

Abridged List of Aromatics

To the left is a chart depicting the four types of cooking aromatic categories (where an aromatic is any spice, herb, or aromatic vegetable) and their maximum suggested ratio of use. The ratio expresses the dominant category compared to supporting categories. For example, if savory aromatics are dominant, the ratio of use is generally four parts savory aromatics to a maximum of one part of each of the other categories by weight. Note that this applies to dry ingredients only and not to fresh ingredients which contain a varying degree of water. This rule of thumb does not apply to fresh ingredients.

To the right is an abridged listing of the aromatics that make up the four categories. Each category functions in relation to another as depicted in the chart. Savory and sweet balance and harmonize one another while pungent is the insurgent that can enhance in small quantities but overpowers in large quantities, while delicate sits atop and nuances. If we wish the outcome of our dish to be savory-forward, we should add the largest amount of savory spices, balancing their harshness with sweet spices. If we wanted to nuance or enhance the savory flavors further, we could choose to add delicate or pungent spices, respectively, but it's not absolutely necessary.

Delicate	Savory	Sweet	Pungent
Amchur	Asafoetida	Ajwain	Allspice
Arugula	Black or white pepper	Basil	Black mustard seeds
Chervil	Celery	Bay leaf	Caraway
Chili pepper	Cilantro	Carrot	Cardamom
Citrus leaves	Cumin	Cassia	Cloves
Citrus zest	Curry leaves	Cinnamon	Dill
Coriander	Grains of paradise	Mint	Garlic
Fennel seed	Thyme	Nutmeg	Ginger
Fenugreek		Oregano	Juniper
Marjoram		Tarragon	Lemongrass
Onion		Thai basil	Mace
Parsley		Vanilla	Rosemary
Shiso			Saffron
Tamarind			Sage
Turmeric			Sichuan pepper
Yellow mustard seeds			Star anise