

Tea Time Traditions

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Fall 2011

Tea...Steeped in History and Tradition

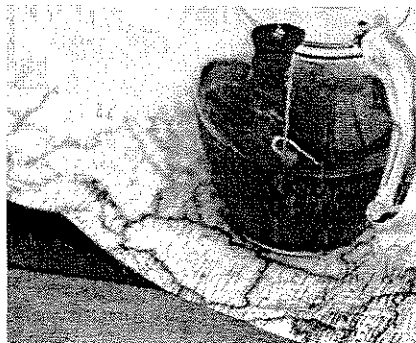
Far more than just a beverage, tea has a rich and important history that goes back nearly 5,000 years. A tradition that can be credited with everything from the opening trade from the East to the West, to being the impetus for freeing America's colonies.

The history of tea was something of an accident. According to legend, the year was 2737 B. C., and the Chinese Emperor Shen Nung was boiling drinking water over an open fire. A regime he followed because he believed those who drank boiled water were healthier. A few leaves from the burning branches of a *Camellia Sinensis* plant fell into the pot of water. The emperor, known as the "Divine Healer," drank the mixture and from then on declared it gave one "vigor of body, contentment of mind, and determination of purpose."

Thus, the belief in tea's mysterious healing powers was established, and became popularly known as it is today, as a healthy, soothing beverage for all occasions.

The first documented reference to tea came in 350 A. D. when Chinese scholar Kuo P'o wrote about "k'ut'u", a medicinal beverage "made from the leaves by boiling." By the fifth century A. D., tea became a major bartering tool for China, along with vinegar, rice, noodles, cabbage, fruits, and dried meats.

It also became a popular social custom for China's elite, with the imperial house and Buddhist priests enjoying royal blends and converting a special "white" tea, considered the rarest and most delicate of teas.



In 1657, Thomas Garway, an English proprietor got the bright idea of offering tea to the public and the beverage quickly became the drink of choice, far outpacing wines, and liquors. Taverns became deserted in favor of "coffee houses" (which were so named because the public sale of coffee pre-dates the sale of tea by a few years.)

Unfortunately, for those in power, Britain was losing all the taxes that accompanied liquor sales. However, the government quickly remedied that situation by imposing a tea tax.

The coffee houses wielded so much power that a threatened King Charles II shut them down in 1675, calling the selling of tea a virtual act of sedition. A month later, the king had to recant his edict when the tea, coffee, and chocolate dealers rose up in protest. Of course, the fact that the king's wife, Queen Catherine of Braganza, was a tea drinker didn't help his cause, as she set an example for all Britain's subjects to indulge in the new fashionable drink.

Across the Atlantic, the tea tax was causing another sort of commotion in the American Colonies. While many other British taxes on goods bound for America had been repealed, the three pence per pound of tea remained intact to save the financially mismanaged British East India Company. Over a five-year period (1769-72), the colonies paid duty on nearly 2 million pounds of tea.

Inflamed by the tax and other restrictions on the shipping and receiving of tea in America, the Sons of Liberty attempted to block the consignees from accepting the taxed tea. In Philadelphia and New York, tea ships were turned back before entering harbor. In Charleston, the tea was unloaded but kept under bond in a damp warehouse.

The Boston Sons of Liberty were determined to make more of a statement. On December 16, 1773, they let two ships sail into harbor. Samuel Adams, Paul Revere and others met in the Old South Meeting House to plot their strategy. After sending a message to the governor to turn back the tea, and having the message ignored, the mob descended on the waterfront.

Disguised as native America Indians, they emptied 342 large chests of precious tea into the harbor.

The Boston Tea Party led the British Parliament to pass a series of laws that Americans referred to as the "Intolerable Acts," limiting the political and geographic freedom of the colonists. These unjust acts were the direct cause for the convening of the First Continental Congress, which ultimately led to the Revolutionary War.

Therefore, in a sense, Americans have continued to embrace tea ever since, adding their own distinctive traditions, like iced tea and the tea bag.

Iced tea was created at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, Missouri. The temperature was soaring and the staff in the Far East Tea House could not get any fair goers to even look their way, let alone sample their tea. Therefore, they poured the hot tea over ice cubes and the drink quickly became the exposition's most popular beverage.

At about the same time, an enterprising New York tea merchant, Thomas Sullivan, began sending out samples of tea in small silk bags to win customers who thought tea in tins was inconvenient. Before long, Sullivan was swamped with orders for the easy, pre-measured tea sacks and thus the tea bag was born.

Today, iced tea accounts for 75-80% of America's tea consumption. Of the more than 200 million pounds of tea packaged for consumption in the United States, more than 65% comes in bags.

Tea is now grown and processed throughout the world, with the major tea growing regions being in mountainous terrain where milder climates and rich soils can be found, as in Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, and Sri Lanka. In addition, with consumers today turning to all natural, relaxing, and refreshing drinks, tea is one of the most compatible contemporary beverages for today's active and healthy lifestyle. Research into this increasingly popular thirst quencher emerges each day, lending credibility to tea's already positive health image.

With a history dating nearly 5,000 years, and with more than 3,000 variations, the most widely consumed beverage in the world has firmly established itself as a beverage of historic and cultural importance, with unbeatable flavors and blends, and all around appeal as the perfect beverage for the 90's.

(Source: Tea Council of the U.S. A., Inc.)

The Tea Market

Three basic types of teas exist - black, green and oolong. Differences among the three types of tea result from the degree of processing and the level of contact with oxygen.

Black Tea...In the U.S. over 90% of the tea consumed is black tea. This type of tea has been fully oxidized or fermented and yields a hearty flavored, amber brew. Some of the popular black teas include English Breakfast, Darjeeling and Orange Pekoe. Others include... Assam, Ceylon, Breakfast, Keeman, Lapsang Souchong, Irish Breakfast, and Russian Caravan.

Green Tea...The oxidizing step does not take place with green tea. It has a more delicate taste and is light green/golden in color. Green tea, a staple in the Orient, is gaining popularity in the U.S. due in part to recent scientific studies linking green tea drinking with reduced cancer risk. Green teas include... Gunpowder, Hyson, Imperial and Jasmine.

Oolong Tea... This variety is popular in China. Oolong tea is partly oxidized and is a cross between black and green tea in color and taste. The popular Oolong teas include... Black Dragon, China Oolong, Mainland Oolong, and Formosa Oolong.

Flavored teas evolve from these three basic teas. For Example, Earl Grey is a blend of fine black teas flavored with the oil of bergamot. Flavored teas are not to be confused with herbal teas.

Herbal teas... While flavored teas evolve from these basic teas, herbal teas contain no true tealeaves. Herbal and "medicinal" teas are created from the flowers, berries, peels, seeds, and leaves and roots of many different plants. To be real tea, the product has to come from a warm-weather evergreen known as *Camellia sinensis*. Only black, green and oolong are derived from the leaves of that tree. To make sure you are getting one of those three, check to see that the label does not have the word "herbal" or "herb" on it. Alternatively, note whether the ingredients list contains the word "tea."

Where does tea come from?... Much of the world's tea is grown in mountainous areas usually 3,000-7,000 feet above sea level, situated between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn, in mineral rich soil. Leading tea producing countries include Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania.

Consumption of Tea

On any given day, about ½ the population drinks tea. On a regional basis, the South and Northeast have the greatest concentration of tea drinkers.

Iced Tea...America is unique in its consumption habits in that approximately 80% of the tea, which is consumed here, is over ice.

Ready to drink iced teas... Ready to drink iced teas are the fastest growing tea products and in fact, represent the fastest growing new product in the supermarket. In 1994, ready-to-drink sales are estimated at \$1.3 billion to \$1.6 billion.

Tea bags, loose tea & iced tea mixes... In 1994, approximately 60% of the tea brewed in the United States was prepared using tea bags. Iced tea mixes comprise about 1/4 of all tea prepared in the U.S. Just over 1% was brewed from loose tea and the remainder was prepared from instant tea.

Ready to drink teas are a beverage alternative that is rapidly growing. As like soda, these teas contain added sugar and caffeine. There are a number of varieties of ready to drink iced teas available to consumers today.

In a taste panel, conducted by Consumer Reports, preservatives and artificial sweeteners contained in ready to drinks influenced the taste quality more than any other component.

Nutrition and Health Qualities

Tea in its pure form is a refreshing beverage that contains no sodium, fat, carbonation, or sugar, and is virtually calorie free.

Caffeine and other stimulants... Tea is low in caffeine. A cup of tea contains about 40 milligrams per cup of caffeine. In comparison, brewed coffee has an average of 115 milligrams per cup and cola an average of 40 milligrams. However, for individuals who are sensitive to caffeine this amount may still be too much. The other stimulants include theophylline and Theobromine.

Tea for health... There has been increasing evidence that tea may provide special health benefits. Most studies have looked at tea and various kinds of cancer, IE. Stomach, esophagus, colon, and lung cancers. Tea contains polyphenols, the so-called tannins, known to be antioxidants and protectors against cancer initiation and promotion. So far, the studies indicate the tea has a beneficial effect for cancer prevention.

However, not all tea is created equal. Green tea appears to offer the most protection. The difference between green and the other two varieties, black and oolong, is the fermentation they undergo. Green tea is not fermented. The fermentation process tends to destroy or alter the polyphenols. Green teas are not readily available in all markets and in stores featuring Oriental products.

Other health studies... Preliminary studies at the University of Scranton in Pennsylvania suggest that

both black and green tea are superior sources of antioxidants that may keep LDL-Cholesterol or "bad" cholesterol from doing damage in the body. In testing 40 beverages, Joe Vinson, Ph.D., found that the antioxidant activity of tea was of a high quality.

Tea antioxidants, on their way into the bloodstream, bind to LDL cholesterol, acting like the body's own antioxidant. They continue to protect the LDL from undergoing oxidation and thus saving the artery walls from damage, IE, heart disease.

More Benefits... Tea is a rich source of fluoride and can strengthen tooth enamel. Even a cup a day can provide a significant amount of fluoride.

Tea can also reduce plaque formation on teeth that can lead to gum inflammation and bleeding and eventually lost teeth. Probably the most important reason to drink plenty of tea is how it helps people maintain enough water in their tissues. This is especially important during the hot weather.

Tea, is it a diuretic? ...The caffeine contained in coffee and tea does increase urination. However, coffee and tea also have other qualities that stimulate the need to urinate. Which together they may have a much greater effect than caffeine alone.

Tea contains a component known as tannins. In addition, the tannins that binds with iron, reducing iron absorption. Tea and coffee consumed along with food can inhibit iron absorption. Drinking these beverages between meals has no effect on iron absorption nor does consuming tea along with foods high in Vitamin C (vitamin C rich foods aid in iron absorption.) Foods containing non-heme iron or the type of iron present in all plant foods are largely affected by consuming tea and coffee simultaneously, therefore vegetarians that drink tea are more susceptible to iron deficiency. It is important to keep in mind that tea and coffee are only part of the total picture...eating habits alone and other components in the diet may affect iron intake and absorption.

Other drawbacks... Tea contain compounds that can discolor teeth.

It is a matter of safety... Consumers and the food service industry take precautionary measures to ensure prevention of food borne illnesses. How do you minimize the risk? The Center for Disease Control makes the following recommendations:

1. The tea industry recommends that iced tea be brewed at 195 degrees F for 3-5 minutes, that tea be stored for no longer than 8 hours, and that the tea brewer, storage dispenser, and faucet be cleaned daily. These guidelines for the preparation and storage of iced tea are consistent with available data and are likely to reduce the coliform contamination of iced tea.

3. The practice of making "sun tea" by steeping the bags in a container of water in the sun may be a higher risk than brewing tea at a higher temperature, because it provides an environment where bacteria are more likely to survive and multiply.

Storage of the tea in ceramic or lead containers is inadvisable due to the tea's acidity.



It is Tea Time!

A perfect pot...To make a perfect pot of tea, there are a few simple steps to follow:

- Always start with fresh cold water.
- Brew tea in a clean glass, pottery, or china teapot.
- Warm the teapot with hot tap water or boiling water before adding tea leaves. Pour out.
- Place 1 to 1 1/2 teaspoons of loose tea for each cup of tea into the teapot. The type of tea chosen will determine the amount of tea you will want to use. Keep an extra pot filled with hot water handy to dilute a too-strong pot of tea.

- Always bring the teapot to the boiling water! Pour boiling water over tea in the pot. (Never allow water to sit and boil too long on stove.) Cover the pot and allow tea to brew for no less than 3 and no more than 5 minutes. Some teas such as oolong and green require only 2 to 3 minutes. Do not brew too long or tea will become bitter. Give the water a stir for even brewing. Pour into cups; use a strainer to remove tealeaves.

For a perfect, cup...Place a teaspoon of loose tea into a tea infuse or ball. (You may rather use one tea bag.) Pour boiling water over the infuser or bag in a teacup. Brew 3 to 5 minutes. Remove tea infuse or ball after brewing time. Avoid the temptation to squeeze out the tea bag, to prevent bitter oils from spoiling the tea.

Setting up your own tea...Like any get-together, planning a tea can be as elaborate or as simple as you like. Whether you own a beautiful tea service or the humblest of porcelain pots, it makes no difference. Tea itself is the only ingredient that is essential.

Setting the scene... Some kind of formality is what marks teatime as special. The tea party "mood"

can be achieved in a number of ways. For example, using linens or cloth napkins and tablecloths is one of the charming traditions of European's tea. Use cloth napkins for a special touch. You can also opt for a tablecloth, place mats or a linen and lace runner to place under the teapot and plates or trays of sweet accompaniments.

Silverware, or simply your favorite pieces, is nice to use, along with a cake server, or smaller spatula-type server for the dainty cakes or sandwiches you plan to serve.

For tableware, opt for porcelain or glass plates, cups, and saucers. Note that cups and saucers do not need to match all around; many hosts collect different cup and saucer combinations so that each guest receives a different cup of tea.

Trays, platters, or plates are suitable for presenting the edibles. A tired cake stand is pretty for more than just for cake.

Consider a tea samovar for larger groups. A samovar is an urn with a spigot at its base. Often, it has a small kerosene burner beneath the pot to keep the tea hot and hearty.

Flowers are a nice touch. Anything from a single rose in a bud vase to a large table centerpiece is appropriate, depending on the size of your teatime gala.

Time for tea...The history books tell of an English duchess, Anna, Duchess of Bedford, in the mid-18th century that experienced a sinking feeling each day around 4:00 p.m. To make herself feel better, she would request a plate of cakes to accompany her cup of tea. She began inviting friends to join her, and so, the tradition of afternoon tea began.

Afternoon tea...Something sweet and something savory is the customary rule for foods served at an afternoon tea. Fresh-baked scones, petit fours, and open-face sandwiches are popular selections.

Elevenes...The British tradition of stopping at mid-morning for a cup of tea and a light snack.

Morning tea is perfect for those who do not eat breakfast, or who would rather eat several light meals throughout the day. It may also be an option for those who get hungry before lunch.

For a morning tea break, spread crackers with cream cheese and a light spread of jam; bring your own bran or fruit muffins, and avoid the coffee cart. If you are home with the children, offer them fruit juice with crackers while you enjoy your tea.

High Tea...High tea honors the end of the workday. This substantial evening meal is usually enjoyed between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. A buffet of savory meat pies, hearty sandwiches, and sweet desserts is one option for a high tea table.

Dessert tea... If you crave something sweet or fruity at the end of the meal, but are trying to pass on the added calories, serve a tea tray.

Select several varieties and flavors of teas. Serve with fresh fruit, cinnamon sticks, or a side dish of yogurt sorbet.

You can also serve punch with a concentrated brew; and a flavorful blend of juices, seasonal fruits, or mints.

Caring for your tea things... The china, silver, and linen you use for tea are worth some risk, but they also deserve loving care. Here are some ideas for preserving your beautiful tea things:

If you have lace tablecloths that which are stained or yellowed put a cup of enzyme bleach (such as Biz) in a bucket of water and soak for about three days, and then put through the wash cycle. Regular bleach can yellow the delicate fabric or cause it to fall apart.

To clean your silver, try rubbing with toothpaste. Alternatively, place aluminum foil in bottom of sink, fill sink with water and add 1 cup Tide detergent (do not use another kind). Dump in silver pieces and let set for eight to twelve hours, or until tarnish free. Be sure to wash well following this procedure!

If the inside of your china teapot turns brown, clean with bleach. Be sure to rinse thoroughly before using.

Tea Recipes

SPICED TEA MIX

- 1 cup dry instant tea (can use decaffeinated)
- 2 cups dry powdered orange drink
- 3 cups sugar (may use half sugar substitute)
- ½ cup hot cinnamon candy
- 1 t. ground cinnamon
- ½ t. powdered cloves

One package (about 1 cup) lemonade mix

Mix all ingredients and place in a covered container. Makes 1 ½ quarts. To give as a gift, pack in a small jelly jar with lid. Tie a ribbon across the neck with a bright plastic teaspoon. Also, include directions for mixing: one heaping tablespoon to one-cup hot water.

TEA SANDWICHES

Afternoon tea sandwiches are made from very thinly sliced bread with crusts removed. Spread bread with unsalted butter, herb butter, mayonnaise, or cream cheese. Add filling and cut into squares,

rectangles, or diamond shapes-or use cookie cutters for round or heart-shaped sandwiches.

ALMOND CHICKEN TEA SANDWICHES

- 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cooked and chopped coarsely
- ½ c. slivered, blanched almonds
- ½ c. mayonnaise
- White or wheat bread

Mix chicken, almonds, and mayonnaise. Butter well each slice of bread. On half the slices, spoon about 3 tablespoons of almond chicken mixture. Top with remaining slices. Stack three sandwiches tall. Wrap in wax paper and again in a slightly dampened kitchen towel. Let filling set for at least an hour. Unwrap, cut off crusts, and cut into triangles. For a different look, cut sandwiches in 2" strips and set on a doily sideways, with the strips of chicken filling showing.

ENGLISH CUCUMBER TEA SANDWICH

- Thin sliced bread (white or dill)
- Butter
- English cucumber, peeled and sliced very thin
- Salt and pepper
- Mayonnaise
- Fresh parsley, chopped

Cut bread into rounds, spread with butter. Top half of the rounds with thin-sliced cucumber. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Top the sandwich with another buttered bread round. Spread mayonnaise along the side edge of sandwich and roll in chopped parsley. (You may choose to leave cucumber open-faced with a dollop of mayonnaise and a sprinkle of chopped parsley or dill.)

PUMPKIN TACO DIP

- 1 cup (pkg) chipped beef
- 1 - 12oz pkg Neufchatel cream cheese
- ¾-cup pumpkin
- 2 Tbsp. reduced sodium taco seasoning
- 1/3 cup red and green peppers
- 2 - ¼ oz. black chopped olives
- 1/8 tsp. garlic powder

Make ahead and store in the refrigerator. Let warm a few minutes before serving. Serve with crackers, sliced veggies, or tortilla chips. Makes 3 cups.

CREAM SCONES

2 cups all-purpose flour
1/3 cup white sugar
2 tsp. baking powder
1/8 tsp. salt
1/3 cup chilled unsalted butter
1 large egg, slightly beaten
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1/2 cup whipping cream

Preheat oven to 375F. Place oven rack in the middle of the oven. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Cut the butter into small pieces and blend into the flour mixture with a pastry blender or two knives, until it looks like coarse crumbs.

In a small measuring cup, combine the whipping cream, beaten egg and vanilla. Add this mixture to the flour mixture and stir until just combined.

Knead dough gently on a lightly floured surface. Roll or pat the dough into a circle that is about 7" round and 1 1/2" thick. Cut the circle into 8 wedges. Make a glaze of one well-beaten egg and 1 Tbsp. heavy cream and brush it over the scones.

Separate the wedges place them on the cookie sheet and bake for 15 minute or until lightly browned. These scones freeze very well.

Variations:

- Add 1/3 cup dried red tart cherries
- Add 1/3 cup miniature chocolate chips
- Add 2 tsp. grated lemon peel and 1 Tbsp. poppy seeds
- Add 1 Tbsp. poppy seeds to the dry ingredients. Use almond extract instead of vanilla. Sprinkle with almonds before baking.
- Sprinkle sugar over the glazed scones before baking.

HOMEMADE DEVONSHIRE CREAM

1 c. whipping cream
2 t. powdered sugar
1/2 c. sour cream

Beat whipping cream until soft peaks form. Blend in sour cream and powdered sugar. Chill and serve. (Will keep no longer than 4 to 6 hours in refrigerator.)

LEMON CURD

1 c. sugar
6 T. butter
3 to 4 t. lemon zest, finely chopped
6 T. lemon juice
3 eggs beaten

In the top of double boiler, combine sugar, butter, zest and lemon juice. Over simmering-not boiling - water, stir mixture until butter has melted and the sugar is dissolved. Stirring constantly, spoon a little of the hot butter mixture, stirring constantly to blend. Cool over simmering water until it has thickened-about 20 minutes. Remove lemon curd from heat, cool and refrigerate. Will keep in refrigerator 1 to 2 weeks.

HEAVENLY MERINGUE TARTS

1/2 c. sugar
1/4 c. powdered sugar
1/2 t. vanilla
1/4 t. cream of tartar
3 egg whites

Combine sugars by sifting them together in a bowl. Set aside. Beat together vanilla, cream of tartar, and egg whites until soft peaks are formed. Beat in sugar 1 tablespoon at a time until stiff peaks form and meringue is glossy. Drop by spoonful's onto a baking sheet covered with parchment paper. Using back of spoon, make an indention in center of each meringue. Bake at 250° for 1 hour. Turn off oven, do not open door. Leave them for one more hour.

APPLE-PECAN TARTLETS

Miniature puff pastry shells
3 tart apples, peeled and chopped
3/4 c. brown sugar
1/4 t. cinnamon
1 egg, beaten
Dash of nutmeg
2 T. butter, melted
1/2 t. lemon juice
1 t. lemon zest
1/2 c. cream
1/2 c. chopped pecans

Mix all ingredients together and fill unbaked tart shells. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes at 350°.

BITE-SIZE STICKY BUNS

- 5 T. butter, melted
- 2 T. light corn syrup
- 1/3 C. brown sugar
- 1/2 c. pecans, finely chopped
- 12 pieces frozen roll dough, thawed

Grease 24 miniature muffin cups. Set aside. Combine butter, corn syrup, sugar, and nuts. Spoon mixture into the bottom of muffin cups. Cut each dinner roll in half. Place cut side down on pecan mixture in muffin cup. Cover and let rise in a warm place until rolls double in size. Bake at 350° for 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from oven, cool 1 minute, and then invert pan on cooling rack or wax paper.

BUTTER COOKIES

- 2 sticks unsalted sweet butter (softened)
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 egg, separated
- 1 1/2 t. Amaretto or 1/2 t. almond extract
- 2 t. grated orange zest
- 1/4 t. salt
- 2 c. flour
- 3/4 c. sliced almonds

Preheat oven to 300°. Beat together butter and sugar until light and fluffy (about 3 minutes). Add egg yolk, Amaretto or extract, orange zest, and salt; beat well. Stir in flour and blend well. Spread and pat the dough evenly into a 10 X 15 inch jellyroll pan. Beat egg whites until foamy and brush evenly over the dough. Sprinkle almonds over top. Bake 40 minutes or until light golden brown. Cut into 2" squares while still warm.

PUMPKIN SCONES

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup plus 3 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1-tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 6 tablespoons cold butter, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1/2 cup canned pumpkin
- 3 tablespoons half-and-half
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 375F. Place oven rack in the middle of the oven. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Cut the butter into small pieces and blend into the flour mixture with a pastry blender or two knives, until it looks like coarse crumbs.

In a small measuring cup, combine the pumpkin whipping cream, beaten egg and vanilla. Add this mixture to the flour mixture and stir until just combined.

Knead dough gently on a lightly floured surface. Roll or pat the dough into a circle that is about 7" round and 1 1/2" thick. Cut the circle into 8 wedges. Separate the wedges place them on the cookie sheet and bake for 15 minutes or until lightly browned.

SPICED GLAZE for PUMPKIN SCONES

- 1 cup plus 3 tablespoons powdered sugar
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Pinch of ground ginger
- Pinch of ground cloves

CRANBERRY BRUSCHETTA

- 1 1/2 cups Fresh or Frozen Cranberries
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced into rings
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh basil
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 1 (8-ounce) loaf French bread
- Extra virgin olive oil

Combine cranberries, sugar and red wine vinegar in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil. Add onion and garlic, return to a boil and reduce heat. Simmer on low for 10 minutes or until cranberries pop.

Pour into a glass bowl. Stir in basil and oregano. Cool at room temperature.

Cut bread diagonally into 16 (3/4-inch) slices; brush both sides with oil. Broil each side for 1 to 2 minutes or until golden brown. Top each slice with cranberry mixture. Makes 16 servings.

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Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

November 2011

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