



**WINTER**





## Winter

is the season of rest and reflection, with cold temperatures turning our attention to indoor activities.

During the winter months, our gardens undergo a period of dormancy and transformation. Many plants enter a state of rest, conserving energy by shedding leaves or dying back to their roots. During this natural break, while the garden rejuvenates for the burst of growth and activity that comes with spring, Seed to Stomach focuses on indoor gardening...

December: Herbs

January: Cold weather

February: Indoor gardening

During colder months, our kitchens become a source of warmth and nourishment. Seed to Stomach recipes will help you enjoy delicious recipes featuring these garden-fresh ingredients...

December: Winter Squash

January: Oranges

February: Mushrooms



## Field Trip

No matter how blustery the winter weather, a trip to [The Denver Museum of Nature & Science](#) will ignite a passion for nature and science and empower children and families to empower a community that loves, understands, and protects our natural world.



### December: Growing Herbs Indoors

With winter's colder temperatures and shorter days, opportunities for outdoor gardening are limited, but it is the perfect time to explore the joys of indoor gardening. Window herb gardens let us keep growing our gardening skills with robust flavors and nutrition to add to our favorite recipes.

There are more than 40 different types of culinary herbs, but the varieties most commonly grown and enjoyed in food are basil, cilantro, sage, rosemary, dill, mint, oregano, and parsley.

### Activity: Indoor Herb Garden



#### Gather Supplies:

- Small clay pots with drainage holes. Alternatively, you may reuse food containers. Poke or cut a drain hole in the bottom.
- Herb seeds (basil, mint, parsley, and dill are all great choices)
- Potting soil
- Small watering can
- Popsicle sticks and markers
- Scissors for harvesting

#### Explore:

- Choose a sunny, preferably south-facing window sill.
  - Set up planting stations with pots, helping children fill them with soil.
  - Using their fingers, push a small hole in each pot, place seeds, and cover with soil.
  - Mark the pots using popsicle sticks to identify the herbs planted in each pot.
  - Place the pots on the sunny window sill.
  - Create a chart to share daily watering duties and to track the number of days it takes for seedlings to emerge.
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- Once the herbs have established some leaves, allow the children to harvest samples with scissors and use them for sensory exploration or to add to meals and snacks.



## Read a Book

PLANT THE TINY SEED An engaging book about gardening, this book encourages interactions of planting seeds, tapping the clouds, and touching the blossoms as it presents the life cycle of a plant.



## December: Enjoying Winter Squash in the Kitchen



When the weather is cold, our bodies naturally crave foods that provide comfort and warmth. The Clayton Cooks Roasted Spaghetti Squash recipe (on the next page) does that with added nutrition benefits. One of the most versatile vegetables, spaghetti squash is low in calories, rich in vitamins and minerals, and high in fiber. This recipe is super easy to prepare, which makes it great for busy weeknights, and children love the shredded “spaghetti” strings.



### Tip

When cooked to an appropriate texture, squash is a great option when introducing solids to babies and toddlers.



# Roasted Spaghetti Squash

30  
Mins

## 4 Ingredients

- 1 spaghetti squash
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Parmesan cheese (optional)



## Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. While oven is preheating slice spaghetti squash in half lengthwise and scoop out seeds .
3. Coat the inside of both halves with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
4. Flip squash over and place cut side down on a baking sheet and poke fork holes to allow the steam to escape.
5. Bake for 30 – 40 minutes.
6. Remove squash from oven and flip over so the cut side is now up.
7. Let squash cool for 5 minutes and scrape out the inside of the squash with a fork.  
Bake time will vary depending on the size and ripeness of the squash. The squash is done when brown on the edges and the inside of the squash is tender with a fork.
8. Serve hot as is or top with parmesan cheese, marinara sauce, or the mushroom stroganoff.





## Garden Activities in Cold Weather

### Activity: Natural Bird Feeders



#### Gather Supplies:

- Sunflower Butter (allergen-free cooking lard can be substituted)
- Large pinecones, one for each child
- Popsicle sticks and spoons
- Birdseed
- String or twine cut into 12-inch pieces, one for each child
- Paper plates
- Small bowls

#### Explore:

- Pour the birdseed into small bowls so the children have easy access.
- Children start with their pinecones on a paper plate.
- Help them tie the twine or string on their pinecone to make a loop for hanging.
- Using popsicle sticks, spoons, and little fingers, children spread sunflower butter or cooking lard on the pinecones.
- Next, children sprinkle the birdseed over the pinecones so it sticks to the sunflower butter and coats the outside of the pinecones.
- Hang the pinecones outside in the garden or in a tree to provide food for the birds!
- Visit the feeders for some winter birdwatching.

## Add a Song



### Snow-key Pokey

**Original Author Unknown**

*(Sung to the Tune of the Hokey Pokey)*

You put your right glove in, You take your right glove out, You put your right glove in, and you shake it all about.

You do the Snow-key Pokey and you turn yourself around. That's what it's all about.

You put your left glove in, You take your left glove out, You put your left glove in, and you shake it all about.

You do the Snow-key Pokey and you turn yourself around. That's what it's all about.

*(You can repeat with boots, hats and coats.)*



## Activity: Melting Snowman



### Gather Supplies:

- Muffin tin
- Cakepan or dish with high sides
- Felt or foam to make eyes, buttons, carrot noses, top hats, and stick arms.
- Clock or timer

### Explore:

- Freeze water in a muffin tin overnight.
- Instruct the children to cut felt items to decorate the snowman. Top hat, carrot nose, coal eyes, and stick arms are great ideas, but have fun and get creative.
- Pop the ice cubes out of the muffin tray. [Touch icon: what does ice feel like?]
- Have the children place three ice cubes vertically to make the body of the snowman in the cake pan.
- The children can then decorate the snowman with handmade items.
- While the children decorate the snowman, discuss their thoughts, ideas, and predictions on what might happen to the snowman now that it is out of the freezer. You can even write this down on chart paper to show their predictions and what happens.
- Set the timer for five minutes and check back to see if they notice any changes.
- Repeat the five-minute observations until the snowman is melted.



## Add a Song

### Dance Like Snowflakes

*Original Author Unknown*

*Sung to the tune of Frere Jacques*

Dance like snowflakes

Dance like snowflakes

In the air

In the air

Whirling, twirling, snowflakes

Whirling, twirling, snowflakes

Here and there

Here and there.



WINTER

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## Enjoying Oranges in the Kitchen



Citrus fruit, including oranges, are in season during the winter. With the shorter days and the sun tilted away from the earth, we can all use more vitamin C and sweetness to brighten our plates and keep us healthy. The Clayton Cooks Sunshine Smoothie (on the next page) is the perfect cup of sunshine to brighten even the coldest of days.



### Did You Know?

Oranges have more vitamin C than any other fruit.





# Sunshine Smoothie

5  
Mins

## 9 Ingredients

- 1 cup fresh, frozen, or canned pineapple chunks
- 2 peeled fresh oranges, 4-6 peeled clementine or mandarin oranges
- ½ ripe banana, sliced
- 1 handful of kale
- 3 Tbsp. pure maple syrup
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup favorite nondairy milk or cow's milk
- 1 cup 100% orange juice
- Ice Cubes (optional)



## Directions

1. Put all ingredients in a blender.
2. Mix until the smoothie is at the desired consistency adding more milk, 100% juice, and/or ice if needed.





WINTER

## February: Exploring Indoor Gardening



February is the perfect time of year to begin planning and planting for outdoor gardens by using your indoor space.

### Activity: Garbage Gardening

#### Gather Supplies:

- Potting soil
- Leftover vegetable ends (lettuce, cabbage, and celery bottoms are great)
- Small plant pots or reused yogurt or food containers with a drain hole
- Water
- Knife
- Shallow bowls

- Cabbage: Place the end of the cabbage in a shallow bowl of water and guide children to make daily observations, noting changes. After a few days, you'll notice new growth sprouting out of the top. Once the new growth starts, transplant the cabbage end into a pot of soil. A new head of cabbage will continue to grow up and out of the old cabbage end.
- Lettuce: Place the end of the lettuce in a shallow bowl of water and guide children to make daily observations, noting changes. After a few days, you'll notice new growth sprouting out of the top. Once the new growth starts, the lettuce can be transplanted into a pot of soil. A new head of lettuce will continue to grow up and out of the old lettuce end.
- Celery: Celery can be regrown using the same method as lettuce, placing the end of the stalk in a shallow bowl of water. A new celery plant will sprout, and the stalk can be transplanted into the soil to continue growing in the spring.



## Did You Know?

Growing plants indoors can be beneficial for your health. They can improve air quality, boost immune systems, and spark joy!



## Read a Book

Planting a Rainbow This educational and enjoyable book helps children understand how to plant bulbs, seeds, and seedlings, and nurture their growth.





Mushrooms are a type of fungi. Fungi are not plants because they cannot make their own food through sunlight and water, but instead need to absorb their nutrients through their dark and damp environments.

**Activity: Build a Mushroom**



**Gather Supplies:**

- Red construction paper, cut into 8" circles
- White pompons – small, assorted sizes
- Paper rolls (upcycled paper towel, toilet paper, or gift wrap rolls, cut to 6" lengths
- Scissors
- Glue

**Explore:**

- Using a diagram or real mushrooms from the grocery store, discuss the parts of a mushroom: Caps, stems, gills, and spores.
- Cut each red circle halfway to the middle. These will be the mushroom caps.
- On one side, children draw lines to make the gills that will be under the cap.
- Make a shallow cone with the red circles by gluing the two cut edges together, overlapping slightly.
- Children can top their mushroom caps with spores by gluing white pom poms on the top.
- Apply glue to one edge of the paper roll, and place the paper cap on top to form a mushroom



**Read a Book**

Mushroom in the Rain Caught out in the rain, an ant takes shelter under a very tiny mushroom. And when the sun finally comes out, the ant discovers a magical secret of just what happens to mushrooms in the rain!





## Enjoying Mushrooms in the Kitchen



The Clayton Cooks Mushroom Stroganoff recipe (on the next page) is a healthy plant-forward twist on a traditional casserole. Get creative and use different varieties of mushrooms when making this dish. You can also sneak in additional nutrition by adding seasonal winter vegetables like Brussels sprouts, broccoli, kale, and Swiss chard.



### Did You Know?

Mushrooms are a very nutritious food. Some species can be a good source of vitamin B along with essential minerals such as copper and potassium.

# Mushroom Stroganoff

30  
Mins

## 12 Ingredients

- 1 onion, diced
- 4 cloves of garlic, chopped or 2 Tbsp. garlic powder
- 1 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1½ cup vegetable broth
- ¼ cup white or red vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce or 3 Tbsp. soy sauce
- ½ cup of plain yogurt (can substitute with nondairy yogurt if needed)
- 3 Tbsp. flour
- 1 Tbsp. oregano, Italian season blend, fresh oregano or parsley
- Salt and Pepper to taste
- 1 pound egg noodles or preferred pasta



This will keep in the refrigerator for 2-3 days.

## Directions

1. Cook noodles or pasta according to instructions on box and set aside
2. Heat 1 Tbsp. olive oil in large saucepan over medium heat
3. Add diced onions and sauté until slightly brown
4. Add the remaining olive oil, sliced mushrooms, and chopped garlic and continue to sauté for another 5 minutes until tender
5. Stir in vinegar until evenly distributed and let simmer for 2-3 minutes
6. In a mixing bowl add vegetable broth, Worcestershire or soy sauce, and flour and whisk together until smooth
7. Pour vegetable broth mixture in to the pan with the mushrooms and stir to combine
8. Add salt, pepper, and herbs and let simmer for 5 minutes until consistency has thickened
9. Stir in yogurt and taste to see if more seasoning is needed
10. Toss noodles or pasta in sauce and serve hot

