

About Australian Bush Spices

A new world of natural gourmet flavours has emerged from intimate indigenous knowledge of the Australian landscape and an ancient culinary wisdom as to what is edible of native flora.

Many of these 'flavours' continue to be hand harvested from the wild by Aboriginal communities, while others have been domesticated for the first time in history.

Explore their vast culinary virtues, benefit from their salubrity, and ignite the senses, as you acquaint with the tastes, textures, tones and scents of the Australian wild.

Bush Tomato (*Solanum centrale*)

A small bushy shrub covered in small spines and adorned with silvery leaves and purple flowers, the bush tomato, or 'desert raisin', bears the same colour as the red sand hills on which it grows across the arid regions of Central Australia.

Relative of the garden tomato, the perennial and *Solanaceae* member fruits prolifically following fire or good rain, proving a reliable source of staple food and water for indigenous Australians for thousands of years.

The small fruits remain on the bush to dry and shrivel under the fierce desert sun prior to harvest, and despite small-scale commercial cultivation, most fruit is still gently harvested from the wild by hand.

Bearing a fleshy raisin-like texture with soft edible seeds, the vitamin C rich fruit is mildly spicy and piquant in flavour, evocative of caramelised sun-dried tomato with a slight acidity.

The bush tomato is available either whole, or ground as a spice, suited to a diversity of culinary uses including chutneys and relishes, breads, stews, salads, sauces and as a seasoning.

Finger Lime (*Citrus australasica*)

Sheltered beneath the soaring subtropical canopies of Australia's eastern lowland rainforests, a thorny understory shrub, and *Rutaceae* member, bears an exquisite citrus fruit and gourmet bush food literally bursting with intense lime flavour.

Long and oblong or 'finger-shaped', the finger lime varies vastly in size and colour, appearing either green, red, yellow, purple, black or brown, but the culinary allure of the finger lime lies within its taut skin, where a spectacular caviar-like pulp awaits, like a hidden rainforest treasure.

Once cut open, juice-filled globules compressed within the skin ooze out like bubbles of citrus flavoured 'fish roe', exploding onto the tastebuds with a sharp effervescent tang.

With a highly aromatic taste considered 'superior' by chefs, the antioxidant rich finger lime has enormous culinary potential, commonly used in chutneys, jams and marmalades, as a fresh garnish and superb accompaniment to oysters and sashimi, or in the form of dried finger lime peel as a versatile flavouring spice.

The highly sought after bush food continues to be wild harvested alongside growing commercial orchard production.

Lemon Myrtle (*Backhousia citriodora*)

From a tall white flowering tree native to the sultry coastal rainforests of north eastern Australia comes an aromatic bush spice characterised by its powerful lemon aroma and superbly rounded lemongrass, lime oil and lemon flavour.

Considered the world's richest known source of natural citral (90 – 98%), *Myrtaceae* species, lemon myrtle, has emerged as *the* tangy bush food and fragrance of the rainforest. In fact, the citral oils contained in the long, dark green, lemon-scented leaves, have been demonstrated to be highly anti-bacterial, antimicrobial and antifungal.

Used fresh, or dried and ground, the robust citrus flavour, refreshing fragrance and remedial properties lend the lemon myrtle leaf to an abundance of uses, from the culinary to the cosmetic.

Primarily sourced from commercial plantations, lemon myrtle is produced as an uplifting essential oil, refreshing tea blend, in myriad body care products, and as a versatile food flavouring bearing a distinct citrusy edge to products as diverse as biscuits, breads, confectionary, pastas, flavoured oils, and partnering beautifully with chicken and fish.

Macadamia (*Macadamia integrifolia*)

Indigenous to the lush subtropical rainforests of Australia's east coast, a beautiful evergreen tree covered in creamy white or pink, elongated flower clusters produces a native nut world famous for its big buttery flavour, velvety crunch and boundless health benefits.

The macadamia nut was highly prized by Aboriginal tribes who would gather at 'feasting grounds' scattered throughout the rainforests, marked by flat rock slabs bearing bowl-like depressions, which would hold the nuts as they were struck with smaller stones – *the* original nut cracker.

Recorded by great Australian explorers, Allan Cunningham in 1828, and Ludwig Leichhardt in 1843, the oil rich member of the *Proteaceae* family was transported to Hawaii for cultivation in the early 1900s before Australia realised the nut's commercial potential. In the 1960s, the macadamia became the nation's first native plant to be developed as a commercial food crop. Australia is now the world's leading producer of macadamia nuts.

There are eight species of macadamia worldwide, of which *Macadamia integrifolia* (smooth shelled) and *Macadamia tetraphylla* (rough shelled) represent the two preferred commercial species, generally consumed raw, roasted, salted, seasoned, or ground into nut butter.

Once fractured, the tough, woody shell reveals a delicate, ivory coloured kernel boasting a long list of nutritional assets. The humble macadamia nut is free of cholesterol; high in protein, carbohydrates, dietary fibre, vitamins and minerals; contains natural antioxidant properties; and is rich in mono-unsaturated oils, or 'good fats', known to significantly reduce cholesterol levels and facilitate the body's manufacture of essential fatty acids.

Mountain Pepper Berry and Leaf (*Tasmannia lanceolata*)

In the moist understoreys of the cool mountain rainforests of Tasmania and south eastern Australia, grows a primitive flowering evergreen and *Winteraceae* member (surviving unchanged since the ancient Gondwana period), with highly aromatic, peppery flavoured fruit and foliage, used medicinally and as a spice by indigenous Australians for millennia.

Mountain Pepper grows as an attractive shrub or small tree with glossy, dark green, elongated leaves, vivid scarlet stems, and small cream coloured flowers revealing clusters of purple-charcoal coloured berries.

Once harvested, either wild or from plantations across Australia, the plump pea-sized berries are left to dry until they become wrinkled and hard, resembling black peppercorns, which may be ground or used whole as a flavour enhancer in the same way as conventional pepper.

The antioxidant-rich berries bear an intense peppery heat with a distinct fruity dimension, infusing sauces with a beautiful rich crimson colour, while the leaves, dried and ground, are more subtle and herbal in flavour, suited as a less dominant food spice.

Wattle Seed

Across the vast dry plains of outback Australia, the drought-resistant wattle tree flourishes, often bearing the iconic golden fluffy flowers that serve as our national floral emblem.

Of the 700 or more *acacia* species - the largest group of flowering plants in Australia - a select few produce edible seeds within their pods, proving a reliable staple food source for Central Australian Aborigines, who would either consume the green pods whole, or dry, mill and bake the seed into cakes or bread.

Today, wattle seed is commonly dried, roasted and ground to the consistency of rough coffee grounds, used as a caffeine free coffee substitute, and as a spice, with a versatility in flavour adaptable to host of sweet and savoury culinary applications.

Roasted wattle seeds, small, brown and glossy in appearance, boast a rich and palatable flavour profile embracing familiar chocolate, coffee and hazelnut notes with a hint of vanilla, reflected in the aroma, with subtle variations between species.

High in fibre, carbohydrates, proteins and polyunsaturated fats, and considered a low GI food, wattle seed has emerged to be rich both in flavour *and* nutrition.

Wattle seed supply for the food industry is obtained via wild harvest and expanding commercial cultivation.

BLENDS

Australian Bush Spices welcomes you to a vibrant new era of taste, and a premium range of bush inspired food fusions to spice up the menu.

Six unique Australian eating experiences feature intense native flavours with exotic foreign twists, as YELLOW, RED, BLUE, WHITE, GREEN and ORANGE transform food into sophisticated cuisine and feasts for the senses.

Each blend rich with complexity, yet simple and versatile in application and cooking, lends the range to a casual elegance in dining across a broad culinary spectrum.

Savour the Australian landscape: discover new frontiers of flavour. Exotic bush inspired spice blends for food with rustic flair.

YELLOW

YELLOW bush dukkah reinvents a typical Egyptian spice mixture, marrying ancient flavours of the Middle East with native Australian wattle seed, macadamia nut and zesty lemon myrtle for a fiercely invigorating fusion evocative of some bustling 'bush bazaar'.

Traditionally eaten as a late afternoon snack together with fresh bread and olive oil, devour YELLOW with an ice-cold ale or lively Australian sparkling, as an exotic evening appetizer with an Arabian Nights twist.

RED

RED meat blend marries native bush tomato with mountain pepper berry for a sweet fiery fusion with colonial kick to liven up any red meat, like lamb, beef or kangaroo.

A liberal coating of RED forms the ultimate charred crust, trapping flavour and sealing juices for hearty cuisine with as much punch as Jeff Fenech, commanding a glass of robust Australian Cabernet Sauvignon.

BLUE

BLUE seafood blend combines oriental kaffir lime and lemongrass with native finger lime for a sharp citrus fusion and refreshing addition to your fishy affair, fit for any fresh catch, like king prawns, crayfish or barramundi.

Reminiscent of reeling in a beauty down at the local jetty, BLUE is best enjoyed with a late harvest Australian Riesling whilst observing the sunset from water's edge.

WHITE

WHITE meat blend marries native lemon myrtle with zesty finger lime for a robust limey fusion with great Australian bite – the ultimate addition to any white meat, like poultry, pork or crocodile.

A generous coating of WHITE seals in juices with a deliciously charred crust and citrusy flavour bigger than Croc Dundee, best devoured with a glass of crisp Australian Sauvignon Blanc.

GREEN

GREEN salad sprinkle blends native bush tomato, north coast macadamia and lemon myrtle for a subtle piquant fusion with endless raw appeal for your fresh harvest.

Simply sprinkled dry or combined with balsamic and premium olive oil as a heavenly dressing, GREEN whispers wow factor to any style of salad or fresh vegetables, ideally savoured with a glass of earthy Australian Pinot Noir.

*australian
bush spices*

ORANGE

ORANGE bush curry combines traditional Indian spices with native Australian bush tomato, feisty mountain pepper berry and a tantalising hint of finger lime for a wildly aromatic fusion and versatile curry base fit for a Hindu god.

An intensely sweet and spicy blend, ORANGE harmonises with coconut cream or tomato stock as a foundation for red meat and/ or vegetables, and a 'bush come Bombay' food experience best enjoyed with a glass of peppery Australian Shiraz.

Contact Scott Foster;

scott@australianbushspices.com.au

www.australianbushspices.com.au