



EACH **SPICEJET** AIRCRAFT HAS BEEN NAMED AFTER A PARTICULAR SPICE. IN THIS ISSUE WE TALK ABOUT THE BENEFITS AND USAGE OF **NIGELLA**



Assorted breads with a touch of nigella

belongs to the same family as caraway and dill or parsley. These seeds are also known to repel certain insects and can be used like moth balls. The name nigella is derived from the Latin nigellus meaning black. These tiny little seeds are very similar to black sesame in appearance but are a bit more angular.

Nigella is widely used in Indian cuisine and finds use especially in mildly braised lamb dishes like korma. It adds a punch to vegetable and dal dishes and is also used as an ingredient in chutneys. The seeds are sprinkled on top of naan breads before baking. “Nigella is one of the five spices in panch phoran and is also part of some versions of garam masala. In the Middle East nigella is added to bread dough. Give them a quick toast in a dry skillet to bring out the most flavour. Nigella seeds can be sprinkled on all manner of vegetable dishes and salads, from a simple stir fry to baked sweet potatoes,” says Chef Ajay Chopra, Founder, Zion Hospitality Pvt. Ltd.

Nigella seeds have many healing qualities and medicinal use and play a vital role in day-to-day health and wellness as well. Rakesh Sethi, Corporate Executive Chef, Radisson Hotel Group, South Asia, recalls, “Since my childhood I have seen my mother making pickle at home and I was always attracted by the combination of spices and seeds use for pickling. One of the jet black tiny seed that took away my attention was nigella.” Nigella imparts a nutty and peppery flavour to the dish it is used in. It is good to broil the nigella seeds before using them whole or pounded. This helps in getting the best flavour out of the seeds.

NOURISHMENT IN A SEED

SMALL, MATTE-BLACK, WITH A ROUGH SURFACE AND AN OILY WHITE INTERIOR, NIGELLA SEEDS, ALSO CALLED AS ONION SEEDS OR KALONJI, PACK A PUNCH THANKS TO THEIR DISTINCT FLAVOUR AND TASTE PROFILE.
BY BINDU GOPAL RAO

NIGELLA HAS BEEN USED SINCE A LONG TIME BY ASIAN HERBALISTS and pharmacists and there are reports that it was used for culinary requirements by the Romans. It has many names including black cumin and its scientific name is *Nigella Sativa*. Called kalonji in Hindi, it belongs to the buttercup family of flowering plants. It is also a common ingredient in Middle Eastern cuisine and