

FOOD & FAMILY

Compatible Spices Add Distinctive Flavor

Have you often wondered what makes the same recipe you fixed last week for the family taste so elegant and unusual when served at a friend's house? More often than not the distinctive flavor may be traced to the courageous use of compatible spices displayed by your friend.

A more all-inclusive term for spices and herbs might well be "food accessories," for usually these are used to add flavor or seasonings that often lend distinction to the most mundane menus.

Salt is the most indispensable of these flavorings and is used extensively in food processing and preservations as well as in home cookery.

In the case of supermarket and everyday home use, the term spice has come to mean any herb or condiment, whether it is leaf, stem, or seed of plants yielding flavorings.

Most spices used in this country are imported, but many homes now have spice gardens and the interest in home grown spices seems to be spreading each day. Sage, dill, parsley, thyme, basil, mint and marjoram may be grown easily from seeds in your own home garden.

Whether of the home-grown or grocery store variety, spices contain certain volatile materials known as

essential oils which impart characteristic odor and flavor. Because these are volatile, air and light may destroy some flavor unless care is taken in storage. For this reason always store spices in closed containers in a semi-dark area of the kitchen.

Most spices have a romantic history and source of origin. It is well known that countries have been discovered and wars fought in search of spices. These offered great wealth to the man who held control at the source. With modern methods of marketing, spices have become most available and abundant; just take a peek at your grocer's shelf! If the amount of different spices only confuses you, here is a suggested list of basic spices for home use.

Allspice, bay leaves, celery seed, cinamon, cloves, dill weed, garlic, ginger, marjoram, mint, nutmeg, oregano, paprika, parsley, pepper, sage, thyme, and tarragon. With these on hand almost any recipe calling for spice may be prepared and you can develop new and even more exciting flavors by experimenting. When in doubt, consult a reputable spice chart or call one of us on the Home Service staff at the Southern California Gas Company.



WINNING COOK is Mrs. William M. Yeager of 5517 Beran St., whose recipe for Kidney Bean Stew combines a double-protein meal of beans and beef with the unusual flavor of onion soup mix and Okra. Mrs. Yeager will receive \$5 for submitting this week's "Cook of the Week" recipe. —PRESS Photo

Homemade Pies Take to Freezing

By BEA WEBB

The big freezer of your modern gas refrigerator will be a real help in preparing for the dinners ahead. Frozen food can be purchased quite far in advance. And, you can make and freeze some of the dishes.

Good old-fashioned mince and pumpkin custard pies are always popular desserts. For truly homemade pies, prepare them your self and freeze them. Apple pies or a combination of apple and cranberries are excellent too. All you do is to make up the pies as you ordinarily do (omit cutting openings in top of two crust pies) and freeze them, without wrapping, until they are firm. Then wrap the pies in moisture-vapor proof freezer paper or aluminum foil and return them to the freezer.

Pies made for freezing should be made in pans of heat-treated glass, metal or baking paper. Since they need not be thawed before baking, they can go straight

from the freezer to the oven. At baking time, simply un-drap the pies, cut steam openings in top of two crust pies, and put them in the oven to bake. Only the baking time should be increased compared to baking unfrozen pies, but not the temperature. If you decide to thaw the pies before baking leave them wrapped until time to put them in the oven.

OLD FASHIONED PUMPKIN PIE

- 1 1/2 C. pumpkin
 - 1 C. brown sugar
 - 3/4 tsp. ginger
 - 1 tsp. cinnamon
 - 2 Tbsp. molasses
 - 1/2 tsp. salt
 - 3 eggs, slightly beaten
 - 1 C. evaporated milk
- Mix in order given. Let pie mixture stand an hour or longer if time permits (this allows flavor to blend and helps prevent shrinkage.) Pour mixture into a 9-inch unbaked pie shell. Bake in modern gas oven at 425 deg. for 45 minutes.

Idaho Potatoes Make Nest for Newburg

Now is the time to enjoy those famous Idaho-grown Russet Potatoes and huge delicate - flavored Sweet Spanish Onions—abundant, economical, and of their usual high quality. While you are shopping for these bargains, do note the Quick Idaho Potato Products on your grocer's shelves and in the freezer cases. New ones are joining the old stand-bys. These handy foods are of the same fine flavor and quality of potato you find under the skin of your favorite "Idaho."

STUFFED BAKED "IDAHOS" WITH CRAB NEWBURG

Bake the desired number of even-sized potatoes, scrubbed but not oiled, in a 400 to 450 degree F. (hot) oven to make a crisp skin. Test for doneness with a thin skewer, so skin will not be marred. When tender, roll each in mitted hands. Cut off top or in half, depending on size. Scoop out potato; prepare as for mashed potatoes, using hot milk and butter. Pile the mashed potato lightly into each shell, hollowing out the center to build up sides, thereby leaving a "dosh" to house the Crab or Lobster or Shrimp Newburg, Chicken a la King, or even creamed dried beef. Just before serving time, place potatoes on a heat-proof platter. Brush tops with melted butter. If desired, sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese. Bake in a 375 degree F. (moderately - hot) oven until tops are golden

and the potato inside the shell is sizzling hot. Fill shells with desired creamed mixture. Good served with a jellied tomato salad and

FRENCH-FRIED SWEET SPANISH ONION RINGS

For batter combine in flour sifter 1 cup sifted flour, 1 teaspoon baking powder, 1/4 teaspoon salt. In deep bowl, beat 1 egg until thick and lemon-colored. Add 1 cup milk, 1 tablespoon vegetable salad oil. Stir in sifted ingredients, beating until smooth. For Onion Rings, slice 3 large unpeeled Idaho Sweet Spanish onions about 1/4-inch thick. Peel slices. Separate into rings. Take out the end pieces and centers to chop and freeze, easily done by spreading on a cookie sheet. Freeze quickly. Place loosely in jars or freezer containers. As much as is needed may be taken out.

To fry onion rings, heat shortening or oil about three inches deep in deep-frying kettle to 375 degrees F. Dip a few onion rings at a time into the batter so that each ring is completely covered, using a long-handled two-tined fork and letting drain a second before dropping into heated oil. (Easier not to use a deep-frying basket.) Fry until golden-brown. Lift out with second long-handled fork; drain on paper toweling. Sprinkle lightly with salt. Serve hot. These fried rings may be kept hot by placing in a 325 degree F. (moderately-slow) oven until all rings are fried. Keep in single layer.

Fresh Yeast Imparts Homemade Smell to Bread

Happy the home where the fragrant aroma of fresh baked bread is an old friend; it's a smell so distinctive, it just says "home!" If home-made yeast bread is a stranger to your family, why not plan to strike up a friendship soon?

Probably the most important single ingredient in making bread is the yeast. There are two kinds available — fresh, compressed yeast and dry, granular yeast. Be certain to use yeast before the date stamped on the package. If not fresh, yeast will not react fully to make the dough rise high and light.

The growing process of yeast is started by dissolving it in lukewarm water. Hot water may destroy the yeast, and cold water will slow its growth. Temperature is equally important during the rising period; bread rises best in a draft free, warm place.

If milk is used for the liquid in making yeast bread

the nutritive value of the bread is increased; liquid milk should be scalded before adding to the mixture to destroy undesirable enzymes and to keep bread fresher longer. If using non-fat dry milk, simply measure and add to the other dry ingredients. No need to scald; no extra dishes either!

After mixing, the dough must be kneaded to develop the yeast action further, distribute the ingredients and make the dough light and elastic. To knead, turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and gently pat it until it forms a slightly flattened ball.

Place fingers on edges and bring the far edge of dough up toward you. Press down and away from you with the heels of your hands in an even rolling motion. When little blisters of air are evenly distributed under the surface of the dough and it feels smooth, the dough has been kneaded enough.

Fruit Salads Perk Up Dinner Parties

A delicious fruit salad will give sparkle and zest to any late winter dinner menu. Whether you're serving turkey, ham, goose, or roast of beef the fruit flavor will whet the appetite for the fine feast at a dinner party.

PERKY PEARS

To color the pears, drain the juice from canned pears into a saucepan, add flavoring and food coloring, heat to boiling and pour over pears. Let stand a day or two in the refrigerator so the fruit will absorb flavor and color. Use mint flavoring and food coloring for green pears — red cinnamon candies and red food color for red fruit.

To use tinted pears for salad, put two small pear halves together with a mixture of cream cheese, chop-

ped nuts and a little mayonnaise. Stand them in cups of crisp lettuce.

SPICY APRICOT MOLDS

- 1 2 1/2 lb. can apricot halves
- 3/4 C. vinegar
- 1 tsp. whole cloves
- 2 pieces stick cinnamon
- 1 pkg. orange flavored gelatin

Drain syrup from apricots into a sauce pan. Add vinegar and spices. Bring to a boil. Add apricots and simmer gently for 10 minutes. Remove apricots and place in six to eight individual molds. Strain syrup, measure and add hot water to make two cups. Pour over gelatin and stir until dissolved. Cool gelatin mixture until syrupy. Pour over apricots. Chill until firm.

ROSY CINNAMON APPLES

- 1 1/2 C. sugar
- 1 1/2 C. water
- 1/2 C. red cinnamon candies
- 6 to 8 Johnathan apples

Put sugar, water and candies into a saucepan. Cook, stirring frequently, over low flame until candies are dissolved. Bring syrup to a boil and boil five minutes. Core and peel apples. Put apples, a few at a time, into syrup and poach gently until tender. Put apples into a shallow bowl. Add red food coloring to syrup and pour over apples. Cool and chill several hours or overnight. Turn apples occasionally so they will color evenly. To serve apples as salad, drain and fill center with a mixture of cream cheese, nut meats and mayonnaise. Place in crisp lettuce cups.

Breakfast Basic To Proper Health

By BEA WEBB

It makes good sense to start the day with a good breakfast; it has been a long time since last night's dinner and food is needed.

It's very difficult to eat all the important foods needed each day if you skip or skimp on breakfast. Children and adults alike need to break the night-long fast in order to meet energy needs as well as nutritive requirements.

If your family has fallen into bad breakfast habits, waste no time in giving that meal some extra attention. New dishes added to the menu now and then will provide increased interest and make breakfast a favored meal.

BUTTERMILK PANCAKES

- 2 1/2 C. sifted flour
 - 1/2 tsp. salt
 - 1 1/4 tsp. soda
 - 2 Tbsp. sugar
 - 2 1/4 C. buttermilk
 - 2 Tbsp. melted shortening or salad oil
 - 1 egg, well beaten
- Sift flour, salt, soda, and sugar into bowl. Add buttermilk and melted shortening



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or oil to well beaten egg. Stir liquid mixture into dry ingredients. Mix thoroughly. Bake pancakes on lightly oiled heated griddle.

ORANGE BUTTER SAUCE

- 3/4 C. powdered sugar
 - 2 Tbsp. soft butter
 - 1 tsp. grated orange rind
 - 1 to 2 Tbsp orange juice
- Blend sugar into butter.

Stir in orange rind and orange juice. Use enough orange juice to make desired consistency.

FRIED RICE JACKS

- 1 C. uncooked long-grained white rice
- 1 1/2 tsp. salt
- 2 C. water
- 2/3 C. milk
- 1 tsp. sugar
- Flour
- Bacon drippings

Put rice, salt and water into a 2 qt. saucepan. Bring to a vigorous boil on the automatic top burner set at 225 deg. or over high flame. Turn flame very low or set automatic top burner at 210 deg., cover pan and simmer 15 minutes. Stir in milk and continue to simmer over low flame (or 210 deg.), stirring frequently, until milk is absorbed, about 12 minutes. Stir in suar. Pack into a well-greased loaf pan. Cover. Chill thoroughly. Loosen molded rice from pan and turn out onto a platter or bread board and cut into slices with flour and fry in bacon drippings until browned on both sides. Serve hot with butter and syrup.

New Condiment Developed Here

A meat manager of a local market who cares as much about how the meat tastes when it gets to the table as he does about its condition when the housewife purchases it recently developed a new condiment intended to enhance flavor.

Developer of "Chef's

Blend," new flavor-extender, is Bill Clawson of Farmer Boys Market, Carson and Figueroa Streets.

Ideal for barbecuing, pan frying, and oven cooking, Chef's Blend can be used on all meats, poultry, fish, soups, salads and sauces, according to Clawson.

A blend of spices and herbs from the old world, the condiment uses very little salt. Development of the product took several years. Ingredients contained in addition to spices and herbs are flour, corn meal, sugar, salt, and monosodium glutamate.

Devised to reduce meat shrinkage, Chef's Blend seals in natural juices, reduces cooking time, tenderizes, and adds an exotic flavor to all foods.

ARABIAN PAGEANT

CASTING has begun for the Arabian Nights Pageant, a free nightly presentation at Riverside County's National Date Festival at Indio, a musical called "Tale of the Magic Carpet."



BILL CLAWSON

COOK OF THE WEEK

A casserole one-dish meal rich in protein with an unusual flavor is kidney-bean stew, this week's winning recipe. The bean-beef base owes its flavor to a unique combination of tomatoes, onion soup mix and okra. Contributor is Mrs. William M. Yeager who receives \$5.

KIDNEY BEAN STEW

- 1 lb. ground beef (chuck or round)
 - 1 envelope onion soup mix
 - 2 cups stewed tomatoes (1 lb. can)
 - 1 cup okra (drained)
 - 1 1/2 cups sea shells (a macaroni product)
 - 2 cups kidney beans (1 lb. can)
 - 1 Tablespoon bacon grease
 - 4 pieces of bacon (cooked and broken up)
- Brown ground beef (small chunks) until fat cooks out,

drain meat. Add 1/2 cup water and one envelope of onion soup mix, stir until dissolved. Add two cups stewed tomatoes, 1 cup drained Okra and one T. bacon grease, mix thoroughly. Cook for 15 minutes over medium low heat, stirring occasionally.

In separate pan cook 1 1/2 cups of sea shells until done, drain and add to mixture. Add bacon pieces, then stir mixture thoroughly. Season with salt and pepper to taste. A small amount of chili pepper may be added. Mix in two cups kidney beans. Don't break up beans; just heat and check seasoning.

Serves six generously. Enter your favorite original recipe in our food and family contest. Weekly winners will receive \$5. Submit entries to Gourmet Editor, Torrance Press.