



The Monthly Newsletter of the Plymouth Place Dining Services, Life Enrichment & Wellness Departments

Nutrition News You Can Use

Preparing for Thanksgiving and Holiday Traditions

by Janet Budnick, RD

Most winter holidays are centered around food, the process of cooking the food, the glorious smells coming from the kitchen. Whatever your tradition, this is the start of a few holidays teeming with tradition. Main fare for Thanksgiving is roast turkey, cranberry sauce, stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy, sweet potatoes, Brussels sprouts, green bean casserole, and, of course, pumpkin pie for dessert. Some other traditions include adding cornbread, sweet potato pie, pecan pie, salads with cranberries and oranges, gelatin mold, etc.

Right before the meal begins, giving “thanks” or saying a family prayer will gather the group together. They may be asked, “What are you grateful for this year?” and everyone gives their

response. After the meal, everyone has overeaten to the maximum fullness, more than they have eaten in weeks! Then some families watch football. They play games. They take a nap or listen to music.

The highlight was truly the food. But it’s never too late to start new traditions! Consider participating in a Turkey Trot. Serving at a Food Pantry. Break the wishbone for “good luck” and take a walk after dinner. Volunteer your time at a nearby event.

The season of giving has just begun. I am grateful for everything I have, and I can give of my time, my helping hands, my smile to others who may not have smiled for a long time. New traditions are born out of thanks and giving. **PP**



November 2023 Wellness Notes & Trends

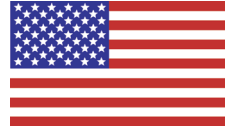
Balance Clinic –

Are you interested in learning more about your balance? On November 10, David and Stefanie will be using VirtuSense to conduct balance assessments for anyone who is interested.

We will be in the Lower Level Promenade from 12:30-2:00pm. If you have any questions, please reach out to either David (708-482-6777) or Stefanie (708-482-6775). We’re looking forward to seeing you there!

Dancing in Easter Learning Center –

Did you know that we offer various dance classes? Every Tuesday at 11:15am, there’s Line Dancing. Wednesdays at 11:30am, Dance Aerobics. And every Wednesday and Friday at 1pm, Muscles in Motion. All these classes take place in the Easter Learning Center and can be modified to accommodate residents with walkers and canes. In other words, all are welcome and we’d love to have you! **PP**



Cranberry Love

by James P. DeWan

Sure, you may say you love cranberries, but, do you really? Obviously, come Thanksgiving, cranberry sauce is on pert near every table from Meddybemps, Maine to Zzyzx, California. Skilled home cooks take pride in updating grandma's recipe with locally harvested, organic cranberries. Their fancy pants sauces are fortified with fresh pears or shelled pecans and boozified with brandy, Grand Marnier or red wine. And oh, how the guests tuck in to its gooey, alleged goodness.

Here's my question, though: If it's that good, why don't we eat it year 'round? The dedicated locavores will jump quickly on the seasonality bandwagon, but, seriously, who are we kidding about the limited availability of fresh cranberries? We've got red ripe tomatoes in January and just last month I grilled some beautiful asparagus. Asparagus in October, for cry Pete!

No, I'm guessing our devotion to the treacly rubescence is as much cultural as it is gustatory. That would explain, at least in part, the continued affection—at least as far as the overly hip whippersnappers are concerned—for the canned (and quite frankly, solid) cranberry sauce. (Why do they even call that product a sauce, one has to wonder? Aren't sauces by definition liquid? Name another sauce that's carved into rounds and laid on the plate like a shimmering, gelatinous coaster. No one ever asks, "Another slice of gravy, Madge?")

Now, before you accuse me of denouncing Cranberry and all his works, remember that I have proselytized to all who'll listen (and many who won't) that the only universal truth is this: There's no accounting for taste. I may care naught for cranberry sauce myself in any of its maleficent forms, but, truthfully, if you're going to the trouble of making me dinner, I'd be just as cheerful with a slice from the can as I would with grandma's boozy heirloom recipe.

And, of course, you know that the folks at the CCCGA and the WCREG (that's the Cape Cod Cranberry Growers Association and the Wisconsin Cranberry Research & Education Foundation—as if I need to tell you that! We'll just call them "Big Cranberry.") are all about wanting you to know how healthy cranberries are. "Filled with Vitamin C," they crow. True, cranberries have Vitamin C, exactly

23.5 milligrams per 8-ounce glass, according to our friends at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Sounds like a lot. Until you realize that an equal portion of orange juice has 124mg, more than five times the amount that's in cranberry juice. Wow.

Okay, but, what about all those urinary tract infections we've been drinking all that cranberry juice for all these years. (And no, I don't know why we have to talk about urinary tract infections in a food column, but, apparently, I just can't stop myself. Forgive me.) Turns out, the research indicates it doesn't actually help, no matter what Big Cranberry says. Admittedly, some research suggests that consumption of cranberries may reduce the likelihood of contracting said malaise, so maybe there is something to that old saw about a cranberry a day keeping the doctor away.

Oh, and, listen to this: If you've ever made cranberry sauce, you know that it has a lot of sugar—typically nearly as much by weight as the cranberries themselves. That tells you that cranberries are very, very sour. And they're bitter, too. Have you ever tasted pure, unadulterated cranberry juice? Talk about a rough draught. If you haven't tasted it, well, remember that look that Margaret Dumont used to give Groucho Marx? Imagine that look as a fruit juice.

And that sour bitterness is why most of the time, when you're drinking cranberry juice, you're actually drinking cranberry juice cocktail. But, get this: Cranberry juice is so sour that, in order to make it palatable, by the time you've turned it into cranberry juice cocktail, it has more sugar than Coca Cola!

So, why do we even bother with our ruby red friend? For the simple reason that we like cranberries. We like them dried (called craisins). We like them in bread. We even like the sauce (not too much, mind you—maybe just a couple times a year). And we like that sugary cranberry juice cocktail and the excellent actual cocktails it's used in, like a sea breeze (with vodka and grapefruit juice) or a cosmopolitan (with vodka, triple sec and lime juice).

My advice, then, is to enjoy cranberries while they're in season (now) and, as long as you know what's in all those beverages, enjoy some cranberry juice cocktails. And have an excellent Thanksgiving. **PP**

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17TH:

ROMEO's: Destination TBD. Meet in the Lobby at 11:15 am.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20TH:

Culinary Adventures: 4:30 pm, Game Room.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23RD:

Thanksgiving Dinner. Seatings at 12:15, 12:30 and 12:45, Dole Hall. Make reservations with the Call Center.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH:

JULIET's: Destination TBD. Meet in the Lobby at 11:15am.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27TH:

Laudable Lunch with Elaine Sikorski, A History of Cakes: Fruitcake & the British Empire. 11:30am, Game Room.