

Cranberry

By Kami McBride

This tangy red fruit that makes it to the thanksgiving table is the perfect food for this time of year. Cranberries are loaded with vitamin C and help to ward off colds and flu. They help boost the immune system and can help keep the body strong during the cold months. They are of course a very bitter fruit, so find a way that you like to prepare them and eat them as part of your winter health program. Cranberries make a great chutney or relish that tastes good on more than just turkey! We mix cranberry chutney into rice and put it on sandwiches.

Cranberries contain high amounts of antioxidants that help protect against heart disease and cancer. Cranberries are one of the fruits with the highest known antioxidant content. Anti-oxidant foods have been shown to protect the body against cardiovascular disease. More Americans die of heart disease than anything else. Think of your cranberries as food for the heart.

Anybody that suffers from Urinary tract infections or cystitis knows that cranberries are their ally. Cranberries also reduce other infections by blocking different bacteria from sticking in other areas of the body as well. Bacteria in the urinary tract, stomach and mouth have been shown to be inhibited by the presence of cranberries. They are also a general tonic to the kidneys and urinary tract. Cranberry tea is also a good remedy for mild nausea.

If for some odd reason you don't eat your cranberries fresh or would like to save them for tea to drink through the winter, they store well frozen. Just put them in a zip lock freezer bag or a mason jar in the freezer. They last for about 8 months this way.

Cranberry Tea

1 cup water

1 cup crushed cranberries

Bring water and cranberries to a boil; turn off the heat and let sit for one half hour. Add honey to sweeten and enjoy this health enhancing beverage. Add 1 cup of lemonade to make this into a holiday beverage or just enjoy the tea and its antibacterial properties as a general tonic promoting winter wellness.

Herbal Cranberry Chutney

2 cups fresh cranberries

1 orange

Handful of chopped dates

½ cup agave nectar or sugar source of choice

¼ cup orange juice

¼ cup apple cider vinegar

1 small finely chopped onion

1 tablespoon grated ginger

1 teaspoon finely chopped sage leaf
1 tablespoon finely chopped chives
1 tablespoon finely chopped savory

If your thanksgiving cranberry dish still comes from a can....try this instead!!

Cranberry Jalapeno dip

4 cups fresh finely chopped cranberries
¾ cup finely chopped cilantro
½ cup agave nectar or other sugar source of choice
¼ cup minced green onions
3 tablespoons lime juice
2-3 tablespoons finely minced jalapeno peppers
2 tablespoons grated fresh ginger root
1/8 teaspoon sea salt

Mix everything together, let it sit for several hours before serving. Pour over a block of cream cheese and serve with crackers

This is an unusual favorite that you will find at our table every year during the holidays

Kami McBride has taught herbal medicine since 1988. Through her herb classes and personal wellness consultations she provides people with the tools to create a sustainable approach to their health care. Kami has helped thousands of people learn to use herbs in their daily lives in ways that are healthy, safe and fun and she teaches classes in herbal medicine and women's health at her school and herb gardens in Vacaville, California. She can be reached at 707-446-1290 or www.livingawareness.com