

Cranberry

Sauces & Relishes

**How to Make Cranberry Condiments
With Natural Sweeteners and Fresh Fruits**



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Contents

Introduction.....	3
Whole-Berry Cranberry Sauce	5
Apple-Orange-Cranberry Relish.....	7
Cranberry Fig Sauce.....	8
Fresh Cranberry Relish	9
Debra's Favorite Raw Cranberry Relish	10
Fruit-Sweetened Raw Cranberry Relish	11
Raw Cranapplepear Relish With Honey.....	11
About Debra	12

Introduction

I put together this little book of cranberry sauce and relish recipes because cranberries are a wonderful fruit to use during the holidays, but canned commercial cranberry sauces contain a few things I'd rather not eat.

First, unless the cranberry sauce is organic, it's full of pesticide residues. Then, if it comes in a can, the lining of the can is leaching bisphenol-a (BPA) into your cranberry sauce. And, America's most popular brand of cranberry sauce is sweetened with high fructose corn syrup.

Need I say more?

This book gives you another choice. You can make your own cranberry sauce at home. It's quick and easy to do, and you can make it with organic cranberries, and your choice of natural sweeteners. You can even make raw cranberry relish. You will enjoy the most delicious cranberries you've ever eaten!

In 2005, I began to research and explore the use of natural sweeteners. Actually, I had started researching them in about 1984, but couldn't figure out how to use them, so I went back to refined white sugar.

But in 2005, I decided that if I could learn how to use sweeteners that were in their natural state, it would be better for my body to eat these than refined and artificial sweeteners. And if I could make desserts with these sweeteners that would satisfy my emotional desire to eat sweets, then I wouldn't reach for desserts made with refined or artificial sweeteners.

I was right on both counts.

As I learned to make my favorite treats using natural sweeteners, I found that not only did they taste *better* than desserts sweetened with refined white sugar, but they didn't give me that sugar craving of wanting more.

Over a period of time, using these sweeteners, my body craved sugar less and less until I had little interest in white sugar sweets at all. This from a woman who once ate a whole coconut cream pie and would order multiple desserts in restaurants.

Since then I've created hundreds of recipes using natural sweeteners.

This book contains my favorite recipes for cranberry sauce and relish, to help you get through the holidays in a healthier way, and to get you started using natural sweeteners at the time of year while refined white sugar treats are most tempting.

If you want more holiday recipes using natural sweeteners, get my ebook ***Holiday Treats...Naturally Sweet*** at www.debrashomecooking.com.

The Sweeteners

One year I did an experiment and tried ten sweeteners in both the cooked sauce and the raw relish. I've listed them here alphabetically, as I know each of you will be choosing different sweeteners for different reasons. I love doing these tests, because they really show that the flavors and characteristics of the different sweeteners are really suited for different purposes. Some of the flavors of the sweeteners just really didn't go with cranberries at all!

All the sweeteners blended well with the cranberries after they were left to sit for a few hours.

- **agave nectar**: Very good - a personal favorite.
- **barley malt syrup**: Flavor of barley malt is overpowering - not recommended.
- **brown rice syrup**: Flavor does not go well with cranberries - not recommended.
- **date sugar**: Very good.
- **unrefined cane sugar** (such as Sucanat or Rapadura): Very good.
- **fruit spreads (fruit juice sweetened)**: This was very very good! I used marmalade and it added both sweetness and a nice orange flavor. I would also try raspberry or strawberry.
- **honey**: Very good, though results will vary depending on the type of honey used. I suggest a light honey such as wildflower, tupelo, or especially orange blossom.
- **maple syrup**: Another personal favorite. Since both cranberries and maple syrup grow in the Northeast, I'm not surprised they go together so well.

This year I tested the recipe for Whole-Berry Cranberry Sauce with coconut sugar, a sweetener that recently has become available, and is my personal favorite.

All these sweeteners can be purchased at your natural food store or online.

Have a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season!

Whole-Berry Cranberry Sauce

Your standard plain cranberry sauce.

Cranberries alone are quite healthy--lots of vitamin C and only 7 carbohydrates for a half-cup. But the recipes call for 1 cup sugar for every 2 cups cranberries, which is a lot. I found with the natural sweeteners I could use 1/4 cup sweetener to every 2 cups cranberries and it was plenty sweet. But you can always use more or less sweetener to taste.

You can use any natural sweetener with cranberries.

Makes 2 1/2 cups.

Ingredients

3 cups fresh cranberries (1 standard 12-ounce package)
1 1/2 cups boiling water
3/8 cup sweetener

Instructions

1. Wash and pick over the cranberries. Discard stems and soft berries.
2. Place the cranberries in a saucepan.
3. Cover with boiling water and turn the stove on to high heat.
4. When the water begins to boil, continue to boil for a few minutes until all the berries have burst open.
5. Turn off heat and stir with a wooden spoon, mashing some of the berries against the side of the pot until most of the berries are broken. It will be like a thin applesauce.
6. Add sweetener to warm cranberries and stir to dissolve. If you have trouble dissolving the sweetener, reheat to boiling, stirring constantly.
7. Allow sauce to cool to room temperature, then refrigerate until cool. Sauce will set up as it cools.

ADDITIONS

My cranberry sauce ends up being different every year because there are so many good things that go so well with cranberries!

Spices & Flavorings

Try adding cinnamon, cloves, ginger, nutmeg, allspice, or vanilla. These can be added during or after cooking.

Also rosemary, black pepper, and balsamic vinegar go well with cranberries, but are more savory.

Fruits

Add to cooked sauce during or after cooking, and to raw relish. These fruit go exceptionally well with cranberries: orange (fruit, juice and zest), tangerines, apples, raspberries, pears, stawberries, cherries, raisins.

Nuts

Add chopped, toasted nuts at the end. Walnuts and pecans are the most popular.

Liquor

This can be added as a flavoring at the end, or used in cooking. My personal favorite is to use ruby port for half of the cooking water. A bit of Grand Mariner gives a nice orange flavor, and brandy is good, too._

Cranberry Sauce With Orange Marmalade

Use 3/4 cup fruit-sweetened orange marmalade for the sweetener. The sauce is sweet with bits of tart orange peel. Simple and delicious!

Apple-Orange-Cranberry Relish

This was inspired by a relish sold at the cooking store Williams-Sonoma. After tasting the free sample, I came home and made it without sugar. It's sweetened only with fruits and is wonderfully fragrant with holiday spices.

Makes 3 cups relish.

Ingredients

2 apples, peeled and finely chopped
3/4 cup fruit-sweetened orange marmalade
3 cups (1 12-ounce bag) fresh cranberries
1 1/2 cup water
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground cloves

Instructions

1. Wash and pick over the cranberries. Discard stems and soft berries.
2. Place the cranberries in a saucepan.
3. Cover with boiling water and turn the stove on to high heat.
4. After starting the cranberries, add the other ingredients right away, and continue to cook until both cranberries and apples are soft. Mash the mixture a bit with the back of a wooden spoon to break up some of the fruits, but still leave it chunky.
5. Allow sauce to cool to room temperature, then refrigerate until cool. Sauce will set up as it cools.

Cranberry Fig Sauce

This recipe sweetens the cranberries with dried fruits only. I think I like this version best of all.

If you don't want to use figs, try dates, raisins, dried cherries, dried apples, or any mix of dried fruit.

Makes about 2 cups.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups dried figs (any single variety or a mix)
- 1 cup fresh cranberries
- 1 cup ruby port
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Instructions

1. Put all the ingredients in a pot over medium heat.
2. Bring to a boil, then turn the heat down and simmer 30-40 minutes, until almost all the liquid is gone. (Liquid will continue to absorb as it cools, into a more saucy consistency.)
3. Cool and serve.

I always like to add fresh orange or tangerine pieces to cooked cranberry sauce to lighten it up and make the flavor sparkle.

Fresh Cranberry Relish

Ingredients

3 cups fresh cranberries (1 standard 12-ounce package)
3/8 cup sweetener

Instructions

1. Wash and pick over the cranberries. Discard stems and soft berries.
2. Chop cranberries in a blender or food processor. Do not puree.
3. Add sweetener and any other ingredients and mix well.
4. Cover and chill in the refrigerator overnight to allow juices to blend with the sweetener and flavors to blend.

Debra's Favorite Raw Cranberry Relish

This raw relish was enjoyed by all at Thanksgiving in 2005. It happened to be placed on the table during the salad course. I had brought a salad of romaine and red leaf lettuce, with cucumbers, mild blue cheese, green onions, and a dressing of olive oil, organic apple cider vinegar, a bit of balsamic vinegar and salt and pepper. The relish accidentally ended up on the same forkfull with the salad and after I exclaimed it's deliciousness, everyone added it to their salad. Really yummy!

So good I make it every year now.

Ingredients

1 package (12 ounces) fresh cranberries, coarsely chopped
2 ribs celery, chopped fine
2-3 tablespoons red onion, finely chopped
raisins to taste
raw honey to taste
1/2 cup walnuts, toasted and chopped

Instructions

1. Mix all ingredients, except the walnuts, and chill several hours to blend flavors.
2. Add walnuts and mix just before serving.

Fruit-Sweetened Raw Cranberry Relish

This was sent in by a reader, who makes it for the staff and students at a school every Thanksgiving. They all love it!

Ingredients

1 pound raw cranberries

4 apples

4 oranges

Instructions

1. Wash cranberries, take out any bad ones.
2. Core the apples, you do not need to peel them.
3. Peel 3 of the oranges and cut up. Take out any seeds.
4. Cut up the last orange, leave the peeling on.
5. Put the above in a food grinder or food processor. I use an old fashioned hand grinder.
6. If you like it sweeter add more oranges or apples.
7. Let it sit over night.

Raw Cranapplepear Relish With Honey

Another suggestion from a reader...

Combine chopped fresh cranberries with chopped ripe pear, chopped apple, and raw honey.

About Debra



Debra has been cooking for more than fifty years—since she made her first dinner of hot dogs and brownies at age six. Since, she has learned a lot about what to eat and what not to eat in order to be healthy.

The author of *Toxic Free: How to Protect Your Health and Home from the Chemicals That are Making You Sick*, Debra specializes in helping consumers remove toxic chemicals from their diets, including food additives, pesticides, toxic residues from food packaging and storage, and cookware.

But she is also concerned about how foods themselves are being altered with GMOs and how their nutritional content has been altered by poor soils and processing.

Debra's goal is to eat whole, local, seasonal, organic foods and prepare them in a way that is so delicious that she and others *prefer* these healthy foods over the processed, packaged, refined foods we all grew up with. And she's accomplishing this. Family and friends rave about her cooking and recipes.

For several years Debra published a website called Sweet Savvy, which was discontinued due to technical difficulties with the website. Now she's writing a food blog that covers every aspect of preparing delicious, nutritious real foods at www.debrashomecooking.com.

In 2011, some of her recipes were included in the **Green Market Baking Book**, along side recipes "from many of the best chefs and bakers in the business."

