

# QUATRE ÉPICES

Quatre épices/four spices is a spice mix used in French and Middle Eastern cooking. Most épices/four spices recipes are pepper (often white), nutmeg, cloves and ginger. Most recipes contain twice as much pepper as the other spices, though the spice ratios are flexible.



Although the exact history of quatre épices is unclear, it is thought to have originated in the port city of Saint-Malo, situated in Brittany in France's northwest. During the baroque era in the 17th century, Europe was all about extravagance when it came to architecture, art and music. Big transformations were also happening to the dining habits of European society, with important changes being led by creative French chefs. As a walled port city, spices were being brought in directly by traders. Much of the food during this time was influenced by Arab and Persian culinary traditions, with generous use of herbs and spices.

Quatre épices is a great cold weather spice, and is typically used in hearty dishes made around the winter season. In French cuisine, quatre épices is typically used in soup, ragout and rich meat dishes like venison stew or beef braised in red wine. The spice blend is also used in charcuterie like pate, terrines and sausages like boudin blanc. The spice blend can also be used as a dry rub for meat, and it pairs really well with lamb shanks or roast pork when mixed with a little sea salt and fresh rosemary. It can be used to flavor vegetables, as well. Add a pinch of the spice blend to your mashed potatoes or sprinkle on top of roasted winter vegetables. Quatre épices can also be used in sweet dishes like cakes, icing, puddings and cookies. It's the main spice blend in a traditional French spiced bread called pain d'épices, made with rye flour, honey and spices.

## QUICK & EASY VEGETABLE POT PIE



### INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 cups frozen mixed vegetables, thawed
- 1 can (15 oz) lentils, drained
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 cup vegetable broth
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp Quatre Epices spice blend
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 sheet refrigerated pie crust
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. In a large skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the vegetables and lentils, cook and stir until heated through, about 3-5 minutes.
3. Stir in flour until blended, gradually whisk in broth. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Cook and stir until thickened, 1-2 minutes. Stir in mustard, Quatre Epices, and salt.
4. Transfer to a greased 9-inch pie plate. Place pie crust over filling. Trim; cut slits in top. Brush with oil; sprinkle with Parmesan.
5. Bake until golden brown for 30-35 minutes. Cool 5 minutes before serving.

# BEEF STEW IN RED WINE



## INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs flat-iron steak or chuck, trimmed of fat & cut into 6-8 pieces
- 2 slices of bacon, roughly chopped
- 1 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 6-8 carrots, peeled & sliced into segments
- 1/2 onion, diced
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 10 pearl or small cipollini onions, peeled
- 10 cremini mushrooms
- 1 bottle dry red wine
- 1 tbsp olive or vegetable oil
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tbsp Quatre Epices spice blend
- parsley, chopped for garnish (optional)
- salt & pepper to taste (optional)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Prep the meat and all fresh ingredients. Heat a braising pan, skillet (with high sides), soup pan, or dutch oven on medium-high. Season beef with salt & pepper to taste.
2. Add bacon to pan and cook for 3 mins per side. Drain grease into a safe container. Add the oil, then the beef to the pan with bacon in a single layer. Brown beef for approximately 2 minutes per side (8-10 minutes total).
3. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 5 minutes until softened. Sprinkle flour over the mixture and stir to mix in.
4. Reduce the heat to medium. Add the pearl onions, carrots, bay leaves and Quatre Epices to the pan and stir. Cook for another 5 minutes.
5. Add the wine, taking care not to overfill your pan. Bring to a gentle boil and stir to loosen brown bits on bottom of pan.

*(Instructions continued on back)*

# QUATRE EPICES BUNDT CAKE



## DRY MIX INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar, packed
- 2 tsp Quatre Epices spice blend

## WET MIX INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup hot water
- 1/2 cup pumpkin puree
- 1/3 cup molasses
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

## CRANBERRY GLAZE INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/4 cups powdered sugar
- 2 tbsp 100% cranberry juice
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°. Lightly spray 2 small bundt pans with non-stick cooking spray. Set aside. If you don't have bundt pans, you can use a loaf pan.

*(Instructions continued on back)*

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR BUNDT CAKE (continued)

2. Heat the water until it's hot to touch, but not boiling. Stir in molasses and whisk until uniform. Stir in the pumpkin puree, olive oil, apple cider vinegar, and vanilla.
3. In a medium mixing bowl, combine the dry ingredients: all-purpose flour, light brown sugar, baking soda, baking powder, and Quatre Epices.
4. Slowly stir wet ingredients into dry ingredients. Mix with a wooden spoon until just combined, taking care not to overmix.
5. Add batter to the greased pans. Bake for 30 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean. Remove from the oven and let cool in the pan for 5 minutes before turning out onto a cooling rack.
6. To make the glaze: In a small mixing bowl, add 1 tbsp of cranberry juice at a time to the powdered sugar. Add the vanilla extract. Stir until a cohesive glaze forms. If the glaze is too thin, add more powdered sugar, one tablespoon at a time.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR BEEF STEW (continued)

6. Reduce heat to low and cover pan. Simmer the stew for at least 30 minutes, stirring occasionally
7. In a medium skillet, stir fry the mushrooms over medium heat. Stir into stew during last 5 minutes of cooking.

\*Serve in bowls with hot crusty bread to mop up the stew. Garnish bowls with parsley, if desired.