



Cranberry Creations

Versatile ruby-red cranberries are the jewels of fall cooking.

BY ROSLYN RALPH

Cranberries are one of the few fruits native to North America. The berries are harvested in the fall, so fresh berries are generally only available for a few months. But since the berries freeze well, it is a good idea to store a few bags for use all year round. Also, dried cranberries are available in the bulk section of most grocery stores all the time.

We tend to think of cranberries as being cooked into a sauce and served as an accompaniment to roast turkey. But there are lots of other uses for both fresh and dried cranberries. They can be added to baking, salads and vegetable dishes and to top off cereal or granola. The recipes below will just get you started.

Creamy Dried Cranberry Spread

Try this on a toasted bagel or slice of nutty whole grain bread. It is easy to make and delicious.

Ingredients

1/4 cup dried cranberries

1 8-oz. container low-fat cream cheese, at room temperature
1/4 cup soft goat cheese
2 Tbsp. plain yogurt
2 tsp. honey

Directions

Coat the metal blade of a food processor or blender with cooking spray to prevent sticking. Add cranberries and coarsely chop. Add cream cheese, goat cheese, yogurt and 1 tsp. honey and process till well blended. Taste and add remaining honey if desired. Transfer to a bowl, cover and refrigerate for up to three days. Makes about one cup.

Apple and Cranberry Pie

This is an interesting twist on traditional apple pie. This recipe adds dried cranberries to the filling for a bit of tartness. You can use your own favourite pastry recipe or keep things simple and use frozen prepared pastry shells.

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Filling Ingredients

1 cup dried cranberries
2/3 cup sugar
3 Tbsp. flour
1/4 tsp. cinnamon
1/4 tsp. nutmeg
2 lb. baking apples, peeled, cored and
thinly sliced
2 Tbsp. brandy
1 tsp. vanilla

Directions

Preheat oven to 375°F. Combine all filling ingredients in a large bowl and place in a prepared pie shell. Cover with pastry, sealing the edges. Brush the top of the pie with an egg wash of 1 large egg blended with 1 tsp. milk. Cut slits in top to allow steam to escape. Bake for about one hour until apples are tender and crust is brown. Allow to cool and serve at room temperature.

Cranberry Relish

No list of cranberry recipes would be complete without something to go with a bird. This relish is also nice served with a baked brie.

Ingredients

2 cups fresh cranberries, washed
1-1/2 cups sugar
1/2 cup cranberry juice
1/2 cup fresh orange juice
1 Tbsp. grated orange zest
2 Tbsp. orange liqueur (such as Triple Sec)

Directions

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan and cook over medium heat until the berries pop open (about 10 minutes). Discard any foam from the surface and transfer to a bowl. Cool to room temperature, cover and refrigerate. Makes about 2 cups. 🍁