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FOOD EDITORS RELEASE

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“GOBBLE” UP THE FLAVOR: MAKE WILD RICE YOUR ULTIMATE THANKSGIVING UPGRADE!

Wild Rice is Essential to a Memorable Thanksgiving Meal!

As the holiday season approaches, families across the nation are carefully preparing their Thanksgiving menus. This year, as a way to enhance your holiday feast, try upgrading your meal with a delightful twist by incorporating the great taste of wild rice – a nutritious and flavorful alternative to traditional Thanksgiving sides your guests are sure to “gobble up.” With its nutty flavor and chewy texture, wild rice not only enhances the culinary experience but also adds a touch of sophistication to your holiday spread.

Known as an ‘ancient grain’ and the only cereal grain native to North America, there may be no holiday more appropriate to feature the tradition of wild rice. It has long been considered a highly nutritious whole grain, rich in protein and essential nutrients, and a great source of dietary fiber. It possesses a flavor profile tailor-made for adding a distinctly nutty flair to your holiday stuffing, sides, soups, and salads. It also pairs beautifully with seasonal ingredients, making it an ideal complement to roasted turkey, savory stuffing, and vibrant vegetables – all of which are sure to impress your guests and leave them asking for seconds. Its adaptability means it can complement both traditional and modern recipes, fitting seamlessly into any Thanksgiving menu.

Let wild rice take center stage at your Thanksgiving table this year so your guests can ‘gobble up’ its great taste, flavor, and nutritional benefits. Whether you’re hosting a large gathering or an intimate dinner, it’s the perfect way to honor tradition while embracing new flavors.

This year, try any one or all of these wild rice recipes to make your Thanksgiving meal one to remember:

Classic Creamy Wild Rice Soup

The ideal starter for your Thanksgiving spread is also one of America’s favorite soups – *Classic Creamy Wild Rice Soup*. Hearty, simple, and extremely flavorful, this comforting soup blends the nutty flavor of wild rice with smoked ham, onion, sherry, and almonds to provide the perfect beginning to a memorable holiday meal. When you’re looking for tasty options for leftovers, try swapping out the ham with leftover turkey.

Wild Craisin Salad

As an alternative to the typical jellied cranberry sauce, try this savory *Wild Craisin Salad* to add festive color and a new way to feature cranberries at your holiday celebration. *Wild Craisin Salad* combines wild rice, dried cranberries, green pepper, and celery tossed in a refreshing light cranberry vinaigrette dressing.

Wild Rice Stuffing

Thanksgiving provides a great opportunity to incorporate the distinctive flavor of wild rice into your holiday meal with traditional *Wild Rice Stuffing*. This holiday favorite combines bacon, onion, sage, mushrooms, and wild rice in an extraordinary blend of flavors to create a delicious and flawless accompaniment to your holiday turkey.

For even more great recipe ideas featuring the great taste of wild rice, search the world's largest wild rice recipe library for other ideas on how to make wild rice the star of your Thanksgiving meal (www.mnwildrice.org/search.php).

CLASSIC CREAMY WILD RICE SOUP

- ½ cup finely chopped onion
- 6 tbsp butter
- ½ cup flour
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 2 cups cooked wild rice
- ½ cup shredded carrots
- 1 cup cooked, cubed smoked ham
- 3 tbsp slivered almonds
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 cup half and half
- 2 tbsp dry sherry

In large saucepan, sauté onion in butter. Add flour, stirring until bubbly; gradually stir in broth. Stir in wild rice, carrots, ham, almonds, and salt; simmer 5 minutes. Stir in half and half and sherry; heat through. 6 servings.

WILD CRAISIN SALAD

- 4 cups cooked wild rice
- ½ cup sliced celery
- ¼ cup sliced green onion
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- ½ cup chopped green pepper
- ½ cup Craisins (dried cranberries)

Dressing (whisk together; chill):

- ½ cup cranberry juice
- ½ cup white vinegar
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp basil leaves
- sugar and salt to taste

In large bowl, combine salad ingredients. Add dressing; toss. 6-8 servings.

WILD RICE STUFFING

- 4 slices bacon, cut in 1" pieces
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- ½ lb mushrooms, sliced
- 3 ribs celery, chopped
- 3 cups cooked wild rice
- 1 tsp crushed leaf oregano
- ½ tsp crushed leaf sage
- 2 cups bread crumbs
- salt and pepper to taste
- ¼-½ cup chicken broth, optional

Preheat oven to 350°F. In large skillet, sauté bacon, onion, mushrooms, and celery; cook until bacon is crisp. Stir in wild rice, oregano, sage, and bread crumbs; adjust seasonings. Place in greased 2-qt. casserole, cover and bake 30-40 minutes. Add ¼-½ cup chicken broth, if needed, for moisture.

Sausage Stuffing: Add ½ lb crumbled, cooked, and drained sausage. 6-8 servings.

Notes to Editor:

For electronic copies of the photos for these recipes, call or email our office. If emailing, please specify your preferred photo format.

Due to limited funds, we are unable to utilize a clipping service. Run our release and send us a copy – we'll return the favor by sending you a ½ pound of wild rice. If you cannot accept the wild rice, we'd still appreciate a clipping to show our growers – ***thanks!***

Classic Creamy Wild Rice Soup



Wild Craisin Salad



Wild Rice Stuffing

