The Cupboard You Inherited

What to keep on the shelf, and the three things worth buying properly.

The shelf

Turmeric, cumin, coriander, mustard seed, fenugreek, curry leaves, one dried chilli.
Ghee, coconut oil, and a neutral oil for tempering.
Split yellow lentils, rice, and salt — everything else is a variation.

Worth buying properly

Whole spices, ground at home or in small quantities. Ground cumin is dust within a season.
Ghee that tastes of something. If it does not, it is butter pretending.
Curry leaves, fresh or frozen. Dried leaves are a rumour of the real thing.

One question to ask

When you cook a family dish, ask who taught the person who taught you.
The answer is usually the most interesting part of the recipe, and nobody has written it down.

From episode 03, Turmeric and Other Inheritances.