

# Cranberries Pop Up In Unexpected Places

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LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)  
— At this time of the year, cranberries keep popping up in both expected and unexpected places. The bright red berries add zest and sparkle to holiday meals and decor.

Cranberry Fudge and Cranberry Mustard Dip might not appeal to your sense of propriety, but participants at a recent workshop were pleasantly surprised how delightful these unusual dishes tasted.

"That Cranberry Mustard Dip is the best dip and I wasn't even going to try it," said a workshop participant.

Nancy Wiker, Lancaster County extension agent, prepared a variety of dishes using cranberries, which participants sampled at the Crazy for Cranberries Workshop.

A one-half cup serving of cranberries contains only 30 calories and 10 percent of the U.S. Recommended Daily Allowance of vitamin C. The berries are low in sodium and contain fiber and a natural pectin, which means the berries thicken when cooked to make cranberry sauce.

Cooking workshops are always a delightful way to gain new recipes. From merely reading recipes, it isn't possible to predict whether or not you and your guests will like the tastes, but workshops offer taste-testing samples, which requires no expense for the ingredients and time preparation on your part.

Plus, you can learn a lot of little tidbits that you wouldn't necessarily learn otherwise.

Did you know that cranberries do not absorb sugar when they are whole?

"If the tart taste bothers you in prepared dishes, smash the cranberries a bit before combining with other ingredients," Wiker said.

If you buy cranberries at the beginning of the holiday season, they are usually more economical. Buy extra bags and freeze them for later use. To prevent freezer dehydration, pop the berries into a zip-lock bag or plastic container.

When ready to use frozen berries, do not thaw because thawed cranberries will soften and lose their crispness. Instead, rinse berries with cold water and use immediately.

Cranberries are native to North America. They were one of the first products exported to England after the Pilgrims settled in the new world. Sailors learned to carry cranberries on board because they prevent scurvy.

Cranberries grow best in sand dunes. Major cranberry producing states are New Jersey, Wisconsin, and Oregon.

Harvesting has changed a lot from those beginning years of hand picking. Today, the growing area is flooded during harvesting and an "eggbeater" machine causes the berries to float for easy collecting.

Good berries bounce when dropped, so during processing berries are dumped and the good ones bounce into a conveyor belt for easy sorting and packaging.

Some other trivia that you may find interesting is that it takes 440 berries to make a pound. If you wondered why there are no true cranberry wines, it is because cranberries do not ferment.

You have probably heard that cranberry juice can cure urinary tract infection. As early as 1923, American scientists found that

when people drank cranberry juice, their urine became acidic. Scientists believed the acid prevented the growth of bacteria. But in the late 1960s, researchers found that it was not the acid but fructose (fruit sugar) that prevents bacteria from attaching itself to the lining of the urinary tract.

You can drink three ounces of cranberry juice daily to prevent a urinary infection, but if you have contracted an infection, start antibiotics as soon as possible, according to medical advice.

You can also drink 12 to 32 ounces of the juice to fight off the infection, but it shouldn't take the place of antibiotics.

So cranberries are good for your health, tasty, and attractive. Stock up on them and try these recipes presented at the workshop.

Clip these recipes for further use. You're sure to find some new favorites.

## WILD RICE PILAF WITH DRIED FRUIT AND PINE NUTS

3 tablespoons butter  
1 medium onion, diced  
½ cup chopped celery  
8-ounces chipped mushrooms, white, or brown Crimini type  
1 cup wild rice cooked in chicken stock  
1 cup gourmet brown rice or barley cooked in chicken stock  
½ cup diced dried apricots or dried cranberries  
½ cup toasted pine nuts  
Freshly ground pepper to taste  
Cook the rices in stock until tender according to package directions.

In medium frying pan, heat the butter over medium heat and saute onion and mushrooms until the onion is deep golden, about 10 minutes. Add the cooked brown and wild rice. Let rest 5 minutes. Stir in dried fruit and nuts, adjust seasonings, add extra stock for moisture if needed. Can be used as stuffing or as a side dish.

## PORK TENDERLOIN WITH CRANBERRY MUSHROOM SAUCE

2 whole port tenderloins  
Marinade:  
½ cup cranberry juice  
2 cloves garlic, crushed  
1 tablespoon Balsamic vinegar  
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard  
1½ tablespoons olive oil

Marinate the pork tenderloins in the marinade in the refrigerator in a plastic bag overnight or for several hours. The longer the soak, the better the flavor.

Remove tenderloins from the marinade and place on a rack in a shallow pan. Bake in preheated 400 degree oven for 25-30 minutes until the internal temperature reaches 160 degrees. Slice and top with the following sauce:

Cranberry Mushroom Sauce:  
8-ounces sliced mushrooms  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
½ cup butter  
2 tablespoons A-1 Sauce  
2 cups cranberry juice  
½ cup dried cranberries  
1 tablespoon chopped chives

Saute mushrooms in garlic butter. Add the A-1, and simmer together for a few minutes. Add cranberries and juice and simmer to reduce volume. Add the chives just before serving. Serve as a sauce spooned over the sliced tenderloin. This could also be spooned over sliced turkey tenderloins or beef or even chicken. If there is leftover sliced meat this adds moisture when reheating.

## CRANBERRY BISCOTTI

2½ cups flour  
1 cup sugar  
1½ teaspoons baking powder  
1¼ teaspoons cinnamon  
½ teaspoon nutmeg  
¾ cup sliced almonds  
2 eggs  
2 egg whites  
1 tablespoon vanilla  
1½ cups fresh or frozen cranberries

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.

Combine dry ingredients in a medium mixing bowl. Whisk together eggs, egg whites, and vanilla in a separate mixing bowl. Add to dry ingredients, mixing just until moist, using an electric mixer on medium speed. Add cranberries, mix thoroughly.

On a floured surface, divide batter in half and pat each half into a log approximately 14 inches long and 1½ inches wide. Place on cookie sheet and bake for 30 minutes or until firm. Cool on a wire rack.

Reduce oven temperature to 300 degrees. Cut biscotti into ½-inch slices. Stand upright on cookie sheet and bake for an additional 20 minutes. Let cool and store in a loosely covered container.

## GINGERBREAD WITH WARM CRANBERRY COMPOTE

14.5-ounce package gingerbread cake mix  
2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries  
3 cups pineapple tidbits  
1 cup brown sugar  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
¼ teaspoon nutmeg  
Whipped cream

Prepare gingerbread as directed on package. Cool completely.

Combine remaining ingredients, except whipped cream, in a medium saucepan. Bring mixture to a boil and cook just until the cranberries begin to pop, stirring frequently. Cool sauce slightly.

Spoon warm compote over each serving of gingerbread. Top with whipped cream.

## CRANBERRY MUSTARD SANDWICH SPREAD

½ cup jellied cranberry sauce  
1½ tablespoons grainy Dijon mustard

1 tablespoon brown sugar  
Combine ingredients in a small mixing bowl, whisking until smooth. Spread on sandwiches or use as a baste for meats and poultry or as a dip for pretzels and crackers. Makes ½ cup.

## CRANBERRY FUDGE

2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips  
¼ cup light corn syrup  
½ cup powdered sugar  
¼ cup evaporated milk  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
6-ounce package Craisins (sweetened, dried cranberries)  
½ cup chopped walnuts or pecans, optional

Line the bottom and sides of an 8x8-inch pan with plastic wrap. Set aside.

Combine chocolate chips and corn syrup in a medium saucepan. Cook over low heat until melted and smooth. Remove from heat. Add powdered sugar, evaporated milk and vanilla; stir vigorously until the mixture is thick and glossy. Add dried cranberries and nuts; mix well. Pour into prepared pan.

Cover and chill until firm, about 8 hours. Cut into 1½-inch squares. Store covered in refrigerator. Serve at room temperature. Makes 25 pieces.



"Crazy for Cranberries" taught by Nancy Wiker shows the many novel ways that cranberries provide taste and color.

## CRANBERRY BUTTER

½ cup butter, softened  
½ cup jellied or whole berry cranberry sauce

Pecans, chopped (optional)

Whip butter in a medium mixing bowl until light and fluffy, using an electric mixer on high speed. Add cranberry sauce and mix on medium speed until thoroughly combined. Place in individual or large serving container. Sprinkle with pecans, if desired. Best, when served at room temperature. Serve with muffins, bagels, pancakes, etc.

Makes 2 cups.

## SPARKLING

### CRANBERRY PUNCH

16-ounces cranberry juice cocktail  
2 46-ounce cans pineapple juice, chilled  
2 24.5-ounce bottles sparkling grape juice, chilled  
Sherbet or ice ring

Pour refill into a medium punch bowl. Stir in pineapple juice and sparkling grape juice. Float sherbet or ice ring on top of punch, if desired. Serve immediately. Makes about 1½ gallons.

## CRANBERRY WASSAIL

32-ounce bottle cranberry juice cocktail

1¼ cups apple juice  
3 tablespoons sugar  
1 cinnamon stick  
½ teaspoon whole allspice  
2 slices orange, garnish  
4 whole cloves, garnish

Combine all ingredients, except garnishes in a large saucepan. Heat to boiling, reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes. Strain punch to remove spices. Place in a heat-proof punch bowl. Garnish with orange slices studded with cloves.

## CRANBERRY-APPLE RELISH

4 cups cranberries, chopped  
1 pound apples, peeled, cored, chopped  
2½ cups brown sugar  
1 cup water  
½ teaspoon cinnamon  
½ cup chopped walnuts

Combine cranberries, apples, brown sugar, and water in a large saucepan. Simmer over medium heat for 15 minutes, stirring frequently. Stir in cinnamon and walnuts. Cook 5 minutes.

## CRANBERRY ORANGE SCONES

2 cups flour  
1 tablespoon sugar  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
½ teaspoon salt  
¼ cup butter  
½ cup heavy cream  
1 egg  
1 cup Craisins (sweetened dried cranberries)  
2 teaspoons orange zest  
Sugar

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. \* Grease cookie sheet.

Combine dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Work butter into dry ingredients until butter is the size of small peas using a pastry blender. Add remaining ingredients, mixing just until dry ingredients are moistened.

Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface and gather into a ball. Pat into a circle ¾-inch thick; cut into 8 wedges. Place on cookie sheet. Sprinkle with sugar.

Bake 12 minutes or until golden brown.

Makes 8 scones.

## CRANBERRY APPLE COBLER

½ cup sugar  
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon  
¼ cup chopped walnuts  
3 cups sliced apples, peeled if desired

1 cup chopped fresh cranberries  
1 cup flour  
1 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
Dash salt

5-ounce can evaporated milk  
1 egg, beaten  
½ cup butter, melted

Combine half cup sugar, the cinnamon, and ½ cup walnuts; set aside.

In bottom of a 2-quart square baking dish or 2-quart casserole, combine apples and cranberries; sprinkle with sugar/nut mixture. Set aside.

Stir together flour, 1 cup sugar, baking powder, and salt. Add the evaporated milk, egg, and melted butter. Stir until smooth; pour over apple-cranberry mixture.

Sprinkle with remaining ½ cup nuts. Bake in 325 degree oven for 55 to 65 minutes or until top is golden. Cool on wire rack; serve warm.

Makes 9 servings.