

MENASHA PUBLIC LIBRARY: SPICE OF THE MONTH CLUB



WHAT IS NUTMEG?

Nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*) is in the tropical evergreen tree family and the spice that is made of its seed. Nutmeg trees are native to the Molucca islands of Indonesia and the spice is mostly cultivated there and in the West Indies. Nutmeg trees may can grow up to 65 feet tall. They begin to yield fruit eight years after being planted, and can bear fruit for 60 years or longer. Nutmeg is a rather intense spice with a distinctive aroma that can be quite vibrant. Nutmeg can have hints of sweetness, but it its nutty spiciness is usually what dominates its flavor. People sensitive to certain flavors sometimes find nutmeg to be almost too spicy.

Nutmeg contains both antioxidant and antibacterial properties and its therapeutic uses have been known and used for centuries. Historically, grated nutmeg was used as a sachet filler, and Romans would used it as incense. Beginning in the early fifteenth century, nutmeg became highly prized as an expensive spice in the Western world. It was even the subject of Dutch plots to keep prices high as they sought to retain their nutmeg monopoly.

NOVEMBER

NUTMEG



8 TIPS FOR NUTMEG

- Nutmeg makes a great complement to many vegetables, most notably: parsnips, mushrooms and spinach.
- Freshly ground nutmeg is much more aromatic than the ground version. You can buy whole nutmeg (often sold in jars) and scrape it against the finest holes of a box grater or by using a microplane grater. Whole nutmeg can maintain freshness in a tightly sealed jar for several months.
- Nutmeg oil is often used in aromatherapy. Its most general application is for muscular aches and pains, but it can also be used for mood elevation and in hormone-regulation.
- Nutmeg is thought to stimulate the release of serotonin, which can help in the natural production of melatonin. It also contains significant levels of the relaxant magnesium. Try this nighttime drink before bed:
Combine $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp fresh nutmeg, a few drops of vanilla, and 1 cup milk on low and simmer until warm (not hot) for about 10 minutes. Add any sweetener of your choice.
- Nutmeg contains a poisonous narcotic called myristicin, which is responsible for its distinctive flavor and scent. The small amount included in the nutmeg that is needed to flavor a dish is perfectly safe; however. Keep nutmeg away from dogs, as any amount of nutmeg can be highly poisonous for them.
- Try this antibacterial treatment to help clear and soften skin. Stir together: 1 Tbsp honey, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cinnamon, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp freshly ground nutmeg. Apply to skin and rinse after 20 minutes.
- Nutmeg combines well with many kinds of cheese, which makes it a common and effective ingredient in cheese sauces and soufflé.
- Although more studies are needed, nutmeg has shown that it may offer some protection against blood clot formation.



Add Nutmeg to:

-Egg Dishes

-Cream-Based
Soups

-Savory Meats



Note: This information is meant to supplement, not replace advice from your healthcare provider and is not meant to cover all possible uses, precautions, interactions or adverse effects.

Sources Consulted: Encyclopedia Britannica; Consumer Health Complete; spiceography.com; Gale Health and Wellness; MasterClass

Nutmeg and Black Pepper Popovers

Courtesy of: bonappetit.com

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon finely grated nutmeg
- 3 large eggs
- 2½ cups whole milk
- 5 tablespoons melted unsalted butter, divided

Time:

Prep: 15 Minutes

Cook Time: 35 Minutes

Total Time: 50 Minutes



Directions:

1. Whisk flour, parsley, salt, pepper, and nutmeg in a medium bowl. Whisk eggs and milk in a large bowl until well blended. Gently whisk in flour mixture, followed by 3 Tbsp. butter (do not overmix).
2. Preheat oven to 425°. Grease 12 standard muffin cups with remaining 2 Tbsp. butter. Pour batter into prepared muffin tins, filling cups three-quarters full and dividing equally. Bake popovers until puffed, golden brown, and crispy around edges, 30-35 minutes. Using a thin knife or an offset spatula, remove popovers from pan. Serve immediately.
3. Do Ahead: Batter can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill.

Makes 12

1 popover contains: Calories (kcal) 160 Fat (g) 7 Saturated Fat (g) 4.5 Cholesterol (mg) 70 Carbohydrates (g) 17 Dietary Fiber (g) 0 Total Sugars (g) 3 Protein (g) 5 Sodium (mg) 520

Candied Pecans

Courtesy of: epicurious.com



Ingredients:

- 1 large egg white
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups pecan halves (8 to 9 ounces)

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 300°F. Brush large rimmed baking sheet with butter.
2. Step 2
3. Whisk egg white in bowl until foamy. Add sugar, spices, and salt. Whisk until mixture is thick and opaque. Add pecans; stir until coated. Using forks, transfer nuts to sheet, spacing apart; discard remaining coating.
4. Step 3
5. Bake nuts until deep golden brown, about 35 minutes. Cool completely on sheet. Transfer to container; cover and store at room temperature. (Can be made 4 days ahead.)

This recipe makes approximately two cups.