

FROM THE *test kitchen*

We went to cooking school so you don't have to.

GET FRESH WITH TURMERIC

You're probably familiar with ground turmeric, which gives curry powder (and trendy lattes) that distinctive yellow coloring, but have you tried the fresh stuff? It has a brighter, spicier flavor than dried turmeric. And while the knobby brown sort-of root (it's actually a rhizome, in case your botany teacher asks) was once available only in Asian markets or health-food stores, it can now be found in the produce section of some grocery stores. On the outside, fresh turmeric looks similar to ginger. But scrape off the skin and you'll find vibrant yellow-orange flesh. Heads-up: This means it will color cutting boards, dish towels, and hands. To avoid stains, wear plastic gloves and wash surfaces promptly after contact. Just peel it and slice, mince, or grate like you would ginger. Taste as you go since fresh turmeric can be intense. Blend it into smoothies, grate into soup, whisk into salad dressing, or steep in milk for a soothing bedtime drink. —JANET TAYLOR McCracken

