

Kick the Can

Uncommon cranberry sauces
to brighten up your holiday table

BY LAURA DANKOWSKI

Most of us have fond memories of holidays past, of roast turkey and stuffing, buttery mashed potatoes with rich gravy and, of course a glistening, jiggling, can-shaped column of cranberry sauce.

While we admit we actually like the stuff, we've found some zesty alternatives to serve at the feast and to bring a spicy accent to leftovers. Whether you're serving turkey, roast pork, or tofu, these sauces are sure to liven up any celebration.

CaJohn's Cranberry Salsa

Rapidly becoming a holiday staple, CaJohn's Cranberry Salsa is an expert blend of fruit and spices. This chunky, fresh-tasting salsa is well balanced and mild enough to serve in mixed company. We like it as a topper for glazed yams, as a chip dip, or heated up and folded into a creamy cheese fondue.

Gunther's Gourmet Cranberry-Habanero Salsa

Here's a good, old-fashioned salsa with just a suggestion of cranberry to sweeten things up. You'll love the autumnal hue of this bold and chunky salsa. The more than medium heat level lingers like a most welcome houseguest. We'd pair it with sharp cheddar cheese on a crusty baguette or as a dip with sweet-potato chips.

Tribal Moose Spicy Cranberry BBQ Sauce

This dark, thick, rich sauce packs a major hit of onion right off the bat then the fiery burn starts creeping in. The boldness of the chiles amiably cooperates with the sultry, raisin-y sweetness of the cranberry. There's a clean-tasting, citrusy finish at the very last that's a refreshing surprise.

This complex and delicious concoction is ideal for pairing with turkey drumsticks or roast duck, and a big glass of red wine.

Toad Sweat Cranberry Dessert Hot Sauce

Here's a very hot fruit explosion that instantly hits the back of the throat and keeps on sizzling. This deep red, Halloween-candy-sweet syrupy sauce burns with a delightful dulcet cranberry flavor. An ingenious pinch of barely-there cocoa powder lends an earthy, grounded quality to this audacious, well-rounded sauce. Serve over dark chocolate gelato for an unforgettable dessert or buck the label and pour this onto Brie or goat cheese for a tempting appetizer.

Captain Spongefoot Cranberry-Chipotle Table Sauce

Fruit and fire do the tango in this sweet, ruby red sauce. Captain Spongefoot takes the extra step and removes the seeds from the cranberries, much to the delight of tender tummies and dentures. This gorgeous sauce is an instant glaze for fish, chicken or turkey meatballs, or stir it into holiday mashed sweet potatoes for a sassy side dish.

