

FOOD SECTION

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Section II

Christmas Cooking with
Herbs & Spices

<p>Basil: An herb believed to have been used in the Christ Child's manger. Sweet fragrance enhances holiday fragrance. Duck, beef or lamb stew. Add to fruit compotes, stuffings, herb butters.</p>	<p>Nutmeg: Warm, aromatic, slightly bitter flavor perks up hot beverages, puddings, all your holiday baking. Seasons chicken, stew, soups, salads and vegetables.</p>	<p>Sage: Aromatic, slightly bitter flavor adds zest to cheese dips, pale, bland cream soups. A must for sausage. Rub ground sage on any meat roast and add a leaf inside whole fish before baking. Excellent in any stuffing.</p>	<p>Thyme: Used in biblical times for its clean, sweet smell as well as a flavor enhancer and believed to be part of the manger. Pungent addition to any fish—important in poultry and vegetable stuffings. Try with beans, beefs, carrots, onions or potatoes.</p>
Basil	Nutmeg	Sage	Thyme
<p>Cinnamon: Fruity sweetness and subtle warmth. Stick cinnamon is used as a muller for hot spiced holiday drinks. Ground cinnamon flavors cakes, breads, pies, fruits, puddings, souffles. Seasons pork, ham, stews, casseroles. Scents sachets or potpourri for holiday gifts.</p>	<p>Bay leaves: The dried leaf is used whole or ground. It has a bitter, pungent flavor, even stronger when crushed. Seasons beef, lamb, poultry, stuffings, vegetables and salad dressings. Add to game stews, salad dressing for tomatoes.</p>	<p>Rosemary: Often blossoms at Christmas. Use fresh or dried leaves and fresh logs for cooking and garnishing. Adds excitement to fruit cups, cheese creamed soups. Blends well with all meats and poultry. Excellent addition to squash and lentils.</p>	
Cinnamon	Bay	Rosemary	
<p>Allspice: Either whole or ground. For baked products, puddings and fruits, meat, fish, duck and eggs. Invaluable for mincemeat, pickles, relishes, preserves and chutneys. Use for sachets and potpourri as holiday gifts.</p>	<p>Mace: Smooth flavor more potent than nutmeg. Used in baked products, puddings, fruits, custards, candies, whipped cream. It enhances chocolate flavors particularly. Seasons meats, fish, poultry, gravies, sauces, vegetables, jellies, pickles, preserves and relishes.</p>	<p>Cloves: Whole cloves, stud ham, pork, pomanders used in spice bags for meat, stews, fruits, pickles. Ground cloves used in baked goods, dessert sauces, spiced fruits, meat, fish, stuffings, stews, meat sauces and some vegetables.</p>	<p>Ginger: Root spice with strong flavor. Crystallized or preserved ginger is a confection. Cracked or whole used in pickles, stewed fruits, baked products, urchins, froglets. Perks up most meats, fish and poultry.</p>
Allspice	Mace	Cloves	Ginger

You can recapture the spirit of the first Christmas in your own home this year with the flavor and fragrance of herbs and spices.

Many of the herbs and spices in use today were available in the Holy Land at the time of Christ's birth.

The herbs and spices of Christmas are not limited to frankincense and myrrh. Authorities believe many more were in wide use during biblical times as preservatives, flavor enhancers and fragrant antiseptics. It

is commonly accepted that at least six herbs—and probably more—were part of the original manger.

Your own nativity scene can be enhanced by including these herbs in the creche. Not only will it be more authentic, but your home will be filled with the same fragrance that permeated the manger, nearly 2,000 years ago.

If you don't have your own herb garden, you can purchase the nativity herbs from any nursery. Start

with Lady's bedstraw, an herb that used to be mixed with hay for the cattle and must have covered the bottom of the manger. Mix it with some pennyroyal mint and thyme for a clean, refreshing scent. Add rosemary and basil, which had been hung in the stable to purify the air, and the Christmas rose which blooms at Christmas with white, waxy blossoms.

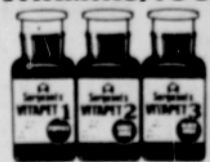
Herbs and spices also can be the basis of delightful Christmas gifts. For those on your list who love to make salads, make an herbal vinegar. A favorite recipe combines white wine vinegar with red opal basil leaves. Pour into a pretty, covered bottle and wait until the basil turns the vinegar a beautiful ruby red and releases its flavor. When the vinegar suits your taste, strain out the basil leaves.

A sachet bag that also repels moths is easily made with a 3 x 6-inch rectangle of pretty, porous material such as organdy, muslin or batiste. Sew up the two long sides with the wrong side of the fabric turned out. Sew down a hem on the open end. Turn the bag inside-out and thread a thin length of ribbon through the hem. Fill the bag with a mixture of Southernwood, rosemary and tansy, pull the ribbon to close the bag, knot and make a pretty bow. Voila! A sachet bag as practical as it is pretty.

Your own homemade gifts of food can be an exciting way to be remembered all year, and it's so easy. Herbal teas are extremely popular today, and you can prepare your own in just a few minutes.

For lemon tea, combine 9 tablespoons of dried lemon thyme with 1/2 tsp. of lemon balm and 3 tablespoons of dried lemon verbena. Cut the peel from a lemon, dry it out, grind and mix with the leaves. Add this mixture to 4 tablespoons of mild green tea and pack in a plastic bag. Makes 2 ounces or 36 servings. For gift-giving, tie a bow around the bag and place it in a pretty teacup and saucer.

YOUR DOG NEEDS VITAMINS, TOO.



Sergeant's
The Pet Care Specialist

Holiday Popcorn

1 cup unsulphured molasses
1 cup sugar
1 tablespoon butter or margarine
4 quarts unsalted popped corn

Combine molasses, sugar and butter in heavy 2-quart saucepan. Place over low heat and stir until sugar dissolves. Cook over medium heat without stirring until syrup, when dropped in very cold water, separates into threads which are hard but not brittle, or till candy thermometer reaches 270°F. Pour syrup over popped corn in a large bowl and toss with 2 forks to coat kernels. Immediately spread out onto waxed paper and separate into small clusters. Cool.

Healthy Child

Is your child alert, energetic and able to focus on a task for a period of time? All traits necessary for success in school and life. Or is your child's energy often scattered. Is he/she easily distracted from the task at hand? Easily angered? Often demanding or needing attention?

Find out how food affects the way your child behaves, how it can determine whether he/she is a joy to live with, or will succeed in school and life.

Come to Mariah Taylor's Pediatric Nurse Practitioner's Clinic, 5311 N. Vancouver Ave., at 7:30 Thursday, December 9th for a talk and discussion with Dr. Anand Arupo, a Naturopathic Physician practicing in Portland and Bend for the past two years, since her graduation from the Portland College of Naturopathic Medicine. Dr. Arupo also holds a Master's degree in counseling from Syracuse University, in Syracuse, New York. Before moving to Oregon from New York nine years ago, she worked as an elementary school teacher and high school counselor while raising three children, now between 17 and 22.

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