

**Have you ever noticed that some of the food you are eating tastes so much better at one establishment versus another? Whether its beef, chicken or pork, it seems that spices make all the difference. The good news; anybody can use seasonings to spice up their food. Spicing it up doesn't necessarily mean making it hot.**

**I wanted to highlight a few favorites we use at our house and hopefully you will find these tasty too. These are quick and easy.**

**First, there is nothing like having fresh ginger.**



**If you haven't used fresh ginger because it's too much work I encourage you to try it.**

**Ginger - Just use a knife to shave the outside layer off the ginger and mince it. You can add it to chicken or just about any meat or vegetable while it's cooking. Ginger is good for digestion and is a natural anti-inflammatory. Wrap the extra in a paper towel and store it in the vegetable drawer. It will keep for a couple weeks.**

**Sesame oil – use it to top off the flavor and give it a mild Asian twist. Sesame oil comes in darker and lighter colors. You'll notice that some varieties are high heat. You can use these to do some of the heavy cooking. Other oils are used for flavor and meant to be added at the end of the cooking cycle.**

**Sambal Oelek - If you like heat there is nothing that tastes as good as Sambal Oelek to add heat and great peppery flavor to a dish.**

**Garlic - do we need to discuss this?**



**Greek Seasoning is another quick way to add a mild flavor to meats, fish, and even eggs. You can buy sodium free and several varieties of this seasoning. All are good.**



**If you want to add a bit of zip to your grill this can also go on just about everything. It has some heat but blends in nicely with pork, beef, venison, and yes I use this on eggs, depending on my mood. If you ever make a skillet breakfast with pan roasted potatoes with garlic and olive oil, onions, peppers and eggs, this dresses it up nicely. This breakfast goes over well when you and your guests had a bit too much fun the night before.**



**This seasoning is my favorite with a steak. It has granulated garlic and black pepper and other “steak like” seasonings in it. I can almost eat this right out of the shaker. I know for a steak purist this may be wrong but not for the people I hang out with.**



**Don't forget to cook with wine. Wine that is being used to cook will not impart alcohol to your guests because it evaporates in the cooking process. But it adds a flavor that can't be beat. Try adding white wine to your marinara sauce to give it a really great zip. I don't use “cooking wine”; it's just wine with added salt. Or pour some white wine into your pan after sautéing your chicken breasts in garlic, ginger, black pepper and olive oil. Mix a dab of Dijon mustard in with the simmering wine and scrape up the brown bits and pour the juice mixture over the chicken and serve.**

**I hope you enjoy the tips. Scott Herkes**