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Spicey Grenada

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Grenada draws those who worship the sun and everything that comes with it – beaches, aquatic sports, hiking and true Caribbean culture.

It's also a place for foodies. There are many types of scrumptious fresh fish, locally grown vegetables and herbs, but it's the spices that set Grenada apart. In fact, the island's main products – nutmeg, cinnamon and sorrel give it another name, Spice Island, and they are used in local dishes in fresh and inventive ways.

Spices play a key role in the bustling, noisy market in Grenada's capital, St. George's. The colourful stalls are crammed together and particularly busy on Friday and Saturday mornings. The vendors are friendly and will even offer cooking suggestions if you ask. Apparently, Martha Stewart has been known to pick up a few tips here.

I have always avoided using nutmeg in my cooking, but that has changed after tasting the local grown nutmeg in drinks, soups, pasta dishes and desserts. It is vastly different from what many of us are used to, and during one meal I overheard someone say "nutmeg is the new salt."

There is no end to the uses for nutmeg, locally. Full pods are used as a garnish in rum punch or poached as a topping for pancakes at breakfast, and the long decorative shells become mulch on sidewalks and gardens.

Pick up bundles of whole nutmeg that are often packaged with miniature graters to grate right into your steel cut oats. To spice up the conversation with the local vendor, ask them what they use it for, and bring home some new cooking tips, too.



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