

Gourmet Cupboard

A seasonal look into the Custom Gourmet Chef's pantry



January 2012



Welcome to this month's issue of the Gourmet Cupboard... I love mustard. Such a simple thing really, ground up mustard seeds with a cold liquid of your choice and some additional flavour enhancers; I like herbs, chilies or roasted red peppers. And once the condiment is ready, you can use it on so many things, from your eggs in the morning to your pasta at lunch to your salad dressing, roasted potatoes and salmon that night. How could you not love this easy versatile condiment!

Mustard Cooking Tips and Hints

- If your recipe calls for dark mustard seeds, do not substitute white ones. The flavour is quite different and your recipe will not be the same. When used whole in canning and preserving, the seeds do not impart a sharp mustard flavour as you would expect, but add a nice, mild aroma.
- The seeds are often toasted until they split open to bring out the flavour more. Just be careful for overcooking will make them very bitter.
- Since heat causes the pungent flavor of mustard to dissipate, mustard is generally added near the end of the dish and gently heated.

Variations and styles: The addition of various herbs (dill, rosemary, chives, basil and parsley work well), spices (like chilies, peppercorns and even horseradish) vegetables (think roasted red peppers, olives or sun dried tomatoes), and fruits (cranberry, apricot and apple are my favourites). There are literally hundreds to choose from and make, limited only by your imagination. Try adding one of these ingredients to your basic mustard for a new twist...apricots and ginger, ground pecans and brown sugar, maple syrup, roasted garlic, sesame seeds or apple sauce. Or substitute the white wine vinegar in the recipe below with beer, red wine, fruit juices, balsamic vinegar or whiskey.

Mustard Flavour Pals: avocado, beef, beets, cabbage, chicken, crab, fish, lamb, mussels, potatoes, pork, rabbit, salmon, sauerkraut, sausages, steaks and vinaigrettes.

Homemade Mustard — *A basic recipe that is hotter and more intensely flavoured than the commercial preparations.*



Ingredients

3 tbsp yellow mustard seeds	2 tbsp shallot, minced
2 ½ tbsp brown mustard seeds	¼ tsp ground allspice
1/3 cup white wine, fine quality	¾ tsp salt
1/3 cup white wine vinegar	¼ tsp white pepper

Yield: 3/4 cup

Procedure

1. In a glass bowl, combine the first three ingredients and let stand for 10 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients and refrigerate overnight, covered.
2. Transfer the mustard mixture to a blender and process until mustard has obtained your desired texture and thickness. Store in an airtight, glass container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

Ancient Roman Mustard — *Made with almonds and pine nuts that dates back over 2,000 years.*

Ingredients

1 cup black or brown mustard seeds	1 cup cold water
1/2 cup almonds, chopped	2 teaspoons salt
1/2 cup pine nuts, chopped	1/2 cup red wine vinegar

Yield: 2 cups



Procedure

1. Grind the whole mustard seeds for a few seconds in a spice or coffee grinder, or by hand with a mortar and pestle. You want them mostly whole. Add the chopped nuts and grind into a paste.
2. Move everything to a glass bowl and add the salt and cold water. Mix well and let stand for 10 minutes.
3. Pour in the vinegar and stir well. When the vinegar is incorporated, pour into a glass jar and store in an airtight, glass container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. Allow to sit 24 hours before using the first time for best flavour.

Nominated for the 2012 Comox Valley Customer Service Award!

Contact us for your next party to see why! Let us make your entertaining stress free and delicious!