

Vinegar has long history



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Babylonians used vinegar as a preservative. Roman legionnaires used it as a beverage. Hippocrates extolled its medicinal virtues, and the Bible refers to vinegar for its soothing and healing property.

Can you believe that in this sophisticated world we are still using a product discovered more than 10,000 years ago?

Over the years vinegar has been produced from many materials such as molasses, fruits, berries, melons, coconut, honey, beer, maple syrup, potatoes and beets. The kind and quality of vinegar has changed, but the principle remains the same. Vinegar is fermentation of natural sugars to alcohol and then secondary fermentation to vinegar.

White distilled vinegar is made from ethyl alcohol. This is the strongest and sharpest flavor but an all-purpose product for cooking and cleaning. The following are just a few tips from a very long list. A few tablespoons of white vinegar in the cleaning water will cut down the grease and help remove the odor in clothes. Freshen a stale lunch box by dampening a piece of fresh bread with white vinegar and put in the lunch box overnight.

AFTER YOUR next party, fill a couple of small bowls with white vinegar. Place them around the room. This can eliminate tobacco odors. Do the same thing if you are trying to eliminate a fresh paint odor. Roll a tablespoon of white vinegar mixed in a cup of water to eliminate unpleasant cooking odors.

For sparkling glassware use ¼ cup white vinegar added to a gallon of rinse water. This will eliminate dull soap film from glassware and make it shine. Nobody likes to wash windows, but here is an easy, fast way to handle this chore. Simply wash windows with a mixture of equal parts white vinegar and warm water. Dry with a soft cloth. This so-

lution will make your windows gleam and won't leave the usual film or streak on the glass.

Apple cider vinegar is used widely in cooking and pickling, especially when a darker color is acceptable. While vinegar has a more pungent acid taste where cider vinegar is more mild and mellow and generally used in cooking. For cleaning or washing use white vinegar.

To put sheen on a crust of homemade bread, take it out of the oven when it is almost baked, brush the top with white or cider vinegar and return to the oven for a few minutes. Add a teaspoon of white or cider vinegar to the water when poaching eggs. The whites stay better formed. To keep cheese fresh and moist, wrap it in a cloth, dampened with vinegar, then wrap well. Try soaking fish in vinegar and water before cooking for whiter less "fishy" tasting product.

Wine vinegars are simply white vinegars added to wine. Wine vinegars are used in salads and sauces. These are predominantly vinegars made from red wine. However, there are some white wine vinegars available.

SPECIALTY VINEGARS, such as malt vinegar, are probably more popular in England than here, although with the increasing popularity of fish and chips, malt vinegar is available. Tarragon and other herbed vinegars are also available and generally used for salads.

Some additional ways of using vi-

negar in your household are to add one teaspoon of white vinegar to any gelatin recipe in the hot summer months to help keep the molded salads or desserts firm. If your soup or other foods are too salty, add a teaspoon of vinegar and a teaspoon of sugar and repeat. Use one teaspoon white vinegar to cut the sugary sweetness and bring out the flavor in desserts such as pecan pie or maple syrup pie.

For a fluffy meringue, add ¼ teaspoon white vinegar to three egg whites. Seven-minute cake icing will be whiter and softer if you add vinegar to the ingredients before cooking. Use ¼ teaspoon white vinegar in a basic seven-minute icing calling for 1 ½ cups sugar and two egg whites.

Soak normal food-stained pots and pans in full-strength white vinegar for 30 minutes, then rinse in hot, soapy water. Minerals in foods and water sometimes cause dark stains inside aluminum utensils. You can remove these stains by boiling a solution of 1 tablespoon of vinegar to one cup of water in the pot or pan.

It is fascinating to think that vinegar continues to be used in so many of these ways today. Vinegar is being rediscovered as a household helper. It should be a staple on the pantry shelf. It is economical, at hand and ready to use in a great variety of ways.

Now ask yourself, how could any household get along without vinegar for cooking and cleaning?

Jambalaya Ham Soup starts with meaty ham

AP JAMBALAYA HAM SOUP
One 1 ½- to 1 ¾-pound meaty ham bone
5 cups water
1 slice onion
1 cup celery leaves
2 to 3 parsley sprigs
¼ teaspoon black pepper
¼ teaspoon ground red pepper
1 cup chopped celery
¼ cup chopped onion
1 small clove garlic, minced
2 tablespoons margarine or butter

One 8-ounce can tomato sauce
¼ cup ketchup
¼ cup long grain rice
One 10-ounce package frozen cut okra
One 4 ½-ounce can shrimp, drained

Combine ham bone, water, onion slice, celery leaves, parsley, black pepper and red pepper. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Cover; simmer 30 to 45 minutes. Remove bone. Cool and cut off meat; chop. Discard bone. Strain broth. Cook chopped cel-

ery, onion and garlic in margarine until tender. Stir in broth, ham, tomato sauce, ketchup and uncooked rice. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Cover; simmer 15 minutes. Add okra and shrimp. Return to boiling; reduce heat. Cover; simmer 5 minutes. Makes 6 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 241 cal., 15 g. pro., 19 g. carb., 12 g. fat, 65 mg. chol., 739 mg. sodium. U.S. RDA: 19 percent vit. A, 25 percent vit. C, 14 percent iron.

Orange roughly, mild flavor

POACHED FISH IN ORANGE SAUCE
1 medium cucumber
1 pound fresh orange roughly, sole, or flounder fillets
1 teaspoon finely shredded orange peel
1 cup orange juice
1 medium carrot, shredded
¼ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon cornstarch

Chop enough of the cucumber to equal ¼ cup. Thinly slice remaining cucumber.

Arrange fish fillets in a microwave-safe 8- by 8- by 2-inch baking dish. Turn under any thin portions to obtain a uniform thickness. Cover with clear microwave-safe plastic wrap, vent by leaving a small area unsealed at edge of dish. Cook on 100 percent power (high) for 4 to 7 minutes or until fish just flakes with a fork, giving the dish a half-turn after 4 minutes. Cover to keep warm. In a 2-cup, microwave-safe mea-

sure, stir together orange peel, orange juice, carrot, salt and cornstarch. Cook, uncovered, on high 3 to 5 minutes or until thickened and bubbly, stirring after every minute. Makes 4 servings.

Cook on high 30 seconds more. Stir in chopped cucumber. Place cucumber slices on serving platter. Spoon sauce over all.

Makes 4 servings.

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Grains can cook speedily

AP — HEALTHFUL GRAINS — QUICK OR SLOW

You've heard that cooking grains is tedious and time-consuming. Wrong. Some whole grains are ready to eat in less than 10 minutes. Others can simmer without watching. Here's a guide to help you choose the whole grain that fits your dinner schedule. Cooking times and water amounts are for 1 cup grain.

SUPER QUICK: LESS THAN 10 MINUTES

— Ready-to-cook couscous (KOOS Kous): Tiny beadlike grains have a mild flavor. Look for it next to the rice or pasta in your supermarket. Serve as you would rice or spaghetti. To cook, cover with 1 cup boiling water; let stand 3 to 4 minutes.

— Quick-cooking hominy grits: Coarsely ground yellow or white corn kernels. Look for it with the cornmeal. To cook, simmer, covered, in 4 cups water for 5 to 6 minutes. **FAST: 10 TO 20 MINUTES**

— Bulgur wheat: Precooked cracked wheat, bulgur has a mild, nutty flavor. In the supermarket it's stocked with the rice or whole grain flours. Serve as you would rice. To cook, simmer, covered, in 2 cups water for 12 to 15 minutes.

— Quick-cooking barley: Simmer, covered, in 1 ½ cups water for 12 to 15 minutes. **MEDIUM: 30 TO 45 MINUTES**

— Brown rice: Unpolished whole rice kernels. To cook, simmer, covered, in 2 cups water for 30 to 40 minutes. **SLOW: 45 MINUTES TO 1 HOUR**

— Wild rice: Dark, slender kernels have nutty flavor. Look for it with regular rice. To cook, simmer, covered, in 2 cups water for 40 to 50 minutes.

— Wheat berries: Unpolished whole wheat kernels. Simmer, covered, in 3 cups water for 1 hour. For quicker cooking, soak berries overnight in water. Next day bring to boiling; reduce heat and simmer 30 minutes.

— Better still, cook grain berries ahead and freeze. Cook berries, drain well, and freeze in ½-cup or 1-cup portions for up to 3 months. Thaw frozen berries by placing in a colander and rinsing under hot tap water.

To use wheat berries: Combine with cooked long grain rice, onion, sliced mushrooms and seasonings to make a pilaf to serve with poultry. Add ¼ to ½ cup to batter for corn bread, pancakes, waffles or muffins. Stir into dough for yeast breads and rolls. Add to soups and stews. Stir into Waldorf salad or coleslaw.

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