

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them . . .

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Luke 2:7-9, 13, 14

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him . . .

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

Matt. 2:1, 2, 11

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and a

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OF SPICES AND KINGS

The aromas that permeate kitchen at this season of the year deserve special thought for it is the wonderful spices and herbs we have at our finger tips that make them.

So often, we take these flavor enhancers — the dried leaves, the shrivelled seeds, the curled bark—for granted but can you imagine a world without them?

Would you derive much pleasure from eating a roast turkey stuffing with no sage or thyme, a fruit cake without spices, an oyster stew without celery salt and paprika, mince pie without allspice, a citrus toddy without cloves, a roast goose without marjoram and mustard, gingerbread without ginge, apple pie without cinnamon or nutmeg, roast pork without garlic and a pumpkin pie with no ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg or cloves? The answer is obviously "no."

In fact, much of the joy of cooking as well as eating, would disappear if spices, herbs and seeds were lost to us. So don't just take them for granted. Instead, make particular use of them to bring appealing flavor to family holiday meals. Here are a few ideas to help you cook imaginatively with spices and herbs.

Stuffing: Add a pinch of nutmeg as well as the usual sage or thyme to stuffing for turkey, chicken or goose. If the stuffing is a rice one, then add one-third cup toasted sesame seeds to each 4 cups cooked rice, for crunchiness.

Applesauce Treat: For a light holiday dessert, combine 2 cups of fresh or canned applesauce with 1 cup fine gingersnap crumbs, ¼ teaspoon ground ginger, 1 teaspoon dried lemon rind and ½ cup heavy cream whipped. Chill, then spoon into dessert dishes and sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds.

Chive Butter: Here's an easy canape spread or topping for baked potatoes, hot vegetables or steaks. Add 2 teaspoons tarragon vinegar or lemon juice to 2 teaspoons dried minced chives, parsley or mint. Then blend into ½ cup soft butter. This keeps well in a covered container in the refrigerator.

Seafood Spread. Finely shred 1 cup cooked shrimp, lobster or crabmeat. Then blend with ¼ cup soft butter and season to taste with salt, cayenne pepper and paprika.

Cheese Straws: After rolling out dough and covering it with grated cheese, sprinkle with paprika. Fold over, roll out, cut into strips, twist and bake. The paprika helps them bake to a golden brown.

Sour Cream Dressing: A delicious dressing for tossed salads or sliced cucumbers — whip or shake together in a jar, ½ cup dairy sour cream, freshly ground pepper, 1 tablespoon sugar, ½ teaspoon each of paprika and dry mustard, and 2 tablespoons vinegar.

Oyster Stew: This spells traditional New Year's hospitality. For about 6 servings, heat in a large saucepan 1 quart oysters with their liquid, 1 teaspoon celery salt and 1 teaspoon paprika until

edges of oysters curl. Add 1 quart of milk and ½ teaspoon tabasco sauce. Heat to serving. Place a tablespoon of butter in each of the warm soup plates and then ladle in the hot oyster stew. Serve with oyster crackers.

Tangy Rice: Gixe extra flavor and color to the rice you serve with poultry, by measuring into cooking water a teaspoon each of instant minced onion, dried parsley and dried lemon peel.

Curried Green Beans: A pinch of curry added to the seasoned butter served over fresh or frozen beans will give them a flavor fillip. Try the added touch of curry in turkey or chicken a la king.

Devilled Eggs: Dry mustard is just the thing to give party eggs an interesting flavor. Using 12 hard cooked eggs, combine 1 teaspoon dry mustard, ¼ cup mayonnaise, salt, pepper and 1¼ oz. can devilled ham to the mashed yolks. Refill whites then sprinkle

with paprika.

Sesame Seeds: Browned under the broiler, sesame seeds taste like almonds and substitute nicely for them in cookies or sprinkled on tossed salads and hot cream vegetables.

BONE WARMING TODDY

(about 10 servings of 6 ozs.)
1 cup brown sugar, packed
1 cup white sugar
1 cup brown sugar, packed
12 whole cloves
1 quart apple cider
2 cups fresh orange juice
2 cups fresh lemon juice
Lemon slices, cinnamon sticks

In large saucepan, combine sugars, cloves tied in a small cheesecloth bag, and cider. Stir over medium heat until sugar is dissolved, then simmer for 5 minutes. Add juices and heat to serving temperature but do not boil. Pour into warm mugs with a cinnamon stick stirrer and lemon slice in each.

Mushrooms Fun for Cooks

Holiday Crab and Mushrooms

1/3 c butter or margarine
½ c chopped celery
¼ c chopped onion
½ pound mushrooms
thinly sliced
¼ c flour
1 tsp. salt
2 c milk
1 c grated cheddar cheese
2-6½ oz. can crabmeat OR
2-5 oz. can lobster
drained and flaked
1 tbsp. lemon juice
2 tbsp. cooking sherry
(optional)
1 c toasted bread crumbs

In a large skillet over medium heat, melt fat, cook celery and onions until tender, about ten minutes. Add mushrooms and cook over low heat about 3 minutes or until just tender. Blend in flour and salt. Gradually add milk, stir until thickened. Add cheese, stir until melted. Add flaked fish, lemon juice and sherry, (optional). Cover and cook over low heat until bubbly, about 5 minutes, stirring oc-

asionally. Top with toasted bread cubes. 6 servings.

NOTE: More mushrooms and fish may be used than recipe calls for.

"I'm Mr. Brown's wife," said the brunette, introducing herself to a blonde at the party.

"I'm his secretary," said the blonde.

"Oh," said the brunette, arching her eyebrows slightly, "were you?"

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