!

First, you may notice our logo has been refreshed. We are proud to share that we've updated our brand with a new look that's a nod to clean living as well as our founding in 1975. Our updated colors express our heritage in natural products and pay homage to the beauty of the botanicals we provide to you. Our vision is more clear than ever: "Unearthing the wonders of nature to inspire every body". No matter where you are in your cooking or wellness journey, Starwest is here for you. In fact, it's our mission to help conscientious consumers unearth the powerful benefits of botanicals to transform daily life. The way we go about our business and the careful curation of our products is purposeful, with the intention to nourish mind, body, and soul.

You will begin to see our brand transition to the new logo and look in the months ahead—on our documents, our packaging, and our website. We hope you are as excited about it as we are. And speaking about excitement, we can't wait to unveil the new website we are building.

Expect easy navigation, more blogs, and sourcing stories from seed to shelf—coming in just a few short months. We're also working on updating our social presence. [Follow us on LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#) to get insight on trends in food and beverage, product features, and Starwest highlights. We love our community—let's connect and grow together. We can't wait to hear your thoughts on these new initiatives.

Our article this month features adventure through spices. Just in time for Summer! We've included some interesting stories around products to explore, as well as tantalizing recipes to try or pass on. We hope you and your customers enjoy exploring. Let us know how these suggestions work for you and your clients, and where you'd like us to focus future features. Here's to amazing Summer (and cooking) adventures.

Thanks, as always, for your support. While you are seeing a lot of new things pop up from Starwest, please know our focus on quality and providing our customers with excellent support is unwavering. The best is yet to come.

Until next time!
The Starwest Team



Follow Along!

Follow us on LinkedIn and Facebook to stay up-to-date on the latest industry news and trends in the botanicals and wellness space.

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Meet The Team

New Hires

Starwest is rapidly growing, and we are pleased to announce that we've had many recent new hires. Here's a highlight of just a few:



Christina Weber, Commodity Manager

Christina Weber is our new Commodity Manager and brings 17 years of experience in the organic herb and spice industry. At Starwest, Christina is part of our purchasing team and is responsible for setting the procurement strategy for spices and ingredients.

Outside of work, Christina loves to camp with her family in one of the longest, road legal camping trailers. She is also a big 49ers fan.

WHAT DOES CHRISTINA LOVE ABOUT STARWEST?

"I like working with the different departments and getting to know everyone better."



Sarina Greco, Executive Assistant & Recruitment Specialist

Sarina Greco is our new Executive Assistant & Recruitment Specialist. Sarina brings more than 20 years of administrative support with an emphasis in medical administration, as well as hospitality operations. At Starwest, Sarina is responsible for supporting the executive team and areas of Human Resources, with an emphasis on recruitment.

Sarina is passionate about sports, her dog Scamp, great food, and new cultures. She also enjoys volunteering in the community.

WHAT DOES SARINA LOVE ABOUT STARWEST?

"What I love about Starwest is that it is a truly collaborative group of passionate individuals. Everyone is willing to help teach, share, and collaborate to reach our collective goals. You can see the passion each person has for their work which is rare—and

very resonant to me. I feel very lucky to be doing something I love on a team with others doing what they love!"



Cole Charboneau, Bulk Ingredients Division Account Executive

Cole Charboneau is our new Account Executive for the Bulk Ingredients Division. Cole comes to Starwest with experience in various sales and business development roles within the food and beverage industry. At Starwest, Cole will be working with the Bulk Ingredients Division to increase sales within food and flavor manufacturers. He will be focusing on a handful of existing customers as well as prospecting for new ones.

Cole enjoys golf and is a huge sports fan. Above all, his time with family and friends is most important to him.

WHAT DOES COLE LOVE ABOUT STARWEST?

"Starwest has a portfolio of products that I believe in and know firsthand

can genuinely improve the quality of consumers' lives. Coupling this amazing portfolio with Starwest's revamped team has set the company up for success for years to come. I feel very fortunate to have joined this stellar team and am excited to make my mark in helping the company continue to grow."



Randal Drees, Corporate Controller

Randal Drees is our new Corporate Controller. Randal began his career in public accounting and eventually moved to the private sector. Randal comes to Starwest with 5 years of experience in senior accounting roles. At Starwest, Randal is responsible for the management of the accounting and finance departments. This includes providing timely and relevant financial information.

Randal loves to spend time taking his daughter on adventures and playing disc golf.

WHAT DOES RANDAL LOVE ABOUT STARWEST?

"I love that Starwest is all about better. Across the company we strive to have better products and better support for our customers. We have a ton of initiatives to build better procedures, to look at better information, and to make better decisions. The attitude of the company is to not accept the status quo, but to strive to be better, and that's an exciting thing to be a part of."

Promotions

We would like to congratulate and highlight our Starwest employees that have recently received promotions:



Aaron Sevilla, Order Fulfillment Manager

Aaron joined our team at Starwest 12 years ago. In his new role as the Order Fulfillment Manager, Aaron oversees fulfilling orders for the Retail and Wholesale Division.

Meet The Team (cont.)

In his free time, Aaron loves spending time with his family and friends. He also loves the outdoors, especially the beach.

WHAT DOES AARON LOVE ABOUT STARWEST?

"I love the family vibe that I get at Starwest. There is great teamwork and interactions daily."



Angel Rodriguez,
Production Manager

Angel has been with Starwest for 14 years. His new role as the Production Manager allows Angel to oversee scheduling and production of milling and blending. Angel is also responsible for food safety in the production departments.

In his spare time, he loves to spend time with his daughter, screen print, and play disc golf.

WHAT DOES ANGEL LOVE ABOUT STARWEST?

"For me, I love the people that I work with. It has always been like a family here. I appreciate the leadership opportunities that I have been able to have as I have worked at Starwest."



Jesse Allgaier,
Ingredients Receiving Supervisor

In his new role as Ingredients Receiving Supervisor, Jesse is responsible for the receiving of raw ingredients.

Outside of work, Jesse likes to spend his time camping, enjoying the BBQ, and being with family and friends.

WHAT DOES JESSE LOVE ABOUT STARWEST?

"What I love about Starwest is the people and the camaraderie I have with the team."

Milestones

We are pleased to recognize employees who are celebrating milestones with us:



Christopher Rice,
Extraction Specialist

Christopher joined Starwest in 1997 and currently works in liquid extract manufacturing.

In his spare time, he enjoys reading, watching and playing sports, and traveling. He also spends his time trying to keep up with his six kids.

WHAT DOES CHRISTOPHER LOVE ABOUT STARWEST?

"I really love the PEOPLE! I have met so many amazing, hard-working, resourceful, and passionate people over my 25 years at Starwest. I really enjoy coming to work!"

Wholesale Corner

Building on the distribution of our 2022 catalog, complete with an exciting brand refresh and numerous new products, we are hard at work on a new website that is due to launch this Summer! It will incorporate our new branding and feel you experienced with our catalog. Our goal is to modernize the experience for our wholesale customers. What this means is that while many of the current user-friendly tools will remain in place, it will feature a new mobile-friendly design, exciting new ordering tools and resources that will be road-mapped for expansion and ease of access.

Serving the needs of our customers is our top priority, so we are pleased to let you know that since the beginning of the year we have returned to consistently shipping orders received on the same or following day. It is our plan to continue to meet this important standard that you have come to know and appreciate.

In our last newsletter, Starwest's ops leaders discussed the current state of the global supply chain for herbs and botanicals. More recently, the unfortunate and tragic conflict in the Ukraine is further challenging our ability to source products from many regions of the world. Despite this new obstacle, our supply chain team has been able to make a difference. Since November, the number of out-of-stock wholesale items has decreased by 45%. While there is still much more work to do in a supply chain environment that remains unpredictable, our goal is to continue to make needed improvements in product availability.

Industrial Outlook: The Global Organic Market

Providing our customers with high-quality organic botanicals, herbs, spices, and teas is at the core of who we are at Starwest Botanicals. As will be presented below, this task is challenging. Challenges caused by ongoing difficulties in the supply chain, competition from other crops for farming acreage, changing demographics, and geopolitical issues contribute to longer lead times and increased costs.

Available farming acreage and prices for organic products we source is being impacted by several factors.

First, farmers are now having to consider the attractiveness of repurposing land to produce crops that hold the promise of greater profits. A prime example are Egyptian spices, which have been losing favor with farmers for wheat, which is then exported to China to help satisfy China's fast-growing appetite for more western style foods. Around the globe, this trend is evident. The situation in Ukraine is fueling this trend: Ukraine is a huge exporter of corn and wheat; prices on those commodities is surging, resulting in additional incentive for farmers to abandon spices.

This leads to the second factor, which is that the global demand for organic spices, herbs, and botanicals is increasing at a faster pace than the growth of available organic farmland. According to the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (in Switzerland), during a 17-year period (2000-2017), the

hectares of certified organic land from spice producing countries grew at a compound rate of 12%. In the four-year span of 2013-2017, certified organic land grew at an annual rate of 11%. By contrast, looking at SPINS data from 2015-2018, organic spice sales in the United States grew at an annual rate of 30%. This is a tremendous disconnect between supply and demand, and while the data is several years old, this trend has not reversed.

Thirdly, as the average age of the farmer has increased over time around the globe, the difficulties in implementing farm equipment technology to offset this trend are driving increased prices. When harvesting herbs and spices, the majority are labor intensive and produced on small scale, family farms. Mechanization of commodities such as black pepper, vanilla, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, turmeric, chili peppers, and more is simply not possible due to factors such as landscape (mountain hillsides), having to physically climb trees to harvest (cloves/nutmeg), de-stemming chilis by hand as they are picked, etc. In many developing nations, younger generations are losing interest in farming and opting instead to move to cities to pursue careers in IT or catering to local tourists.

Geopolitical pressures are also contributing to higher prices for organics.

The U.S.-China trade war has left tariffs near all-time highs. Average U.S. tariffs on Chinese exports are six times higher than before the trade war began in 2018. This has a major impact on herbs such as garlic. As a result, like items grown in other countries have become more attractive, from a cost standpoint.

Inflation is driving up costs for farm inputs, energy for processing (drying) and transportation, translating to higher product costs.

Since November of 2020, after international shipping costs first began to soar, the price for booking a container has since doubled. In addition, space on ships is tight, so even if freight prices aren't prohibitive, simply getting a vessel booking can be elusive. U.S. port delays for unloaded vessels and access to local trucking can add an additional three weeks or more to lead times. Where some domestic ports are performing better, importers are attempting to reroute goods to these entry points to reduce lead times.

None of the aforementioned issues are likely to be resolved anytime soon. Our goal is to contain costs as best as possible while realizing that prices will continue to trend upward. On the logistics front, things are likely to improve slowly but not appreciably until sometime in 2023. Shipping delays will be an ever-present factor for the remainder of 2022. Lastly, it's crucial to realize the value of having trustworthy partners. With increases in product prices and demand, the market will inevitably attract unscrupulous suppliers that deal in the ugly world of organic fraud. The old adage that "if something sounds too good to be true, it probably is", remains pertinent in today's world.

Starwest Botanicals takes seriously its responsibility of being that trustworthy partner for its customers. This means we must take every step necessary to thoroughly vet and qualify potential new supply partners, while strengthening partnerships with current ones. We continue to invest in talented people, technology, systems, and equipment that contribute to providing safe and high quality organic herbs, spices, botanicals, and teas at the greatest value in the industry. We can then contribute to our customers' profitable growth by helping them deliver that WOW! to the market they serve.

Bulk Ingredient Buzz

In March our team members attended the Natural Products Expo West trade show in Anaheim California. The show was the first to be canceled in 2019 due to COVID and after two years of hosting the show virtually, 57,000 people attended this year's in-person event. Like what was seen at Supply Side West in the Fall, the trend was using more functional botanicals in finished products from food and beverages to supplements and cosmetics.

Unlike shows in the past, we did not notice any specific flavor trends; however, we did notice some companies stepping outside the norm on the botanicals used, most noticeable was bergamot in a granola and ashwagandha in water.

Companies have started to move towards incorporating these functional ingredients into beverages and foods to appeal to the younger generations. In a recent article in Nutritional Outlook titled [Brain Health](#), it was noted that Gen Z and Millennials are trending to shop more for natural products and they want convenience and innovative delivery forms. By adding functional ingredients to everyday products such as water and granola, companies are able to appeal to the newer younger generations.



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