

What Rhymes with Orange? Camerota's Cupboard June 2010

Here's useful information from the Science Section of *The New York Times* (11/30/10):

Good-for-You Things Come in Orange

Eat your carrots. And have some . . . pumpkin pie. People with high blood levels of alpha-carotene -- an antioxidant found in orange fruits and vegetables -- live longer and are less likely to die of heart disease and cancer than those who have little or none of it in their bloodstreams, a new study reports.

The study does not prove a cause-and-effect relationship, only an association, but its results are intriguing. Researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention analyzed alpha-carotene levels in blood samples from more than 15,000 adults who participated in a follow-up study of the third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey from 1988 to 1994. By 2006, researchers determined, 3,810 of the participants had died. Those with the highest levels of alpha-carotene were more likely to have died than those with the lowest; those with midrange levels were 27 percent less likely to die than those with the lowest levels.

"It's pretty dramatic," said the lead author, Dr. Chaoyang Li, a C.D.C. epidemiologist. The study was published online Nov. 22, 2010 in *Archives of Internal Medicine*.

The Power of Plantains

Orange-Glazed Plantains

(From AICR, American Institute for Cancer Research)

The plantain banana is not your typical peel and eat variety. It is low in sugar and must be cooked before serving. This recipe features the plantain with a sweet orange glaze that makes a great brunch offering or dessert. A plantain has more calories than a

banana, but it is richer in potassium and is a good source of Vitamins A, C and B6.

Makes 4 servings.

Per serving: 140 calories; 2.5 g total fat (1.5 g saturated fat); 30 g carbohydrate; 2 g protein; 2 g dietary fiber; 15mg sodium.

- 2 **very ripe** medium plantains, with peel on
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 1/2 tsp. unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup (1 oz.) shredded queso fresco

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line an 8-inch square baking dish with foil.

2. Pierce each unpeeled plantain in 12 places, using a small, thin knife. Place the whole plantains in the baking dish. Bake 30 to 35 minutes, until the plantains are soft in several places when pressed with your finger.

3. Meanwhile, for the glaze, in a small saucepan, combine the orange juice, cinnamon and butter and bring just to boil over medium heat. Set the hot glaze aside.

4. Transfer the plantains to a cutting board, and set the baking dish aside. Increase the oven to broil. Cut off the ends of the plantains and halve them lengthwise. To remove the peel, run a thin knife along both sides of each half, separating the flesh and skin. Flip the plantains over and lift away the peel, using the tip of the knife as needed to detach the flesh. With a wide pancake turner, return the baked plantains to the pan, lining them up. Pour on the hot glaze and sprinkle on the cheese.

5. Place the pan under the broiler until the cheese is soft and browned in places, 2 to 3 minutes. To serve, halve the plantains crosswise and let them sit for 5 minutes. Use the pancake turner to

place two pieces on each of four dessert plates. Spoon over the liquid from the pan, and serve.

Roast Shrimp with Orange and Rosemary

(Adapted from Mark Bittman's *How to Cook Everything*)

Easy, healthy and delicious!

- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh rosemary leaves or 1 teaspoon dried rosemary or tarragon
- 1 ½ to 2 pounds shrimp, in the 20 to 30 per pound range, peeled, rinsed, and dried, 1/2 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
- Zest of 1 orange, finely minced or grated
- A few dashes of salt and a few twists of freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. When it is hot, warm 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a 9 x 13-inch baking pan, then add the rosemary; return to the oven until the rosemary begins to sizzle.
2. Add the shrimp, then sprinkle with the orange juice and zest, the salt and pepper, and the remaining olive oil. Roast until the shrimp turns pink about 10 minutes.

Makes 4 servings

Nutrition information per serving-320 calories; 41 grams protein; 5 grams carbohydrate; 0 grams dietary fiber; 14 grams fat; 2 grams saturated fat; 302 milligrams cholesterol; 368 milligrams sodium.

Skillet Acorn Squash

(From *More Nutritious Still Delicious*)

This squash gets its dark orange color from beta-carotene, a powerful antioxidant. For a truly colorful plate serve as a side dish along with a green vegetable and some red fruit.

- 1 large acorn squash, about 2 pounds
 - ½ cup apple juice (or orange juice)
 - 1 tablespoon butter
 - ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
1. Trim ends of squash. Stand squash on end; cut in half lengthwise. Remove and discard seeds and fiber. Cut each squash half crosswise into ½ inch thick slices.
 2. In a large skillet, combine apple juice, butter and cinnamon. Mix well. Add squash slices; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 10 minutes.
 3. Turn slices; cover and simmer until squash is tender, an additional 5 to 8 minutes.

Makes 4 servings

Nutrition information per serving: 31 calories; 2 grams protein; 27 grams carbohydrate; 4 grams dietary fiber; 3 grams fat; 2 grams saturated fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 28 mg sodium.