

Winter Herb Fun

Winter-Thyme Dreams

Dream pillows--fun to design, easy to sew, soothing for a long winter's nap--are wonderful herbal presents for friends and family. But instead of making ho-hum rectangular pillows, be creative. With right sides together, cut two layers of fabric (felt, cotton, satin, silk) into a crescent moon, a circle, a heart, or other pleasing shape. Seam the edges, leaving a narrow opening. Stuff 6-7 small pillows with this dreamy mix of herbs:

- 4 cups rosebuds and petals
- 1 cup dried chamomile flowers
- 1 cup dried mugwort
- 1 cup dried lavender flowers
- 1 cup dried mint
- 20 drops rose essential oil, dropped on ½ cup cellulose fiber fixative

Turn in the open seam and whip. For more fun, add lace, ribbons, and other fine fripperies.



Mulled Cider

Winter evenings before the fireplace are times to be treasured. Make yours special with warm, sweet cider.

For the cider, heat one quart apple cider and ¼ cup orange juice in a large saucepan. Add ¼ cup packed brown sugar, ½ teaspoon ground cloves, ½ teaspoon ground allspice, ½ teaspoon ground ginger, 1 two-inch cinnamon stick. Bring almost to boiling, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat, cover, and let steep for an hour. Remove cinnamon, reheat, and pour into mugs. Serve with fresh cinnamon stick stirrers.



Cinnamon-Spice Shortbread

1 cup sugar
2 cups butter
4 cups flour
2 teaspoons cinnamon

1 teaspoon allspice
1 teaspoon nutmeg
½ teaspoon cloves
2 teaspoons cinnamon-sugar

Cream together sugar and butter. Combine flour and spices and add to the sugar mixture, 1 cup at a time. Lightly oil a 9x12" cake pan, and press dough evenly into pan. Cut dough into small squares or diamonds. Sprinkle with cinnamon sugar and bake in a preheated 300° oven for 50-55 minutes, or until lightly browned. When you take this out of the oven, cut the shortbread along the original marks and remove from the pan to cool.