



Winter Holidays

Winter Warmth

DEEP NOURISHMENT. Winter is a time for deeply nourishing foods - slow-simmered stews brimming with root vegetables and grass-fed meat, fermented vegetables, sourdough bread served with grass-fed butter and cheese.

FOCUS ON WARMING SPICES. To combat winter's cold, emphasize warming spices in your meals - cinnamon, cloves, coriander seed, star anise. They're packed with antioxidants, support digestion and help warm you throughout cold winter days.

MINDFUL SWEETS IN BALANCE. Holiday sweets are tied to deep cultural and familial traditions. Celebrate and enjoy them. Try baking cookies made with sprouted grain flour or whole-wheat pastry flour. Use natural sweeteners, such as molasses, and plenty of dried fruit and spices.

GRACE AND REFLECTION. The dark days and closing of the year also offers an opportunity for grace and reflection. Treat yourself with grace and love, reflect on the year behind you and celebrate.



Mulling Spices

MAKES ABOUT 1 CUP

2 tablespoons whole cinnamon sticks (broken into pieces)
2 tablespoons whole allspice berries
2 tablespoons whole cloves
2 tablespoons dried orange peel (or zest from 1 large orange, dried)
1 tablespoon coriander seed
1 tablespoon whole star anise (about 2-3 stars)
1 teaspoon whole cardamom pods
1 teaspoon whole black peppercorns
1 teaspoon fennel seeds

Combine all the spices in a pint-sized mason jar. Shake the jar gently to distribute the spices. Store for up to 3 months.

To use, combine 1/4 cup to 1/2 cup mulling spices with 8 cups juice. Bring to a simmer over medium

Warming Spices + Winter

Winter spices like cinnamon, star anise, cloves, and coriander seed offer warming, circulatory-boosting properties. Their sweet, spicy notes spark warmth, support digestion, and nurture resilience—essential allies for staying grounded and well through the winter season.

Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum verum*): Warming, circulatory stimulant supporting digestion, blood sugar balance, and respiratory health.

Allspice (*Pimenta dioica*): Aromatic, digestive aid with anti-inflammatory properties; supports gut health and relieves bloating.

Cloves (*Syzygium aromaticum*): Antimicrobial, warming, soothes sore throats and supports digestion.

Orange Peel (*Citrus sinensis*): Uplifting, antioxidant-rich, supports digestion, immune function, and overall vitality.

Star Anise (*Illicium verum*): Warming, antiviral, and carminative; supports respiratory health and soothes digestive upset.

Cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*): Aromatic, digestive stimulant relieving gas and bloating, while promoting respiratory wellness.

Black Pepper (*Piper nigrum*): Warming, circulatory stimulant enhancing digestion, nutrient absorption, and metabolic health.

Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*): Cooling, carminative, aiding digestion, detoxification, and soothing inflammation.

Cherry-Apple Cider

MAKES ABOUT 2 QUARTS

1 quart tart cherry juice
1 quart soft apple cider
1 orange, sliced 1/4-inch thick
1/4 cup mulling spices

Pour the cherry juice and apple cider into a Dutch oven or stock pot, and then bring it to a boil over medium-high heat. Immediately turn down the heat to low, and then stir in the sliced orange and mulling spices. Simmer 30 minutes, and strain before serving.



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Sugar Plums

MAKES ABOUT 18

1 cup walnuts (coarsely chopped)
2 tablespoons finely grated orange peel
1 teaspoon ground ceylon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground coriander
pinch fine sea salt
1 cup chopped pitted dates
1/2 cup chopped dried apricots (preferably unsulphured Turkish apricots)
1/2 cup chopped pitted prunes
2 tablespoons honey
coarse sugar (for dredging)

Place walnuts, dates, plums, apricots, orange zest, cinnamon, coriander, and spices together in a food processor with a pinch of salt. Pulse until they're uniformly chopped and well-combined.

Turn out the fruit mixture onto your counter, and form them into small balls. Roll in sugar or coconut, and serve immediately. Store any leftovers in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days.

Visions of Sugar Plums?

Sugar plums, famously mentioned in Clement Moore's *A Visit from St. Nicholas* and Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*, aren't just sugar-coated plums. Their history reveals a centuries-old tradition far more complex and festive.

In 16th-century England, "plum" referred not only to the fruit but to anything sweet. Sugar, then rare and precious, was used to preserve fruits by simmering them in sugar syrup, much like today's candied ginger. A 17th-century cookbook described this method as the "most kindly" way to preserve summer fruits.

By the 18th century, candy makers used "panning," coating nuts, seeds, and spices in layers of hardened sugar. Sugar plums were often nuts preserved this way and flavored with coriander seed. This tedious process could take days, making sugar plums costly and reserved for special celebrations, particularly Christmas. Over time, the original panned sugar plums faded from popularity.

In the 1960s, a modern version emerged—spiced balls of dried fruit and nuts. Though quite different from the original, they still capture the spirit of festive sweetness tied to holiday traditions. Best of all, since they're made with dried fruit and nuts, they're rich in micronutrients and fiber - offering a healthier treat for the holidays than you might find on most cookie boards.