

SPICE OF THE MONTH CLUB

January 2023

Join us to discuss

Tuesday, 01/31 / 6:00pm / Conference Room

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



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This month's spice: Cinnamon

History

References to cinnamon date back to 2,500 years to the land of the pharaohs, where what was referred to as cinnamon was used in the embalming process. In 1500 BCE the Egyptians voyaged to the "land of Punt" (present-day Somalia) to find precious metals, ivory, exotic animals, and spices, including cinnamon, which no doubt had reached there via Arab traders, because it didn't grow in Africa at that time.

Cinnamon trees, when allowed to grow in their wild state, can reach 26 to 56 feet and develop a girth of 12 to 24 inches. The flowers are pale yellow, small--around 1/8 inch in diameter--and have a somewhat fetid smell.



Use

The powdered form of cinnamon is most popular in Western countries when mixed with other ingredients to add flavor to cakes, pastries, fruit pies, milk puddings, curry powders, garam masala, mixed spice, pumpkin pie spice, and other spice blends. It complements fresh ingredients such as apples, pears, and bananas.

Total prep and cook time: 55 minutes

Yields 4 servings.

INGREDIENTS:

Koshari

Onion topping:

2 onions, sliced and halved

2 tbsp oil

Lentils and rice:

1 tbsp butter

1 tbsp oil

1 cup cooked Puy lentils

1 cup broken rice vermicelli

1 cup basmati rice, rinsed and drained

1 tsp ground cinnamon

1/2 tsp ground nutmeg

1/2 tsp fine sea salt

3 cups water

Tomato sauce:

1 14oz can of tomato
juice

1 clove garlic, minced

1/2 tsp fine sea salt

1 tbsp white vinegar

1/2 tsp ground cumin

1/2 tsp hot pepper flakes

STEPS:

1. Onion topping: In a skillet over low heat, heat oil. Add onions, cover with a tight-fitting lid and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft and translucent, about 20 minutes. Increase heat and cook for 5 to 10 minutes, stirring constantly, until dark and crisp. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels and set aside.
2. Puy lentils: rinse 1/2 cup lentils under cold running water and drain. In a saucepan over medium heat, combine lentils with 3 cups water and simmer until tender, 20 to 25 minutes. Drain and add to saucepan in the following step.
3. Lentils and rice: In a large saucepan, heat butter and oil. Add lentils, rice vermicelli, and rice and stir to coat well. Add cinnamon and nutmeg and cook, stirring constantly, for about 2 minutes, until fragrant. Add salt and water and bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for about 15 minutes or until all the liquid is absorbed and rice is tender.
4. Tomato sauce: Meanwhile, in a small saucepan over medium-low heat, combine tomatoes, garlic, salt, vinegar, cumin, and hot pepper flakes. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 10 minutes.
5. To serve, divide rice and lentils into 4 serving bowls and top each with a spoonful of tomato sauce and sprinkle with fried onions.

Apple and Cinnamon Teacake

Total prep and cook time: 30 minutes

Yields 1 9-inch cake.

INGREDIENTS:

Cake:

1/2 cup superfine (caster) sugar

1/4 cup butter

1 egg

1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour

1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tsp baking powder

**1 large cooking apple, peeled, cored,
and cut into 1/2-inch dice**

Topping:

1 tbsp superfine (caster) sugar

1 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tbsp butter, melted

STEPS:

1. **Cake:** In a mixing bowl, beat sugar and butter at high speed until light and fluffy. Add egg and mix to combine. Add flour, cinnamon, and baking powder and mix to combine. Mix in milk 1 or 2 tbsp at a time, until batter reaches dropping consistency. Pour into prepared cake pan and top evenly with apple, pressing fruit gently into batter. Bake in preheated oven for 20 to 25 minutes, until browned on top and a skewer inserted comes out clean. Remove from oven and set aside to cool in pan for about 5 minutes, then turn onto a wire rack to cool for an additional 5 minutes.
2. **Topping:** In a small bowl, combine sugar and cinnamon. Brush top of cake with melted butter, then sprinkle evenly with cinnamon-sugar mixture. Serve warm or cool. Cake will keep in airtight container for up to 3 days.

TIPS:

- Superfine (caster) sugar is a very fine granulated sugar typically used in recipes that require a faster-dissolving granule. If you can't find your own, you can make your own by using a food processor fitted with the metal blade to process granulated sugar into a very fine, sand-like consistency.
- While any apple will work, cooking apples, which are generally often not as sweet and generally hold their shape better, are best. Look for Braeburn, Honeycrisp, or Jonagold apples.
- Dropping consistency for cake mix is when a spoonful of batter falls easily back into the bowl within seconds.

French Toast Pancakes

Total prep and cook time: 25 minutes

Yields 9 serving.

INGREDIENTS:

2 tsp vegetable oil

1 cup all-purpose flour

1 tbsp white sugar

1 tsp baking powder

½ tsp baking soda

¼ tsp salt

1 pinch ground nutmeg, or to taste

1 pinch ground cinnamon, or to taste

1 cup milk

1 egg

2 tbsp vegetable oil

1 dash vanilla extract, or to taste

STEPS:

1. Heat 2 teaspoons oil in a griddle or skillet over medium-high heat.
2. Whisk flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt, nutmeg, and cinnamon together in a bowl; make a well in the center. Beat milk, egg, 2 tablespoons oil, and vanilla extract together in a separate bowl; pour into the well in the flour mixture and stir until batter is smooth.
3. Drop about ¼ cup batter per pancake onto the griddle and cook until bubbles form and the edges are dry, 3 to 4 minutes. Flip and cook until browned on the other side, 2 to 3 minutes. Repeat with remaining batter.

TIPS: These will turn out darker than normal pancakes because of the ingredients for the French toast flavor. They need a slightly more careful eye.