

Recipe of the Month

Orange Peel Cranberry Spice Cake

Ingredients:

- Cooking spray
- 1 cup butter
- 1 3/4 cups sugar
- 2 tablespoons orange zest
- 3 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, divided
- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup buttermilk
- 2 1/2 cups fresh cranberries
- 1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
- 1 tablespoon orange

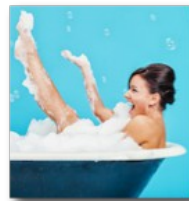
Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray 2 standard-sized loaf pans with cooking spray.
 2. Combine butter, sugar, and orange zest in a medium bowl. Stir in eggs and 1/2 teaspoon vanilla. Set aside.
 3. Combine flour, baking powder and salt in a large bowl.
 4. Alternately stir butter mixture and buttermilk into the flour mixture, stirring until just combined.
 5. Stir in cranberries. Divide batter between both loaf pans.
 6. Bake 60 minutes until a toothpick comes out clean. Allow to cool on a cooling rack and remove from pans.
 7. Combine powdered sugar, orange juice, milk, and 1/2 teaspoon vanilla in a small bowl. Drizzle evenly over each loaf.
- Makes 16 servings*



The Power of Gratitude

Being grateful has been linked to health benefits such as improved mood, better sleep, and more satisfying relationships. Thank You Note Day on December 26 offers us a chance to use the power of gratitude. Researchers recently explored how writing thank-yous increases one's sense of well-being. Writers of thank-you notes often feel nervous about the task. They worry that they will not be able to find the right words or that the recipients of their notes would feel awkward or surprised to receive a letter. But these worries are completely unfounded. Recipients of thank-you notes are almost always grateful. In fact, recipients find thank-you notes to be warmer and more articulate than the writers expect. As long as the intentions of the writer are sincere and heartfelt, the contents of the note are always well received. Researchers believe that thank-you notes are prosocial; that is, they are an important type of social glue linking people together. Self-consciousness should never stand in the way of giving thanks. So, let us express our gratitude to the researchers for conducting their experiment.



Rub-a-Dub-Dub

On December 5, skip your worn-out shower routine and sink into a bath for Bathtub Party Day! Showers suffice

if your only objective is to get clean, but there's something indulgent about reclining in a bathtub full of bubbles. What is more, using bath salts can transform a bath into a therapeutic experience. *Balneotherapy*, or immersion in mineral-laden water or mud, has been a medical remedy for millennia. Today's bath salts made from magnesium sulfate (Epsom salt) or sea salt replicate the experience. These minerals can have remarkable effects of reducing stress, relieving aches and pains, reducing skin irritations, and improving circulation. Add a few candles and some relaxing music, and your bathroom suddenly transforms into a world-class spa.



The Season of Sugar and Spice

December is chock full of holidays celebrating cookies. The first week of December is Cookie Cutter Week. The week of December 16–20 is Cookie Exchange Week. The 4th is Cookie Day, the 12th is Gingerbread House Day, and the 14th is Gingerbread Decorating Day. No wonder December is heralded as “the most wonderful time of the year”! Baking and exchanging sweets have been winter solstice traditions for hundreds of years.

The winter solstice has long been celebrated around the world by many cultures, and food has always been associated with these traditions. It was during the Middle Ages that dessert became an important part of winter solstice feasts. This was due to an influx of new and exotic ingredients, including spices like cinnamon, nutmeg, and black pepper, and sweet fruits like dates and apricots. Wealthy families added these fine new ingredients to their pantries, and their cooks created new and wonderful pastries and cookies. It became a sign of great wealth to send friends and rivals gifts of baked sweets.

One of the oldest and most popular cookies was springerle, the anise-flavored cookie that originated in the German province of Swabia in the 15th century. Anise was prized as a spice and a medicine, often grown in the cloistered gardens of monasteries. Springerle is easily recognized by the elaborate bas-relief pictures pressed into the cookies thanks to detailed molds carved into wood or clay. These cookies were not only delicious, but their pictures told important historical and religious stories. Like anise, ginger was considered both an exotic spice and a medicine. Recipes existed in China as early as the 10th century and finally made it to Europe during the Middle Ages, but it wasn't until the 16th century that the gingerbread house became popular. This was thanks to the Brothers Grimm and their story of Hansel and Gretel discovering a house made entirely of candy. These traditions have endured for

DECEMBER OUTINGS & SPECIAL EVENTS

- 2nd ...Lunch At Cracker Barrel
- 3rd ...Adult Coloring with Gems
...Elves Bingo with Girl Scouts
- 4th ...Manager's Bonus Bingo
- 5th ...Guess The Mystery Oreo
...Family Christmas Dinner
- 6th ...Bow Making 101
- 9th ...Christmas Shopping @ Walmart
...Norwin Show Choir
- 10th ...Switch, Steal, Unwrap Gift Exchange
- 11th ...The History of Kennywood
- 12th ...Christmas Carols w/Pastor Dave Muir
...Girl Scout Carolers
- 13th ...Yankee Gift Swap
- 14th ...Children's Cookies with Santa
- 16th ...Pass Me a Present Please
...Van Ride to See Christmas Lights
- 17th ...Saran Wrap Christmas Ball
- 18th ...Christmas Party with Gary Stewart & Santa
- 19th ...Christmas Cookie Decorating
...Cub Scout Christmas Carolers
- 20th ...Christmas Wreaths w/Promise Hospice
...Jimmy's Twelve Days of Christmas Bingo
- 21st ...Miss Vicky's String Students
- 23rd ...Stage Right Sensations
- 24th ...Left-Right Christmas Stories
- 27th ...Resident Council Meeting
- 30th ...Funny Money Auction
- 31st ...Birthday Party & New Year's Bingo



Radio City Splendor

On December 27, 1932, at the height of the Great Depression, Radio City Music Hall opened in

New York City. The theater was the pet project of billionaire John D. Rockefeller Jr. He envisioned a performance venue for the masses, an Art Deco masterpiece where rich and poor alike could see the highest-quality entertainment. One year after opening, Radio City debuted its *Christmas Spectacular*, featuring the high-kicking Rockettes on its Great Stage. The stage measures over 100 feet long and 60 feet wide, and was constructed to resemble a setting sun. Since its opening, over 300 million people have passed through its doors

largest indoor theater in the world today.

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**Our Beauty shop is open on Tuesdays.
Appointments may be made at the
receptionist desk. Welcome our new
hairstylist is Niccole Swiatkowski.**



CONGRATULATIONS!

Transitions Resident Council
Recognizes
Brittany Brooks, CNA
As an outstanding employee for
December 2019

Tina Yakich, Administrator
Elizabeth (Beth) Kohler, DON
Leslie King, ADON
Ivy (Vita) Burrell, Admissions Director
Tawnette Arford, Business Office Mgr.
Raeann Matiasic, Social Service Director
Marsha Kirker-Bozich, Activity Director
Lynn Marie, Dietician
Jackie Austin, Dietary Manager
Mark Wargo, Maintenance Director
Kim Bartos, Environmental Services

December Birthdays

In astrology, those born between December 1–21 are centaur archers of Sagittarius. Archers are curious, energetic, and enjoy change, the restless travelers of the zodiac. They are funny and enthusiastic, cherishing freedom as their greatest treasure. Those born between December 22–31 are the horned goats of Capricorn. As goats climb to great heights, Capricorns strive to get to the top, using discipline and common sense to find fame, prestige, and money.

Richard Ba...Dec. 3
Anna Marie M...Dec.6
Matt P...Dec. 13
Eleanor M...Dec. 15
Richard Bl...Dec. 16
Carol S...Dec. 23
Marilyn M...Dec. 25
Marlene O...Dec. 26
Shirley S... Dec. 28
Ruth C...Dec. 30



Generosity on Tap

On December 31, 1759, Irishman Arthur Guinness signed a 9,000-year lease at £45 per year for the St. James' Gate brewery in Dublin. The brewery still operates today as one of the largest in the world. Guinness beer is famously known for its dark stout, but Guinness himself was much more than a successful brewer. He was a philanthropist deeply committed to improving social welfare. He ensured that working conditions at his brewery meant that both workers and their families were offered health insurance, meals, high wages, pensions, and even a free beer after a long day's work. Guinness also donated to local charities offering the poor affordable health care, while he preserved Gaelic arts and culture and advocated for religious tolerance. Despite his wealth, fame, and generosity, only one portrait exists of Arthur Guinness, yet his signature appears on every bottle of his self-named brew.