



Za'atar

Za'atar simply means thyme in Arabic and the smell of wild thyme crushed underfoot as you walk through the hills in Lebanon is one of the most evocative aromas. Za'atar as a spice blend is a mixture of dried thyme, sumac (a ground tangy, dried red berry), salt and sesame seeds. It's a classic topping for Lebanese flatbread (manouche) and delicious sprinkled on labneh and other dips, fresh cheeses, salads, vegetables, potato, eggs and even avocado toast! The sesame seeds can go rancid quickly, so buy za'atar in small quantities from a Middle Eastern grocer with high turnover or make it yourself; and always store it in a sealed container in the fridge.

Makes about 30g (1/3 cup)



INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons dried thyme (8 teaspoons)
- 1 tablespoon sumac (4 teaspoons)
- 1 teaspoon salt flakes
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds (4 teaspoons)

METHOD

1. Place thyme, sumac and salt in a spice grinder and blitz briefly. Set aside.
2. Place sesame seeds in a small frying pan over medium to medium-high heat and cook for a few minutes, stirring often, until lightly and evenly coloured.
3. Add thyme mixture and continue stirring for another minute or 2, until aromatic.
4. Remove from pan and set aside to cool.
5. Store in an airtight container in the fridge.