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MAGAZINE

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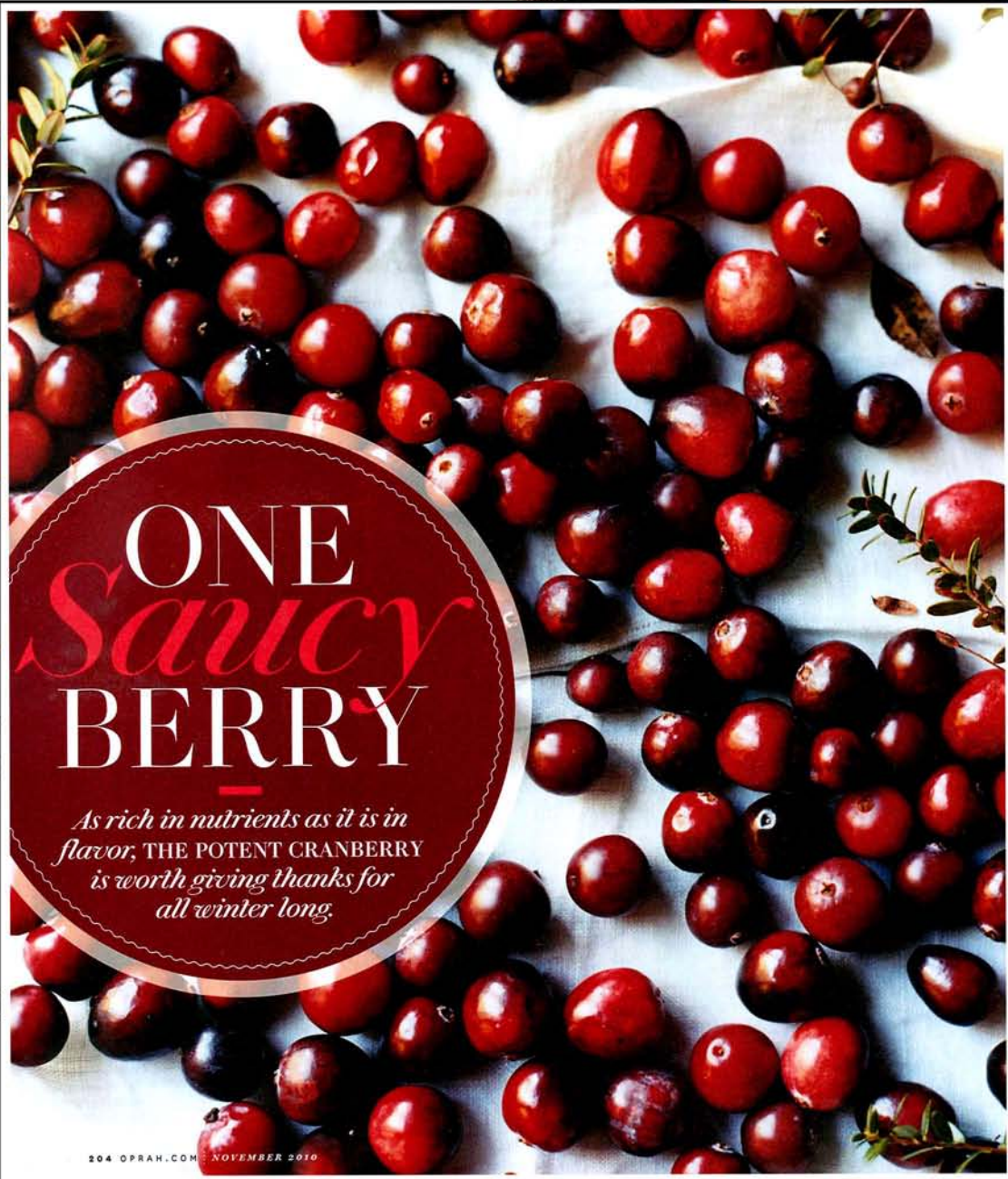
*Don't miss the  
final season!*



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*Saucy*  
BERRY

*As rich in nutrients as it is in  
flavor, THE POTENT CRANBERRY  
is worth giving thanks for  
all winter long.*

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O Wow!  
\$27 Bag

## *Cranberry and Lime-Leaf Drunken Chicken*

— A leisurely soak in a brine of cranberry juice, red wine, lime leaves, and herbs stained this chicken deep crimson before being roasted. The recipe takes its name from a classic Chinese method of marinating chicken in sweet rice wine—and proves that our beloved, all-American cranberry is more culturally versatile than we may think. For recipes see *O, Etc.* (page 211) or go to [oprah.com/omagextras](http://oprah.com/omagextras).



by CELIA BARBOUR PHOTOGRAPHS by DITTE ISAGER  
RECIPES by MARK GAIER and CLARK FRASIER

## *Cranberry Gel with Frisée and Pumpkin*

— Longtime companions cranberry and pumpkin are ripe for a culinary renaissance. Here, they become a spectacular salad course or light lunch: the berries simmered with white wine and gelled, the pumpkin cut into wedges and fried crisp and brown. They're accompanied by a salad of frisée tossed with warm bacon vinaigrette.





### *Cranberry-Lemongrass Cocktail*

— Skewers of cranberries and lemongrass spears serve as garnish for this fragrant concoction of raspberry vodka, lime juice, lemongrass syrup, and sparkling wine.



### *Steak with Cranberry Sauce*

— The complex flavor of cranberries goes well with savory meats, such as this steak topped with a sauce of cranberries, Worcestershire sauce, soy sauce, and dark beer.

# *Cranberries*

bounce into our kitchens every Thanksgiving, only to fade into obscurity the moment the last turkey sandwich is consumed. Whereas fruits like blueberries and bananas take up residence in our lives for the better part of the year, cranberries come and go like a festival mascot.

The cranberry itself is partly to blame for its failure to assimilate into our daily diets. It's tart. Even the bracing grapefruit has three times as much sugar as acidity; with the cranberry, the ratio is roughly one-to-one. Eat a fresh cranberry plain and your senses seize up for a moment, unable to

focus on anything but its rude flavor. Once you get over the shock, however, you'll notice remarkable aromatic notes—a cinnamon-like warmth combined with piney, woody astringency and vibrant fruitiness. Add a little sugar, and cranberries' complexity blossoms to life, allowing them to complement all kinds of savory dishes—grilled meats, cheese courses, roasted fall vegetables, and bitter salad greens. At Arrows restaurant, in Ogunquit, Maine, owners Mark Gaier and Clark Frasier have been experimenting with the berries for eight years, ever since their general manager at the ▶



## *Chocolate-Covered Cognac Cranberries*

— The perfect thing to nibble on as you linger at the table after dinner with your guests, cranberries steeped in cognac and rolled in semisweet chocolate combine dessert and after-dinner drinks into potent little bursts.

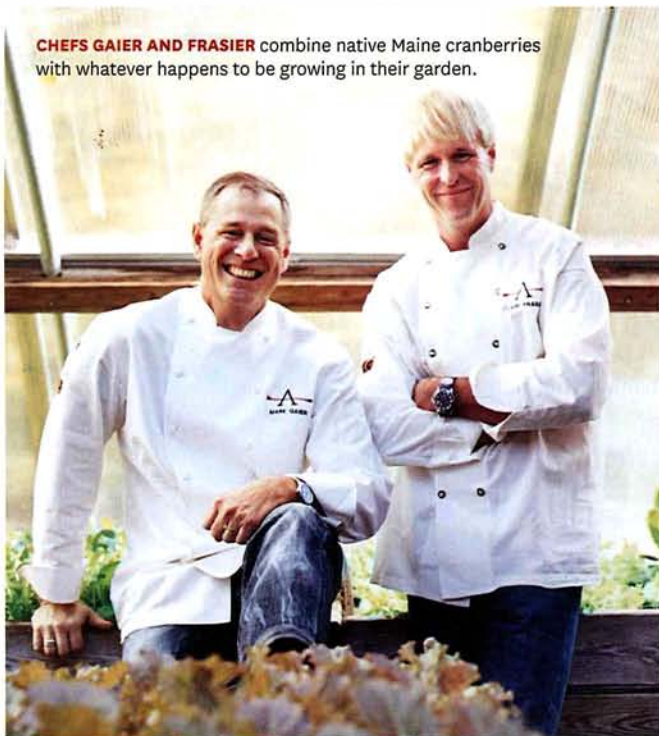
time, Danielle Johnson, mentioned the pretty, half-wild little bog on her fifth-generation family farm. The chefs, whose creations are featured on these pages, have paired the cranberries with ingredients from around the world, including lemongrass, kaffir lime leaves, cognac, and mint. “Our best dishes are accidental, based on whatever’s in season at the same time,” says Gaier, who, with Frasier and one of the waitstaff, started a garden at Arrows 18 years ago to supply the kitchen with fresh, unusual herbs and produce.

These days you don’t need friends with bogs to play around with fresh cranberries. More farmers in the Northeast, the Midwest, the Pacific Northwest, and Canada are growing them on a small scale and dry-harvesting them come fall, which results in the firm, whole berries you can buy at the grocery store, whether fresh or frozen. (Ninety-five percent of all cranberries are still wet-harvested, a process that requires flooding the bogs with water, shaking the bushes, and scooping up the fruit that floats to the surface. It results in more perishable berries that are used mainly in juices and jellies.)

When you do find yourself with an extra bag of ripe, whole cranberries, relax. Let the holidays come and go. Then, one winter morning when you wake up hungry, fix yourself a batch of cranberry French toast. A few weeks later, try cranberry drunken chicken. Because, unlike the holiday that made them famous, cranberries last. Even fresh, organic ones will keep for up to two months in your refrigerator. The same antimicrobial compounds that help your tissues shed germs when you drink cranberry juice also protect the berries from deterioration. Moreover, benzoic acid, found naturally in cranberries, is a preservative now commonly added to processed foods. And cranberries can help the rest of your body stay healthy, too; they are startlingly high in vitamin C and antioxidants, especially anthocyanins, which may inhibit the development of atherosclerosis and cancer, among other things.

So keep a stash of this radiant fruit in your fridge; they may be the best remedy yet for winter’s blahs. And next year, when Thanksgiving rolls around again, you can smile to yourself, knowing that cranberry season is just beginning. **Q**

**CHEFS GAIER AND FRASIER** combine native Maine cranberries with whatever happens to be growing in their garden.



## *Cranberry French Toast with Mascarpone*

— A bright way to wake up on a dreary winter morning: French toast topped with a dollop of mascarpone and a scattering of cranberries soaked in sugar syrup. Cranberries, high in antioxidants and vitamin C (among other good things), are a brilliant addition to cold-weather cooking.

