

Nutmeg

The network around the nutmeg kernel is mace, which can be dried and ground and used as flavoring in sauces, gravies, and even pastries. It smells like nutmeg but has a different flavour.

To test a nutmeg for goodness, prick it with a pin. Oil will immediately collect around the puncture if the nutmeg is good.

Oils

Just as olive oil is expensive in Canada, familiar brands of corn oils are expensive abroad. The following geographical regions produce their own special, economical oils: India — poppyseed, cottonseed, sesame, and peanut; Middle East — poppyseed, cottonseed, sesame, and olive; Far East — soybean, sesame, and peanut; Mediterranean countries — olive; South America — corn, sunflower, and coconut; Europe — corn; West Africa — peanut; and Pacific Islands — coconut.

Plaster

To fill the cracks in plaster, use white vinegar instead of water when you mix a batch of Plaster of Paris. The vinegar will make it set slowly enough so that you will have time to manipulate it properly into the cracks. Water works too fast.

Poultry

Small chickens are not always young and tender. Only experience will tell whether you must boil every chicken for a while before you broil, roast, or fry it.

If a turkey or chicken has a stiff breastbone, that is an indication that the meat may be tough, although perhaps not tough enough to go to the bother of preboiling the bird before you roast it. One tenderizing trick is to brown the bird quickly on a rack above the roasting pan. After the initial browning, pour 1 cup boiling water into the roaster, put on the cover, and let the bird steam as it roasts.

Prescriptions/Pharmaceuticals

Trade names for pharmaceutical ingredients are different abroad. If you are dependent upon certain medicines: (1) ask your doctor to give you copies of your prescriptions written in generic terms with strengths specified or (2) arrange to have supplies sent periodically to you through the pouch. Some medicines available only by prescription in Canada can be purchased off the counter abroad and vice versa.

Many medicines retain their potency for a long time, but antibiotics, insulin, and other biologicals have expiration dates marked on their packages and you can't stock up on them for any long period of time. If you are travelling with a supply of volatile liquid medicines with a high alcohol content, or with any kind of medication (or cosmetics or insect spray) in an aerosol can, keep it in your flight bag which goes with you into the airplane cabin. Not all plane holds are pressurized, and the medication, cosmetic, or spray could either evaporate at high altitude or explode. Ordinarily, when a druggist fills a prescription with some product which is already packaged, the manufacturer's label is stripped off and replaced with the druggist's own. If you are going to have to replace the medicine abroad, ask the druggist to leave the original label on the container. This is also a help when going through customs, as the customs agent can readily identify the medicine for what it is and not suspect you of carrying illegal narcotics.

Seasonings

The marketplace will offer fresher tasting condiments than you are likely to find in imported goods. If you buy spices that originate in that particular area, use them cautiously until you become adjusted to the fact that they are much more potent than the processed and packaged varieties in Canada.