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# PUKKA



## Coriander

### Folklore

Coriander is an ancient spice, first mentioned in Indian texts more than 7,000 years ago. Coriander seeds were even found in caves in Israel that could be dated back 8,000 years. In ancient Egypt, coriander was used as a food in the afterlife and was often placed at burial sites so that the deceased had food for their journey to the underworld! Traditionally, coriander has been used as a culinary spice alongside common curry spices known as turmeric, cumin and chili and was used to preserve meats before the days of the refrigerator.

### Sensory

Coriander is from the same plant family as fennel and cumin, the Umbeliferae family. Coriander leaves have a very distinctive scent, often likened to that of orange blossom and citrus. Coriander was thought to have been grown in the Hanging Gardens of Babylon to create a beautiful aroma as people were walking around enjoying the gardens. Pick a few fresh leaves and chew on them or rub the leaf between your fingers to release their characteristic aroma. The leaves are often used as a garnish for Indian dishes to counteract the heat from more fiery spices such as chilli, but it is the ground seeds that are used to cook with. Coriander seeds are small and perfectly spherical, you can grind them down in a pestle and mortar to create the powder used to cook a curry with.

### What's it for?

Coriander has been traditionally used for settling an upset stomach, soothing an irritated digestive system and cooling any acidic or burning sensations. Both the seed and the leaf are used to help reduce stomach cramps, indigestion and wind. A paste can also be made from freshly picked leaves for reducing heat in skin rashes.

### Why don't you try...

Why not try and make your own fresh coriander chutney? Place a handful of fresh coriander leaves in a blender with some additional fresh herbs such as mint, ginger, garlic and chili and combine with a little olive oil and salt to create a delicious fresh chutney to dress a curry or to use as a dip.