



Fancy Cranberry Juice Sparklers

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 10 / **Cook Time** / **Serves** 6 - 12

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

rim: to dip the outer edge or rim of a glass into sugar or salt after first applying moisture, such as water or juice.

zest: to scrape off the outer colored part of a citrus fruit's rind (skin or peel) using a metal tool with small sharp blades, such as a zester, microplane, or the small holes of a grater (avoid the "pith," the white, spongy lining of the rind that can be bitter).

juice: to extract or squeeze out the juice of a fruit or vegetable, like a lemon, orange, or carrot, often cutting open or peeling the fruit or veggie first to access its flesh.

Equipment

- Small plate
- Measuring spoons
- Zester for zesting citrus (or metal box grater with small zesting holes)
- Cutting board + kid-safe knife (a butter knife works great)
- Citrus squeezer (optional)
- Liquid measuring cup
- Wooden spoon
- Small drinking glasses

Ingredients

Fancy Cranberry Juice Sparklers

- 1 T sugar

- 1 orange
- ice
- 3 C cranberry juice (100% juice)
- 1 C sparkling water

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Instructions

Fancy Cranberry Juice Sparklers

measure + zest + mix + rim

Measure **1 tablespoon of sugar** and pour onto a small plate. Zest **1 orange** and mix the zest in with the sugar. Cut the orange in half and rim the outside of small drinking glasses with the cut side of the orange. Dip the tops of glasses into the orange and sugar mixture so that they're evenly coated with a rim of orange sugar.

fill + juice + stir

Fill glasses with ice. Squeeze orange juice over each glass of ice. Divide **3 cups of cranberry juice** among glasses (fill each about 3/4 of the way). Then, with **1 cup of sparkling water**, top off each glass and stir. Cheers!

Featured Ingredient: Cranberry!

Hi! I'm Cranberry!

"I love being me because I'm very popular during Fall holiday feasts. Yes, I can be sour, but sugar sweetens me right up, and cranberry sauce is a tart and tasty culinary partner when added to turkey (and leftover turkey sandwiches!). I also like hanging out with my orange friends to make delicious scones or muffins."

History

The cranberry is indigenous to North America. The Narragansett people, an Algonquian tribe who called the berries "sasemineash," may have introduced them to Massachusetts Bay colonists in the early 1600s. The Native Americans created what you could call the first energy bar, "Pemmican," made from a mixture of pounded cranberry, ground deer meat, and fat tallow. They also used cranberries to make a dye. Several 17th-century books from New England reference cranberry recipes. A couple of the books describe cranberry sauce, and a cook's guide mentions cranberry juice.

Many years ago, American ships carried cranberries to prevent scurvy, a disease caused by vitamin C deficiency, for the same reason English sailors added limes to their diets.

Eighty percent of cranberries grown worldwide are harvested today in the United States and Canada. Cranberries are primarily grown in five states: Massachusetts, Wisconsin, New Jersey, Oregon, and Washington.

About 80 million pounds, or 20 percent of the cranberries harvested per year, are gobbled up during Thanksgiving week!

There are approximately 4,000 cranberries in one gallon of cranberry juice!

The word "cranberry" is from the mid-17th century (by a North American Puritan), from the German "kranbeere" (crane-berry).

Anatomy

The cranberry plant is an evergreen shrub or trailing vine from the Ericaceae (heath or heather) family that includes the blueberry, huckleberry, rhododendron, azaleas, and heathers. The berries are part of the genus *Vaccinium*.

Contrary to common belief, cranberries do not grow in water. Instead, they are grown on constructed beds surrounded by dykes, evenly layered with sand, and close to a water source. The cranberry farmers flood these "bogs" in Fall so that the cranberries can float to the surface when they are ready to harvest and in Winter to protect the plants from the cold temperature.

Cranberries are small, light, airy, round, and red. Each cranberry has four air pockets in the middle that allow it to float.

Cranberries are sometimes called "bounceberries" because the tiny air pockets make them bounce and float in the bogs when they are ripe!

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

When selecting fresh cranberries from the grocery store, where they usually come in a bag, look for firm, plump berries that are red to dark red. Avoid ones that look shriveled, feel soft, or have blemishes. You can buy fresh cranberries from September through January, and you can freeze fresh cranberries until ready to use. Frozen, canned, and dried cranberries are available year-round at the grocery store. Store cranberries in their sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator for one to two months, check the berries' condition now and then, and remove any that appear to be decaying. They can last about one year in an airtight container if you freeze them.

Cranberries are both sour and bitter. They taste astringent! This is due to tannins, the same compound found in red wines. So fresh cranberries are usually sweetened and juiced, cooked, or dried before eating. Make an easy cranberry sauce by heating a bag of fresh or frozen cranberries with 3/4 cup sugar, 2 tablespoons of orange juice, 1 tablespoon of water, and some orange zest. Simmer the sauce over low heat until the cranberries pop for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Fresh cranberry salsa is delicious. Mince cranberries in a food processor and combine with lime juice, fresh ginger, minced jalapeno, cilantro, sugar, and chopped green onions. Serve with chips!

You can add cranberries to smoothies and bake them into puddings, cakes, and pies. You can also make jam, relish, and sherbet with them.

Cranberries are especially delicious paired with pork, almond, orange, peach, cinnamon, ginger, chocolate, apple, mango, pear, and pear.

Nutrition

Cranberries are a moderate source of vitamin C. Vitamin C protects our blood vessels and heart and helps us maintain healthy immunity during cold and flu season. In addition, the body uses vitamin C to absorb iron, another essential nutrient.

They also have a moderate amount of manganese. It is a mineral and essential trace element involved with the metabolism of carbohydrates and glucose. Manganese also helps bone formation and works with vitamin K in blood clotting.

Cranberries contain A-type proanthocyanidins (plant compounds) that help keep bacteria from binding to cell walls. These compounds are why cranberry juice is associated with preventing urinary tract infections.