

CALLING ALL FOODIES!

The "MCL Spice of the Month Club" is a monthly "take-and-make" kit featuring a variety of unique spices, herbs, or blends. Included in each kit will be information about the featured spice, its history and fun facts, two simple recipe suggestions, and a small packet of the featured spice with enough for two recipes.

Once you have created your culinary masterpiece at home, we'd love you to share photos of your successes (and fails), opinions, tips, and love (or not) of the spice of the month on the Library's

Facebook page using:

@MukwonagoLibrary.

You can always email your pictures and thoughts to us at info@mukwonagolibrary.org

Spice of the Month Kits are free, but supplies are limited. Please, only one kit per household.



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SPICE *Of the Month* CLUB



Nutmeg

Nutmeg is a spice made from the seed of the nutmeg tree (*Myristica fragrans*), a native Indonesian evergreen tree that is the source of two popular spices: nutmeg and mace. Nutmeg is the inner seed, while mace is the red, lace-like substance that covers the seed.

Nutmeg is a quintessential autumn spice, frequently found in fall desserts and beverages. It can also be used in savory dishes, and pairs well with cream- or cheese-based recipes. Nutty and slightly sweet, nutmeg is an intense spice that has a strong and distinct aroma.

To make nutmeg for seasoning, the nutmeg seeds are dried gradually in the sun over a period of six to eight weeks. During this time, the nutmeg shrinks away from its hard seed coat. The spice is ready when the kernels rattle in their shells when shaken.

FUN FACTS

- Nutmeg has been used since at least the 1st century A.D.
- It was considered a treasured spice. The Dutch conquered the Banda Islands, which ended in a massacre, to monopolize the nutmeg trade.
- When consumed in large amounts, nutmeg has psychoactive effects and is reported to be a hallucinogen.

Homemade Wassail



*Prep Time: 5 min.
Cook Time: 30 min.
Servings: About 10*

Wassail is a hot mulled cider with Nordic roots. It's traditionally enjoyed during wassailing, which is the ancient Yuletide practice of singing door-to-door. The ritual began as a way to ensure a good cider apple harvest for the following year and it persists today (in the form of caroling).

INGREDIENTS

- 2 apples
- 8 cups apple cider
- 2 cups orange juice
- 1/3 cup lemon juice
- 4 cinnamon sticks
- 15 whole cloves, (or 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves)
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 Tablespoon light brown sugar (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Poke the whole cloves into the apples on all sides.
2. Add all of the ingredients, including the apples, to a large pot over medium-low heat.
3. Bring to a simmer. Simmer for 30-45 minutes.
4. Remove the apples and whole cloves. Ladle into mugs and enjoy!

Note: *While this recipe contains no alcohol, traditional wassail is often served with an added splash of brandy, bourbon, rum, or whiskey, to taste.*

Recipe Source

www.tastesbetterfromscratch.com

Candied Pecans

*Prep Time: 15 mins.
Cook Time: 1 hour
Servings: about 20*

Candied pecans. The very mention sort of makes you stop whatever you're doing and get in the holiday spirit. Salty yet sweet, crisp yet tender, and confoundingly impossible to stop eating at just one handful. Made with sugar and spice—specifically cinnamon and nutmeg—and everything nice, these are a must for the holidays.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 large egg white
- 1/2 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 tablespoon water
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 pound raw pecan halves

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 250°F. Butter a rimmed baking sheet.
2. In a bowl, beat the egg white, vanilla, and water just until very frothy. In a separate bowl, combine the sugar, salt, cinnamon, and nutmeg.
3. Add the pecans to the egg-white mixture and gently toss to coat. Transfer the nuts to the sugar mixture and toss to coat. Spread the nuts evenly on the baking sheet.
4. Bake for 1 hour, stirring every 10-15 minutes. Watch the pecans carefully during the last 15-20 minutes of cooking for doneness. The nuts should be a lovely golden brown, crunchy, and evenly coated with the hardened sugar coating when they come out of the oven.
5. Store the pecans in an airtight container in a cool, dry place for up to 2 weeks.

Recipe Source

www.leitesculinaria.com