SPICE OF THE MONTH CLUB

Keller Public Library
SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

November 2021

Join us to discuss

11/30 @ 6:30pm / Meeting Room OR online

Spend the month cooking with your spice and join us to discuss your opinions, experiences, and recipes!

Zoom Registration: bit.ly/KPLSpiceNov

Sign up for our e-mail list

We'll send you notices when kits are ready to pick up, meeting reminders, and shared recipes!

Sign up: bit.ly/KPLSpiceMail

This month's spice: ALLSPICE!

History

Allspice is the dried and cured unripe berry of the tropical evergreen Pimento tree, which is native to Jamaica, Cuba, Guatemala, Honduras & Southern Mexico. The first record of allspice occurs in the journal of Columbus's first voyage to the Americas in 1492.

During the 17th century, allspice was valued as a meat preservative used on long sea voyages. The flavor of allspice was liked so well that its use endured even after its preservative qualities were no longer needed.

Because of its confusing name, allspice is frequently mistaken for a spice blend, but is a whole spice in and of itself.

Use

Allspice is found in many recipes for cakes & cookies, is found in many curry blends, & is widely used in the manufacture of tomato-based BBQ & pasta sauces. The flavor profile of allspice is similar to a peppery combination of cinnamon, cloves, juniper & nutmeg.

The Spice & Herb Bible (Third Edition) by Ian & Kate Hemphill
& AtoZ Food America by World Trade Press

Jamaican Jerk Chicken

This traditional chicken recipe is wonderfully spicy, smoky, and fragrant—everything you want jerk chicken to be. For best results, let the chicken marinate overnight so the seasoning has time to thoroughly penetrate the meat. The chicken can also be roasted in the oven if desired. Serves 8.

- **1 medium onion, coarsely chopped**
- **3 medium scallions, chopped**
- **2 Scotch bonnet chiles, chopped**
- **2 garlic cloves, chopped**
- **1 tablespoon five-spice powder**
- **1 tablespoon allspice berries, coarsely ground**
- **1 tablespoon coarsely ground pepper**
- **1 teaspoon dried thyme, crumbled**
- **1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 cup soy sauce**
- **1 tablespoon vegetable oil**
- **Two 3 1/2- to 4-pound chickens, quartered**

1. In a food processor, combine the onion, scallions, chiles, garlic, five-spice powder, allspice, pepper, thyme, nutmeg and salt; process to a coarse paste. With the machine on, add the soy sauce and oil in a steady stream. Pour the marinade into a large, shallow dish, add the chicken and turn to coat. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Bring the chicken to room temperature before proceeding.
2. Light a grill. Grill the chicken over a medium-hot fire, turning occasionally, until well browned and cooked through, 35 to 40 minutes (cover the grill for a smokier flavor) Transfer the chicken to a platter and serve.

Stuffed Acorn Squash with Allspice

For this stuffed acorn squash recipe, organic spices come together with apples, cranberries, and nuts for a savory-sweet stuffing. Serves 4.

- **2 small acorn squash, cut in 1/2 horizontally**
- **6 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided**
- **2 tablespoons light brown sugar**
- **1 small Granny Smith apple**
- **1 small Honeycrisp apple**
- **1/2 teaspoon Ground Cinnamon**
- **1/4 teaspoon Ground Nutmeg**
- **1/8 teaspoon Ground Allspice**
- **2 pinches sea salt + more for garnish**
- **1/4 cup chopped walnuts**
- **1/4 cup chopped pistachios + more for garnish**
- **1/4 cup chopped dried cranberries**
- **1 teaspoon Pure Vanilla Extract**
- **1/2 teaspoon Whole Poppy Seed**
- **Honey**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large glass baking dish, add 4 tablespoons of butter. To melt it, just pop into the oven while it preheats.
2. Slice 1/8 of an inch off the bottoms of each squash half so they will sit flat.
3. Once the butter is melted, sprinkle the brown sugar evenly on the bottom of the pan. Lay the squash face down (with the "bottom" facing up) so the exposed flesh touches the brown sugar butter mixture in the pan. Bake in your preheated oven for 40 to 50 minutes or until knife pierces easily.
4. Meanwhile, in a 10-inch skillet, melt the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter. Once melted and hot, add in the diced apples. Sauté for 8 to 10 minutes until soft, but still firm and textured. Add the spices and salt.
5. Remove stuffing mixture to a medium-sized bowl and add the chopped walnuts, pistachios and cranberries. Add the vanilla extract and poppy seeds, toss together until well combined.
6. Invert the baked squash onto a platter or individual plates. Spoon in some of the brown sugar and butter from the baking dish and drizzle it into the center and along the tops of the squash.
7. Fill the squash centers with the apple filling and top with more chopped pistachios and a drizzle of honey. Serve warm.

Hot Mulled Apple Cider

When heated, the particular blend of spices used in this recipe releases a wonderful aroma that coexists in perfect harmony with the sweet fragrance of apples. The result is a warm, spicy, and flavorful drink that's perfect on a chilly fall day. Serves 6.

- **½ cup brown sugar**
- **1 tsp whole allspice**
- **1 tsp whole cloves**
- **¼ tsp salt**
- **1 dash nutmeg**
- **3 small cinnamon sticks**
- **8 cups apple cider**

1. Combine the brown sugar, allspice, cloves, salt, nutmeg, cinnamon sticks, and apple cider in a large saucepan, and bring the mixture to a boil.
2. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 20 minutes.
3. Filter liquid through a strainer, discarding the solids.
4. Serve hot in large mugs. Garnish with whole cinnamon sticks.