

OTHER USES FOR CINNAMON

Cinnamon and Cumin Dry Rub

from Steve Raichlen's *BBQ USA: 425 fiery recipes from all across America*, Workman's Publishing, 2003.

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp. dried rosemary
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- ¼ cup coarse salt (kosher or sea)
- 3 tbsp. ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp. ground cumin
- 2 tbsp. dried oregano
- 1 tbsp. ground cinnamon

Crumble the rosemary between your fingers into a small bowl. Add the remaining ingredients and stir to mix. Use to season any light-flavored meat such as poultry, pork, or veal.

Makes about 1 cup. Store the rub in an airtight jar away from heat and light; it will keep for several months.

Be sure to cook your meat to the USDA recommended safe minimum internal temperature: 145°F for beef, pork, veal & lamb; 165°F for poultry; and 145°F for fish and shellfish.

Other ways to use cinnamon

Sprinkle cinnamon on your morning oatmeal, smoothie, fresh fruit, or yogurt. Add a cinnamon stick to warm apple cider to add flavor. Add a 1/4 tsp. per cup of flour to your pancake or waffle batter. Add a pinch on popcorn or other salty snacks. To make cinnamon sugar, blend 2 tsp. with ½ cup of granulated sugar and sprinkle on toast, baked goods, and other desserts.

Health Benefits of Cinnamon

Some research suggests that the naturally occurring coumarins and cinnamaldehydes in cinnamon can help reduce inflammation, lower blood sugar, and decrease cholesterol levels. However, cinnamon can be toxic if ingested in large amounts and may cause liver injury. Do not use in place of prescribed medication or to delay seeking medical care.

Sources

Cleveland Clinic, "The Benefits of Cinnamon," health.clevelandclinic.org/benefits-of-cinnamon
NIH, "Cinnamon," www.nccih.nih.gov/health/cinnamon

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TASTE TEST

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CINNAMON

The use of cinnamon dates back to around 3000 BCE. In ancient Egypt, it was used in burials and embalming, religious traditions, perfumes, and as a medicine. Cinnamon was traded along the famed "Silk Road" as early as 2000 BCE, and the demand for cinnamon drove fifteenth and sixteenth century explorers to search for new lands and establish trade routes.

The flavor of cinnamon can vary from a light, almost citrusy flavor to a sweet and spicy heat depending on the type you use. Cinnamon can be found in recipes both sweet and savory, from baking to barbecue, and is a staple in Vietnamese, Indian, and Mexican cuisine.

FUN FACTS

Cinnamon is one of only a few spices that is derived from the bark of a tree and not the seeds, flowers, or fruits of a plant. Cinnamon and its sibling cassia are harvested from the bark of the *Cinnamomum* tree, but only Ceylon cinnamon (from the *Cinnamomum verum* tree) is considered "real" cinnamon. Cassia variations include Saigon cinnamon, Chinese cinnamon, and Korintje. Odds are that the cinnamon in your spice rack is actually a blend of cassia.



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Apple-Spiked Monkey Bread

from *I Didn't Know My Slow Cooker Could Do That: 150 Delicious, Surprising Recipes*, edited by Jan Miller, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015.

Making this sweet breakfast treat for a crowd is easy with your slow cooker! (Makes 14 servings)



Ingredients

Non-stick cooking spray
¾ cup granulated sugar
¾ cup packed brown sugar
1 Tbsp. ground cinnamon
¼ tsp. ground nutmeg
¼ tsp. ground ginger
4, 7.5-oz. cans refrigerated biscuits*
1 ½ cups diced, peeled cooking apples
½ cup chopped pecans
½ cup butter, melted
1/3 cup rum or apple juice
1 tsp. vanilla

Instructions

Coat the inside of a 4-quart slow cooker with cooking spray. In an extra-large bowl stir together the sugar, brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and ginger. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons of the sugar mixture in the prepared slow cooker.

Cut each biscuit into fourths. Add biscuit pieces, apples, and pecans to sugar and spices in the bowl, tossing to coat. Add biscuits to slow cooker. Sprinkle with remaining sugar and spices. In a bowl stir together butter, rum, and vanilla; pour over the biscuits.

Cover and cook on high for 2 to 2 ½ hours until a knife inserted in center comes out clean. Turn off the slow cooker. Carefully remove lid so condensation from lid does not drip onto bread. Cover opening of slow cooker with paper towels; replace lid. Cool 10-15 minutes.

Note: If you don't have a slow cooker, use a large, oven-safe casserole dish instead and bake at 350 °F for 35-40 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean.

Run a table knife around the edge of bread; invert bread onto a large serving platter. Spoon topping and nuts in cooker onto bread.

Note: When choosing cooking apples, look for firm and tart apples like Granny Smith, Cortland, Honeycrisp, or Braeburn.

Cinnamon Chicken

from 4 Sons 'R' Us, 4sonrus.com/little-house-on-the-prairie-cinnamon-chicken

In the classic TV show *Little House on the Prairie*, Laura “accidentally” uses cayenne pepper instead of cinnamon in this dish, making Nellie and Almonzo sick. Using the correct spices creates a warm, comforting dish.



Ingredients

1 ½ cups fresh apple cider (or unsweetened apple juice)
¼ cup honey
¼ cup lemon juice
1 ½ Tbsp. minced garlic
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. freshly cracked black pepper
4 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts trimmed of fat (2 ½ to 3 lbs. of chicken)
2-3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Instructions

Combine the cider, honey, lemon, garlic, cinnamon, and salt & pepper to a mixing bowl and whisk together. Place the chicken breasts in a large zip-top bag and add the marinade. Seal the bag and squeeze out any excess air. Refrigerate for at least 8 hours or overnight, flipping the bag several times.

Pour the marinade out of the bag and into a large skillet. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium. Stir occasionally and simmer until reduced by half, about 10 minutes.

Transfer the thickened sauce to a bowl and set aside. Carefully wipe the skillet clean with a paper towel.

Set the skillet over medium heat and add the olive oil.

Once the oil is hot and shimmering, add two of the chicken breasts. Brown for 1-2 minutes on each side so that they sear, but don't cook through. Transfer the pan-seared chicken to a 2-quart casserole dish.

Repeat the previous step for the remaining chicken breasts. Pour the remaining marinade evenly over the chicken.

Bake the chicken at 350°F for 30-35 minutes. Reserve the juices to pour over the chicken when serving.

Serve with steamed white rice or creamy mashed potatoes and vegetables.

Note: Use a meat thermometer to ensure the chicken is cooked to 165°F before serving.