

THE DAWN OF TOMORROW



For Nancy Brittain, who owns and runs Nancy's Barber Shop at 689 Hamilton Rd., barbering is more than just a job, it's one of the joys of her life. Douglas Jenkins of London gets a trim.

Of Spices, Herbs and Hospitality

The aromas that permeate kitchens 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 ginger, 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 1/3 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, 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger, 1 teaspoon dried lemon rind and 1/2 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 1/2 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 1/4 cup soft butter and season to taste with salt, cayenne pepper and paprika.

THE EVERGREEN

There are many beautiful stories and legends regarding the origin of the Christmas tree. One of the most beautiful of the myths is the story of the three trees which grew near the manger where the Christ Child was born. The olive tree and the fig tree gave generously of their fruits to the infant child but the evergreen, not being blessed by nature, had no fruit to offer. The stars, seeing its plight, came down and rested in its branches, proclaiming henceforth it should be the emblem of that Holy Night.

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