

March 2023

CRANBERRIES – NOT JUST FOR THANKSGIVING:

Apple Cider and Cranberry Mocktails

Cranberry Corn Meal Springform Cake

Cranberry Ice Cream

Cranberry – Red Wine Sauce

**Sautéed Brussels Sprout Halves with Walnuts and
Cranberries**

**Tossed Salad with Mandarin Oranges, Dried Cranberries,
Brie, and Toasted Pecans with Onion–Celery Dressing**

**Wild Rice and Brown Rice Casserole with Dried
Cranberries, Dried Chestnuts, and Toasted Hazelnuts**



The classic foods of the American Thanksgiving are often characterized by some as the once-a-year dishes. Pumpkin pie has been the butt of ridicule such as “Nobody likes pumpkin pie. Thank heavens, Thanksgiving comes but once a year.” Sadly, cranberries seem to get the same lack of respect. I may have felt that way about turkey but never, never did I feel disdain for my custard pumpkin pie or the myriad of cranberry dishes I’ve eaten over the years. Pumpkins and cranberries both appeared in the

markets in October so if you were eating seasonally, as we did, you ate the foods of the harvest for Thanksgiving and Christmas. However, the year-round availability of whole cranberries frozen at the point of harvest and canned cranberry sauces has made this quite a different story. Americans do consume a lot of cranberries – about 400 million pounds annually. And, admittedly, 80 million pounds are consumed during the week of Thanksgiving.

I remember the “Thanksgiving with No Cranberries, aka The Great Cranberry Crash of 1959.” In November 1959, just three weeks before Thanksgiving, the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare under President Eisenhower, Arthur Flemming, became aware of and warned the public that traces of a carcinogenic herbicide amino tiazole, which had been banned for agricultural use in 1958, had been found in cranberry samples from Oregon and Washington. The contamination turned out to be small but the scare almost destroyed the cranberry industry. It did, however, prove an advantage to consumers in the long run as cranberry growers introduced cranberry juice drinks and dried cranberries.

In 2018, the Chinese, who love dried cranberries, were deprived of their treats by the effect of the twenty-five-percent tariff placed on the product as retaliation against the United States in the trade war initiated by President Trump’s tariffs against China. Again, cranberry growers faced massive surpluses.

Our shopping lists during this Covid pandemic have, by necessity, contained a much higher percentage of canned and frozen foods. I remember saying to Ray in February 2020 that we should stock up on canned cranberry sauces although we did have several pounds of cranberries in our freezer. Despite his skepticism, that nutritional decision proved to be a good one. The canned cranberry sauces provided us with another fruit source, another credible source of vitamin C, manganese, and antioxidants.

A bowl of cranberry sauce, however, would probably not have satisfied us. Fear not, there are lots of ways to introduce the nutritional stardom of cranberries into our menu plans. There is a Native American cranberry and black walnut sauce/dessert of which I am very fond (see *A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul*, vol. II, p. 672) and many from previous columns including favorites such as cranberry cream tart [recipe archives – November, 2018], individual cranberry molds with port wine [recipe archives – November 2019], Nor'easter [recipe archives – November 2018], cranberry puffed pastry with goat cheese [recipe archives – December 2020], and my cranberry strudel [recipe archives – December 2018].

Thanks to the high pectin content of cranberries, jellied cranberry sauce is a jellied option for vegans and vegetarians who do not use agar agar or gelatin. As a result, decorative cutouts can be cut with cookie cutters for garnishes; a new texture can be introduced to a menu. How about a large jellied cranberry sauce slice on a soy “turkey” cutlet burger? The contrast in texture, introduced by the jellied cranberry sauce, is remarkable.

APPLE CIDER AND CRANBERRY MOCKTAILS

TPT - 4 minutes

Freshly pressed apple cider is a special autumn taste treat that I have looked forward to since I was a small child growing up in New York State's apple country. Apple cider is not just freshly pressed, end-of-the-season apple juice. That slight fermentation that is allowed to occur, much less of course than in the making of wine, makes the difference. The taste of every apple is different and the combination of apple varieties can create an apple cider that is very distinctive. I remember my family traveling quite a distance every fall to a particular farm to pick up the apple cider that they liked best.



8 ounces apple cider—well-chilled
4 frozen whole cranberries
8.4 ounces sparkling cranberry drink—well-chilled*

Pour four ounces of apple cider into each glass. Add two frozen cranberries to each serving.

When you are ready to serve, add 4 ounces of sparkling cranberry drink to each glass. Fill with ice.

Serve at once.

Yields 2 individual servings

Note: *Sparkling cranberry drink is packaged in aluminum cans which chill quickly. It is dramatically refreshing. If the canned sparkling cranberry drink is unavailable in your grocery, four ounces of cranberry juice and 4 ounces of sparkling mineral water can be substituted.

A pitcher full of equal quantities of apple cider and cranberries and a bucket of ice with sparkling cranberry water on the side is a pleasant mocktail setup to provide for guests who may not wish to imbibe but do remember that one of the byproducts of fermentation is alcohol.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 0.0 g.; FAT = 0.0 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 27.0 g.;
CALORIES = 105; CALORIES FROM FAT = 0%

CRANBERRY CORN MEAL SPRINGFORM CAKE

TPT - 1 hour and 53 minutes;
1 hour = cooling period

This cake exploits our native North American foods, simply and deliciously. We enjoy this as a dessert cake or as part of a special holiday breakfast/brunch menu. Conveniently, this torte can be made the day before and refrigerated, covered, with little loss of quality.

6 tablespoons butter—softened to room temperature
6 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons fat-free pasteurized eggs
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1/2 cup unbleached white flour
1/4 cup fine yellow corn meal
3/4 teaspoon baking powder

**1/2 cup fresh cranberries—sorted, stemmed, rinsed,
and well-drained***

Sweetened whipped cream, for garnish, if desired

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare a **6 or 7-inch springform pan** by coating with non-stick lecithin spray coating. Dust *lightly* with white flour.

Using the electric mixer or food processor fitted with steel knife, cream butter until light and fluffy. Add sugar and continue to cream until again light and fluffy. Add pasteurized eggs and vanilla extract. Beat until well-blended.

While continuing to beat, gradually integrate flour, corn meal, and baking powder. Mix well. Turn cake batter into prepared springform pan, spreading it evenly to the edge of the pan.

Scatter cranberries over the cake batter. Press each cranberry *gently* into batter.

Bake in preheated 350-degree F. oven for 45-50 minutes, or until edge is *lightly browned* and a cake tester inserted into the center comes out clean. Transfer to a wire rack and allow to cool completely—about 1 hour.

Remove springform pan ring and transfer to a cake plate. Serve with or without sweetened whipped cream, as preferred.

Yields 6 slices



Note: *Frozen cranberries may be substituted when fresh berries are not available.

1/6 SERVING (exclusive of whipped cream) –
PROTEIN = 2.0 g.; FAT = 11.7 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 27.3 g.;
CALORIES = 184; CALORIES FROM FAT = 57%



CRANBERRY ICE CREAM

TPT - 8 hours and 45 minutes;
8 hours = freezing period

A cranberry sorbet may be refreshing but adding fresh cranberry purée to a basic French vanilla ice cream gives the tart cranberry a sweet vehicle to deliver its nutrition and its flavor. I offered this as a dessert at a summertime picnic. "I never think of cranberries in the summer," was the response. This ice cream is another very delicious reason to freeze cranberries in season so that you can extend the season.

1 1/2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries
3 tablespoons sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons water
1 teaspoon freshly grated, organic orange zest

2 cups heavy whipping cream

1 1/3 cups fat-free sweetened condensed milk
1/2 cup fat-free pasteurized eggs* (the equivalent of 2 eggs)
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract



In a saucepan set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat, combine cranberries, sugar, water, and orange zest. Cover. Allow to cook until *all* cranberries burst—about 12 minutes. Turn into the work bowl of the food processor fitted with steel knife. Process until smooth. Turn into a fine sieve set over a small bowl. Press cranberry purée through sieve into the bowl. Discard any residual debris. Set the purée aside briefly.

Prepare a **9 x 5 x 3-inch non-stick-coated loaf pan or other appropriate freezer container** by placing it in the freezer until required.

Using an electric mixer fitted with *chilled* beaters or by hand, using a *chilled* wire whisk, beat heavy cream in a *chilled* bowl until stiff. Set aside.

In a large bowl, combine sweetened condensed milk, pasteurized eggs, and vanilla extract. Stir to blend thoroughly. *Whisk-fold* stiffly whipped cream *gently*, but *thoroughly*, into egg–milk mixture.

Add prepared cranberry purée. Using a spatula, *lightly* swirl cranberry purée into base.

Pour mixture into chilled loaf pan or freezer container. Spread evenly. Cover tightly with aluminum foil. Freeze overnight or until firm—about 8 hours.

Leftovers should be returned to the freezer, tightly covered.

Yields about sixteen 1/2-cup servings

Note: *Because raw eggs present the danger of *Salmonella* poisoning, commercially-available pasteurized eggs are recommended for use in preparing this dish.

1/16 SERVING (i. e., per 1/2 cupful) –
PROTEIN = 3.3 g.; FAT = 9.8 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 19.7 g.;
CALORIES = 184; CALORIES FROM FAT = 48%

CRANBERRY – RED WINE SAUCE

TPT - 17 minutes

Sauces are generally supposed to quietly enhance another food but this sauce enters the scene with an attitude. The combination of dried and fresh cranberries gives this sauce texture and assertiveness and splendid color.

2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons finely chopped shallots

3/4 cup red wine
[We choose a Chianti Classico or a Pinot Noir or, maybe even, a Shiraz.]

2 tablespoons dried cranberries
2 tablespoons fresh or frozen cranberries
1/4 teaspoon freshly grated organic orange zest
1/4 teaspoon crushed, dried sage
Pinch salt
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1 1/2 teaspoons red wine
1 1/2 teaspoons corn starch

1 teaspoon butter

In a saucepan set over *MEDIUM* heat, heat oil. Add *finely* chopped shallot. Sauté until shallots are soft and translucent, *being careful not to allow shallots to brown.*

Add the 3/4 cupful wine, dried and fresh or frozen cranberries, grated orange zest, crushed, dried sage, salt, and black pepper. Allow to come to a boil while stirring constantly. Reduce sauce to about 1/2 cupful.



In a small dish, combine the 1 1/2 teaspoonfuls wine and corn starch. Stir until corn starch is in suspension. Add to cranberry sauce. Stir until sauce thickens. Remove from heat. Thin with red wine, if necessary. Stir in butter. Keep warm on a warming tray until ready to serve.

Yields about 1/2 cupful

Note: This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING (i. e., 2 tablespoonfuls) –
PROTEIN = 0.1 g.; FAT = 2.7 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 8.6 g.;
CALORIES = 59; CALORIES FROM FAT = 41%



SAUTÉED BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH CRANBERRIES AND WALNUTS

TPT - 15 minutes

Fresh Brussels sprouts, pinched right from the stalk, and frozen Brussels sprouts benefit from this simple but transformative treatment.

1 tablespoon butter
Pinch *dried* thyme leaves--crushed
12 Brussels sprouts—trimmed, halved,
and well-rinsed
12 *preservative-free* walnut halves



1/3 cup *whole berry* cranberry sauce

In a skillet set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat, melt butter with crushed, dried thyme. Add Brussels sprout halves and walnut halves. Cook, stirring frequently, until Brussels sprouts are tender and walnuts are lightly browned.

Add cranberry sauce. Cook, stirring constantly, until heated through. Turn into a heated serving bowl.

Serve at once.

Yields 2 servings

Note: This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/2 SERVING – PROTEIN = 5.7 g.; FAT = 11.0 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 23.9 g.;
CALORIES = 208; CALORIES FROM FAT = 48%



TOSSED SALAD WITH MANDARIN ORANGES, DRIED CRANBERRIES, *BRIE*, TOASTED PECANS, AND ONION–CELERY SEED DRESSING

TPT - 12 minutes

This is a very American adaptation of a British salad in which blueberries and hazelnuts are the stars; a salad we enjoy in the summer. As a refreshing compliment to an autumn or winter menu, we have introduced mandarin oranges, cranberries, brie, and toasted pecans to the same wonderful greens mixture.

ONION AND CELERY SEED VINAIGRETTE:

2 tablespoons chopped onion

1/4 cup *extra virgin* olive oil

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

1 1/2 teaspoons honey

1 teaspoon *Dijon* mustard with wine

3/4 teaspoon celery *or* lovage seeds

1/2 teaspoon sweet Hungarian paprika

1 1/2 cups torn soft lettuce leaves, such as Bibb or Boston
—well-washed and well-dried

1 1/2 cups torn red-leafed lettuce—well-washed and
well-dried

1/2 cup fresh, baby spinach leaves—well-washed
and well-dried

1 1/2 teaspoons tiny, fresh mint leaves—well-washed

1/2 cup canned mandarin orange sections—*very*
well-drained

2 tablespoons *dried* cranberries

1 ounce firm, ripe, natural *brie* cheese—cubed

1 1/2 tablespoons coarsely chopped pecans—toasted

Using the food processor fitted with steel knife, process onion until *very finely* chopped.

Add olive oil, vinegar, honey, mustard, celery or lovage seeds, and paprika. Process until smooth. Turn into a cruet.

In a salad bowl, combine bite-sized soft lettuce and red-leafed lettuce pieces, *baby* spinach leaves, and *tiny* mint leaves. Toss to mix well.

Scatter mandarin orange sections, dried cranberries, cubes of *brie* cheese, and *toasted* pecans over the top.

Serve into salad bowls or onto salad plates. Pass prepared *vinaigrette* to accommodate individual tastes.*

Yields 4 servings

Notes: *We, personally, prefer this salad without dressing.

This recipe may be doubled, when required.

1/4 SERVING (exclusive of dressing) –
PROTEIN = 2.4 g.; FAT = 15.6 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 11.9 g.;
CALORIES = 193; CALORIES FROM FAT = 73%



WILD RICE AND BROWN RICE CASSEROLE WITH DRIED CRANBERRIES, DRIED CHESTNUTS, AND TOASTED HAZELNUTS

TPT - 2 hours and 28 minutes;
30 minutes = grain soaking period

Wild rice is an unfortunate name for this wonderful grass grain since it is confusing to the cook new to the joys of this very American grain. Wild rice is the only grain native to North America and is far more nutritious than rice. To release its perfection of flavor and texture, it should not be cooked in the same manner as white and brown rices, although it does combine well with rice as in this recipe.

The combination of flavors in this casserole is complex and exciting. They celebrate the harvest.



1/4 cup raw wild rice*

1 tablespoon butter
1/4 cup chopped shallots

1 1/2 cups vegetarian stock of choice

1/4 cup long-grain brown rice
1/4 cup halved, *dried* chestnuts*

6 tablespoons *dried* cranberries*
2 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian flat-leafed parsley
1 tablespoon chopped fresh celery leaves
1 1/2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves
1/8 teaspoon poultry seasoning, or to taste
Freshly ground black pepper, or to taste
Additional vegetarian stock, if required

1/4 cup coarsely chopped, *additive-free* hazelnuts
—*toasted*

Prepare a **1-quart oven casserole**, with cover, by coating with non-stick lecithin spray coating.

Wash wild rice in several changes of *cool* water. Soak washed grain in *cool* water to cover for 30 minutes. Discard any kernels which float to the surface. Again, drain. Rinse again in several changes of *cool* water. Drain thoroughly.

In a skillet set over *MEDIUM* heat, melt butter. Add chopped shallots and sauté until shallots are soft, *being careful not to allow shallots to brown*.

In a saucepan with cover set over *MEDIUM-HIGH* heat, bring the 1 1/2 cupfuls of stock to the boil. Stir in rinsed and drained wild rice. Reduce heat to *LOW*, cover tightly, and cook *undisturbed* for about 30 minutes.

Add brown rice, *dried* chestnuts, and sautéed shallots. Cook covered for an additional 20 minutes.



Add *dried* cranberries, chopped parsley and celery leaves, thyme leaves, and black pepper. Combine thoroughly. Add additional stock only if necessary. Cover tightly and cook for about 7-10 minutes longer or until most of liquid has been absorbed.

Add chopped and *toasted* hazelnuts. Stir to combine. Turn into prepared casserole.** Bake, covered, in preheated 325-degree F. oven for 30 minutes. Remove cover and continue baking until stock has either been absorbed or evaporated, but *do not allow to dry!*

Turn into heated serving bowl before serving.

Yields 4 servings

Notes: *Dried cranberries and dried chestnuts are incredible flavor additions to dishes and can easily be a part of your larder if you have a dehydrator.

**This casserole can be prepared to this point early in the day or the day before and refrigerated until you are ready for the last step. Bring to room temperature before proceeding and be sure that there is enough stock in the casserole before baking.

When required, this recipe may be doubled.

1/4 SERVING – PROTEIN = 8.2 g.; FAT = 5.1g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 36.3 g.;
CALORIES = 224; CALORIES FROM FAT = 20%

*I think you will have to admit that cranberries
definitely represent an escape from the “boring.
Next month I thought perhaps we might look at
some alternatives to the bowl of greens.
Let’s sweep the “boring” from our winter lives together,*

Judy

Please note that all food value calculations are approximate and not the result of chemical analysis.

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