

# SPICE OF THE MONTH CLUB

December 2023

## Join us to discuss

*Tuesday, 12/19 / 6:00pm / Annex*

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: Ground Nutmeg

### History

Nutmeg is native to the Banda Islands of the Indonesian archipelago, which are also famously known as the Spice Islands. The spice had reached China, Asia, and India before the beginning of the Common Era. By 500 CE, nutmeg had arrived in the Mediterranean; during the Crusades it moved north into Europe, so that by the 13th century its use was widely known. Wars were fought for control over the islands where nutmeg grew until it was discovered that the trees could be grown in most tropical regions.

### Use

Nutmeg's warm, aromatic, full-bodied flavor complements a diversity of foods. Although predominantly sweet in character, it should usually be added sparingly. It has long been used in old-fashioned foods such as rice puddings and milkshakes, and it is included in cupcakes and cakes. Nutmeg also complements vegetables, especially, root vegetables, making microwaved or steamed potatoes, carrots, and squash delicious.



# Nutmeg Cake

*Total prep and cook time: 1 hour, 35 minutes*

*Yields 1 8-inch cake*

## INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups self-rising flour
- 2 cups lightly packed brown sugar
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon or cassia
- 1 tsp ground allspice
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- ½ cup butter
- 1 egg
- 2 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 cup milk

**TIP:** If you can't find self-rising flour in stores, you can make your own. To equal 1 cup self-rising flour, combine 1 cup all-purpose flour, 1 ½tsp baking powder, and ½ tsp salt.

Prepared in 8-inch round cake pan, greased and lined with parchment paper  
Baked in oven preheated to 350 F

## STEPS:

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, brown sugar, cinnamon, allspice, and coriander seed. Using your hands, rub butter into the mixture until it resembles coarse bread crumbs. Spoon half of the mixture over bottom of prepared pan.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together egg, nutmeg, and milk. Add to remaining flour mixture and stir well (it will make a very runny batter; stir thoroughly to avoid lumps). Pour batter over crumbs in a pan. Bake in preheated oven for 1 hour and 20 minutes or until golden brown and springy to the touch in the center. Remove from oven and cool in pan for about 5 minutes, then invert onto a wire rack to cool completely.

# Roasted Carrots with Thyme and Nutmeg

*Total prep and cook time: 30 minutes*

*Yields 4 servings*

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## INGREDIENTS:

6-8 large carrots, peeled and cut into uniform slices about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch thick (1  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 lbs.)

1 tablespoon olive oil (or any mild tasting oil)

1  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons fresh thyme leaves, roughly chopped (or  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon dried thyme)

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg

$\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon kosher salt

$\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon coarse ground black pepper, more to taste

## STEPS:

1. Preheat oven to 450°F.

2. On a rimmed baking sheet, toss all ingredients together.

3. Bake for 10 minutes, stir, and bake for 15-20 more minutes, or tender and golden brown.

# Nutmeg Cheesecake

*Total prep and cook time: 7 hours, 40 minutes*

*Yields 10-12 servings*

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## INGREDIENTS:

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

2 pounds fresh cream cheese, at room temperature

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

$\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon pure almond extract

1 teaspoon nutmeg

1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups sugar

$\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon salt

4 eggs

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup graham cracker crumbs (pulse whole graham crackers in a food processor)

## STEPS:

1. Thickly brush a 9-inch springform pan with 1/2 of the melted butter and place in the freezer to harden, about 10 minutes. When hard, repeat to make a thick coating of butter.
2. Adjust your oven rack to the lowest position and preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
3. In a mixer fitted with a paddle attachment (or using a hand mixer), beat the cream cheese until fluffy and very smooth. Beat in the extracts, nutmeg, sugar, and salt. One at a time, add the eggs, scraping down the bowl after each addition. Pour into the prepared pan and place the pan on a double-layer sheet of aluminum foil, with at least 3 inches of foil all around the pan. Fold the aluminum foil up around the sides of the pan.
4. Fill a roasting pan large enough to hold the cake pan with hot water to a depth of about 1-inch, then lift the foil-wrapped cake into the roasting pan, keeping the foil turned up so that it prevents water from overflowing or seeping into the cake. The foil should not be closed over the top of the cake. Be careful not to tear any holes in the foil!
5. Bake until the top of the cake is golden brown and dry to the touch, though still a bit soft in the center, about 1 1/2 hours. It should "shimmy" a bit when you shake the pan; it will firm up more as it cools.
6. Remove the pan from the water bath, remove the foil, and let cool at room temperature 15 minutes. Refrigerate, uncovered, 2 hours before removing the cake from the pan.
7. To remove the cake from the pan, first remove the sides. Cover the surface with plastic wrap. Place a large plate over the cake, then flip the cake over and onto the plate, tapping if necessary to help the cake come away from the pan bottom. If tapping doesn't do the trick, try a blow torch or stove burner to warm the bottom of the pan to loosen it.
8. Remove the pan bottom and evenly sprinkle the exposed surface with graham cracker crumbs. Place a serving plate over the crumbs and flip the cake again so that the crumbs form the bottom crust and the top is covered with plastic. Refrigerate, lightly covered, at least 3 hours or overnight before serving.