

## A top-down view of various spices and herbs arranged in a circular pattern on a dark, textured surface. The spices include a large pile of white powder (likely salt or sugar) in the center, surrounded by a ring of different powders: bright red (paprika or cayenne), orange-brown (turmeric or curry powder), dark brown (cocoa powder or instant coffee), and light beige (garlic powder or onion powder). There are also piles of green herbs (parsley or cilantro), dried red chili flakes, and a small pile of green leafy herbs (possibly basil or dill). The arrangement is artistic and visually appealing.

The island's original inhabitants were indigenous peoples called Arawaks or Tainos who came from South America about 2,500 years ago. They called the island Xaymaca or "land of wood and water."

The Arawak were known for preparing a type of jerky that originated in Peru and is called *charqui*. When preparing it, they poked holes in the meat so the spices would permeate it more thoroughly. The meat would be smoked over a slow fire or sun-dried as in Peru, and it was ideal for taking on long journeys or for adding to boiling water for flavor when preparing other dishes.

Christopher Columbus discovered the island in 1494 and subjected the people there to Spanish rule. Sadly, the Arawak population died out because of warfare and the introduction of European diseases, and African slaves became the biggest group living on the island.

In 1655, according to the [Jamaica Information Service](#), the English invaded the Spanish, who surrendered, freeing their slaves before leaving Jamaica and retreating to Cuba. This group of runaway slaves and their descendants are called the Maroon people of [Jamaica](#). They managed to elude British authorities by living in the mountainous interiors of the island and by cooking meals over coals or on pimento wood underground. Cooking underground only happened because they were in hiding. A positive side effect of preparing the meat this way was the succulent, juicy flavor.

*Today, this kind of meat is enjoyed all over the island. The combination of sweet and savory aromatic spices and ingredients is a standout that you should definitely try at least once!*

# June's Spice of The Month

## Caribbean Jerk Seasoning



## Jerk-Style Chicken

### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup chopped green onion
- 1/4 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 4 tablespoons **McCormick® Caribbean Jerk Seasoning**
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar
- 2 large garlic cloves
- 2 pounds bone-in chicken thighs and drumsticks , skin removed

### Instruction

1. Place all ingredients except chicken in a blender container or food processor. Cover. Pulse just until blended. Reserve 2 tablespoons marinade; set aside.
2. Place chicken and remaining marinade in a large bowl, turning chicken to coat well. Cover. Refrigerate at least 2 hours or overnight. Remove chicken from marinade. Discard any remaining marinade.
3. Grill chicken over medium heat with grill closed 30 to 40 minutes or until cooked through, (internal temperatures reaches 165 degrees) turning occasionally and basting with reserved marinade. Serve with fresh lime wedges, fried plantains, rice and beans if desired.

# Jamaican Me Crazy BBQ Rib Recipe



## Ingredients

- 2 racks of pork ribs
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 cup Caribbean Jerk Seasoning
- 2 bottles of Kraft Honey BBQ Sauce ( 18 oz. each)
- 4 tablespoons apricot preserves
- 3 tablespoons honey

## Instructions

1. Cut the ribs into serving size pieces. ( I use kitchen scissors)
2. Drizzle with oil and rub with the jerk seasoning.
3. Place ribs in a 5 or 6 quart slow cooker.
4. Combine the remaining ingredients; pour over the ribs.
5. Cover and cook on low for 6 to 8 hours or until the meat is tender.

## Jamaican Jerk Pork Chops



These Jamaican jerk pork chops with savory jerk seasoning and sweet peach preserves hit all the right notes. Crisp pepper slices on the side and hot rice turn these chops into a delicious and fast meal.

### Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons butter, divided
- 1/4 cup peach preserves
- 4 boneless thin-cut pork loin chops (2 to 3 ounces each)
- 3 teaspoons Caribbean jerk seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 medium sweet orange pepper
- 1/2 medium sweet yellow pepper
- 1/2 medium sweet red pepper
- Hot cooked rice, optional

### Directions

Softens 1 tablespoon butter; mix with peach preserves.

Sprinkle chops with seasonings. In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon butter over medium-high heat; brown chops 2-3 minutes per side. Remove from the pan.

Cut peppers into thin strips. In the same pan, saute peppers in remaining butter over medium-high heat until crisp-tender and lightly browned, 5-6 minutes. Add chops to pan with peppers; top with preserved mixture. Cook, uncovered, until heated through, 30-60 seconds. If desired, serve with rice.