



The World of Spices – Did You Know?

Can you even imagine a world without spices? We can't! At Ricky's, we are a little obsessed with sourcing the most flavorful and interesting spices we can to prepare Ricky's Lucky Nuts. That's what makes our jobs fun! Our spice glazes are our signature statement that makes Ricky's Lucky Nuts stand out from all the rest! Want to know a little more about a few of our spices? Read on...

Cocoa Powder



Cocoa powder comes from the bean of the cacao tree, native to the Americas, but now also grown in Africa, Indonesia and other parts of the world. Cocoa powder is ground and processed cocoa solids (with most of the cocoa butter removed) that have been obtained through a fermentation, drying and roasting process of the cacao beans. Cocoa powder is actually a bit bitter, but is high in antioxidants and is the key ingredient in chocolate.

We source our organic, fair trade cocoa from Peru.

Did You Know?

Forty to fifty million people worldwide depend on cocoa for their livelihood.

Most likely the first people to eat cocoa were the Olmecs, the oldest known civilization of the Americas (1400-1500 BC) who considered cocoa to be the "food of the gods."

Depending on the cocoa content, it can take between 300 to 600 cocoa beans to make 1 kg of chocolate.

Vanilla Bean

It is nearly impossible to accurately describe vanilla—exotic, warm, floral? Vanilla, is simply vanilla! Green seed pods, which have no taste at all, are harvested and dried for several months in order to concentrate the intense flavor and scent. Native to Mexico, vanilla is now produced in many countries, but the largest production today is in



Madagascar, where the famous "Madagascar-Bourbon" vanilla is produced. We source our organic vanilla extract and real vanilla bean from Madagascar.

Did You Know?

Evidence of the first use of vanilla dates back to the Totonac people who lived in the area of what is now Veracruz, Mexico in the 15th century. The Aztecs also enjoyed vanilla, blending it with cocoa in the ancient drink called Xoco-lall. Chocolate and vanilla have been a classic combination for over 500 years! The vanilla plant is in the orchid family. The flowers must be pollinated by hand and they only live one day! In the world of spices, only saffron is more expensive than vanilla.



chipotle chile



Chipotles are simply any smoked capsicum pepper, but most common of all is the smoked jalapeno. Many jalapenos are harvested green, but some are left on the plant to turn red late in the season. These end-of-season jewels are picked and smoked, traditionally over wood, for several days. Most chipotle comes from Mexico, and have been part of the Mexican cuisine for centuries, but chipotle is also made in the USA and other Central American countries. Our Chipotle Chiles come from Mexico and the USA.

Did You Know?

Evidence of the use of chipotles dates all the way back to the 5th Century, originating in Teotihuacan, an ancient city located near where Mexico City lies today. Chile peppers contain more Vitamin A than carrots! It takes 10 pounds of fresh jalapenos to make just one pound of jalapeno chipotle!

Black Pepper

Native to Southern India, black peppercorns are produced from the mature and still unripe green berries of the pepper plant that have been dried, traditionally in the sun, for many days, turning them a dark grayish black. The same peppercorn plant can produce white and pink peppercorns as well, which are also green peppercorns that are simply processed differently.

Ricky's black pepper comes from several different countries, depending on the season and source, including India, Brazil and Malaysia!

Did You Know?

In ancient times, black pepper was once so valuable it was used as currency in Europe and Asia, earning it the nickname, "black gold." Supposedly, Attila the Hun demanded over one ton of black pepper from Rome when he and his army of barbarians sacked Rome in the 5th Century.

The peppercorn vine can grow to lengths of 100 feet on supporting trees or trellises.



Curry



Curry comes from the word "khari" and really just means a sauce of any kind. But for most people curry is a yellow colored powder of various spices blended together with a distinct but very recognizable taste, ranging from mild to very hot. Typically, curry contains turmeric, which gives it its signature yellow color. Other spices found in typical curry blends include coriander, cumin and fenugreek. The spices in our proprietary curry blend come from all over the world, including India, Egypt and Spain!

Did You Know?

Curry is the word the British gave to the dried blends of Indian spices that they would take back to England with them during Britain's colonial occupation of India so that they could recreate the Indian dishes they loved at home. In India, you would not call it curry, you would call it garam masala. Great Britain has over 9,000 "curry houses," or Indian restaurants!

Coconut

Coconut is a highly nutritious "fruit" produced by the coconut palm which grows throughout the Western Pacific. The dried and shredded meat of the coconut is rich in healthy fats and is only slightly sweet (unlike the very sweet, sweetened coconut available in stores.) Our organic, sulfite-free coconut comes from the Philippines.

Did You Know?



In Thailand, farmers have actually trained monkeys to climb the coconut palm trees to pick the coconuts for them. The word "coconut" comes from "coco," meaning monkey-face, so-called by early Spanish explorers who thought the coconuts resembled monkeys. The coconut is not a nut at all, but a fruit.



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