

Rawsome Cranberry Relish

For folks who haven't already tried raw cranberry relish, this recipe is also an adventure and an experiment, and we offer it in that spirit.

Remember, when eating raw, NOTHING is more important than the healthiness of the ingredients. No pesticides, preservatives, additives or adulterants, ever! So this simple little recipe is going to require a little forethought and preparation. Since this is likely to be an experiment for you and your family -- eating raw orange peel? -- it's okay to make a small batch ahead of time to refine your ingredients and procedures.

At a local health, natural, or enlightened supermarket, find organic cranberries and navel oranges. If your family aren't adventurous eaters, get a tart apple for each orange. The cranberries will be expensive, because growing without pesticides and fertilizers puts the farmer to some serious extra effort and exposes him to a higher risk of crop failure. Remember, for something (like healthy food) to be sustainable - - something you can count on having year after year, there is no such thing as a free lunch. Half a pound of cranberries and one orange will make enough for a taste for everyone ...but believe me, everyone will want more. Bodies recognize this kind of food and go, "Gimme more of THAT!"

It is especially important that your oranges be organic. "Normal" oranges are likely to contain pesticide residue, but their skins will have been soaked in preservative and then waxed so they look good in the market. For this recipe, you will be eating the peel, so it must be free of adulterants.

Find some good local honey, too. Nothing beats honey for flavoring this dish.

Even though these are organic, rinse the cranberries and pick out any shriveled ones, and scrub the oranges with the vegetable brush.

The basic relish proportions are flexible, but equal volumes of orange and cranberry are where to start. Cut the WHOLE orange into quarters and discard the pithy part in the center. (If you had to buy oranges with seeds, dig them out and discard them.) If you want to reduce the liquid in the relish, squeeze the oranges and enjoy the juice; for this recipe we're interested in the peel and the flesh. In your food processor or blender, process small batches lightly, leaving it chunky enough so bits of orange peel and cranberry are recognizable.



If you want to produce a dryer relish, put the ground mixture in a sieve over a bowl and let it drain. At first the juice may make you pucker, but adding a little honey will make it delicious.

In your serving bowl, combine the ground oranges and cranberries with honey to taste. (Try not to taste it so enthusiastically that it all goes away. We had that problem the first couple of times.) That's it! Serve at room temperature for the full flavor.

Variations: add organic raisins, currants, dates, apples, or chopped nuts of any kind. For a real adventure, add a lemon to a bigger batch.

This relish is more than good to eat, it is good for you: wonderfully cleansing and a perfect accompaniment to the often-heavy foods we associate with Thanksgiving.