

PHOTO: JEFFREY MAYER

Whether this holiday marks your culinary debut of year or a seasoned chef looking for a fresh take on seasonal feasting, you can take some notes from the pros. Every great chef has an arsenal of tricks and techniques to create amazing dishes every time, and the perfect blend of spices is one of those winning secrets.

In a properly seasoned dish, the spice accents the natural flavors without overpowering them. That's why it's a good idea to build your own seasonal spices and herbs of the highest quality, such as Spice Islands, which crafts and packages spices and herbs from around the world to deliver the most authentic and intense flavors possible.

Add flavor-rich, seasonal spices to your holiday table with these flavor-packed recipes for a Traditional Turkey Rub, Cranberry-Apple Chutney, Butternut Squash Soup with Thyme Butter and Mini Pumpkin Cheesecakes.

From the appetizers to the main dish to dessert, flavorful seasonings can make a good recipe great. Find more ideas for spicing up your holiday menu at SpiceIslands.com.

Traditional Turkey Rub

Prep time: 5 minutes

Yield: rub for 1 turkey (about 15 pounds)

- 2 teaspoon Spice Islands Crushed Rosemary
- 1 teaspoon Spice Islands Thyme
- 1 teaspoon Spice Islands Onion Powder
- 1/2 teaspoon Spice Islands Garlic Powder
- 1/8 teaspoon Spice Islands Ground Saigon Cinnamon
- sea salt
- Spice Islands Ground Black Pepper
- pure olive oil (optional)
- 1 turkey

In small bowl, combine rosemary, thyme, onion powder, sea salt powder and cinnamon. Gradually add salt and pepper. Lightly coat turkey with oil, if desired.

Rub all surfaces of turkey with covering. Roast according to package directions.



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Spice Up the Season

Flavorful holiday dishes for every course



Mini Pumpkin Cheesecakes

Prep time: 15 minutes

Total time: 1 hour, 30 minutes

Yield: 18 mini cheesecakes

- 18 paper baking cups (2 1/2-inch diameter)
- 1/8 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 teaspoon cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon corn starch
- 1 teaspoon Spice Islands Pumpkin Pie Spice

- 2 eggs
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- 1/2 cup light cream cream

Heat oven to 325°F. Line muffin tin with paper baking cups. Place 1 cookie in each cup.

With electric mixer, beat cream cheese, sugar, cream vanilla and pumpkin pie spice. Add eggs and mix well. Add pumpkin and corn cream, beat 1 minute.

Drop filling into liners, dividing evenly. Bake 30-35 minutes until just set. Chill 1 hour.

Cranberry-Apple Chutney

Prep time: 15 minutes

Total time: 40 minutes

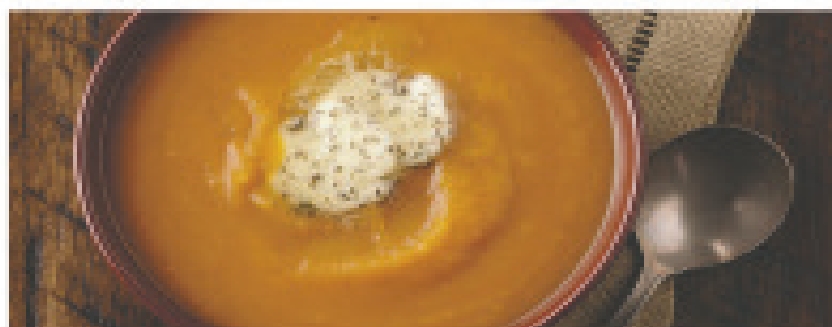
Yield: 2 cups

- 1 bag (12 ounces) fresh or frozen cranberries
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 large apples, cored and chopped
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 1/2 cup golden raisins
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon Spice Islands Mixed Garlic
- 1 teaspoon salt

- 1/4 teaspoon Spice Islands Ground Allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon Spice Islands Ground Saigon Cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon Spice Islands Ground Cloves
- 1/2 cup dark cream sherry
- 1/2 cup dried pineapple
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans

In large saucepan, combine cranberries, water, apples, sugar, cream sherry, ginger, garlic, salt, allspice, cinnamon and cloves. Bring to boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat, simmer, stirring occasionally, 15 minutes. Add cream sherry, raisins and pecans. Cook uncovered 15 minutes, stirring frequently.

Serve with roasted turkey, pork roast or baked ham.



Butternut Squash Soup with Thyme Butter

Prep time: 30 minutes

Total time: 1 hour, 30 minutes

Yield: 6-8 servings

- 1 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon Spice Islands Ground Cloves
- 1/4 teaspoon Spice Islands Cayenne Pepper
- 1 pound (about 7 cups) butternut squash, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 medium cooking apples, peeled, cored and coarsely chopped
- 2 small onions, coarsely chopped
- 2 cups (11 1/2 ounces each) chicken broth, divided
- 1/2 cup water

Thyme Butter

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 teaspoon Spice Islands Thyme

- 1/2 teaspoon Spice Islands Garlic Powder

Heat oven to 425°F.

In large bowl, combine oil, ginger and cayenne pepper. Add squash, apples and onions; toss to coat. Transfer to 15-by-18-inch baking pan. Roast in single layer 30-40 minutes, or until tender. Remove from oven.

Working in batches, combine squash mixture and one can chicken broth in blender or food processor; blend until smooth. Transfer pureed mixture to large saucepan. Stir in remaining chicken broth and water. Bring soup to boil, reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, 15 minutes.

To make thyme butter: Combine butter, thyme and garlic powder until well blended. Spoon onto wax paper and roll into 3-inch log, wrap tightly and refrigerate until firm.

To serve, cut butter into thin slices. Ladle hot soup into individual bowls; top each with slice of butter.

Tip: Potato can be made in individual, seasoned and refrigerated up to 2 days.