DIY make your home smell like fall
By: Dr. Alyssa Musgrove

Fall is finally in the air! It is time for pumpkin spice and everything nice. If you enjoy the fall fragrances but would like to spare yourself from breathing in the harm of toxic chemicals found in most air fresheners and some candles I will share with you how to make your own stove top air fresheners made from whole food ingredients. If you’ve never tried to use this idea at home, it is quite simple. It is a basic stove top potpourri made up of spices, dried fruit peels, and/or extracts. Some people also use a small crockpot and keep the heat setting on low. There are really an infinite amount of combinations and it is so fun to experiment.

This simple DIY (Do It Yourself) project will fill your entire home with the most wonderful holiday aroma so easily and toxic free. It seems to last and last throughout the day, even after you have stopped using the simmering pot. Additionally, simmering pots are a wonderful way to add moisture to the air. I often leave mine on for an hour or two, replacing the water as needed. All of that extra moisture in the air helps the heat to stay longer and carries the aroma throughout the house. It’s very well loved but not very pretty to look at. Also, you will want to discard the ingredients in the pot after awhile if the mix starts to smell or look "off." I've never done one for more than a week. The only downside to a simmering pot is having to clean the pot afterwards! That’s why I have a “dedicated” pot for this very reason. Keep in mind that cleaning the pot afterwards can be a chore, some scrubbing may be involved, so don’t use your favorite pot!

This can be a very versatile recipe and you can really make it anything you want and that suite your families scent preferences. You can also use fresh or dried fruit for this. Because we’re in the throes of apple season right now you may not want to waste any of your precious hand-picked apple crop to a potpourri. This can be made ultra frugal though if you use the apple peels and cores leftover from making your applesauce, apple butter, or whatever else your kitchen has brewing up. You can really make this however you want. Spicier smelling if that’s your preference, or loads of citrus if that’s your thing. Below you will find a list of suggested spices, herbs, fruit peels, and extracts that can be used in simmering pots. This list is not exhaustive by any means. It’s just a few suggestions to help get your creative juices flowing. Common spices: clove, juniper berry, cinnamon stick, anise (whole), ginger, allspice. Common fruit peels: orange, lemon, grapefruit, lime and apple. Extracts or oils to add: vanilla, lemon, almond and orange. Common herbs: thyme, rosemary, basil, sage, mint, bay leaves, lavender and rose petals.

Below I’ll share with you several of my favorite recipes.

Ingredients

* 5 cups water
* 2 navel oranges, peeled
* 1 apple, sliced in half
* 3 cinnamon sticks
* 3 star anise
* 1 teaspoon-sized knob of fresh ginger
* 1 teaspoon whole cloves
* 1/4 teaspoon dried orange peel

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients together in a saucepan and heat over low heat until simmering. I have kept this going for a few hours, adding additional water when needed. You can also throw everything in the crockpot and set it on low or high with the top off.

**Ginger Orange**

* 3 cups water (or enough to cover the fruit and spices)
* 1 cup orange juice
* 2 oranges cut into wedges or 1 cup dried orange peel or 2 cups fresh orange peel
* ¼ cup grated or thinly sliced fresh ginger or 2 Tbs. dried ground ginger

**Cinnamon Apple**

* 1 quart water (or enough to cover the fruit and spices)
* 2 apples cut into slices or 1 cup dried apple peel or 2 cups fresh peels and/or cores, organic if possible
* 6 [cinnamon sticks](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B001NH8RQS/ref%3Das_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B001NH8RQS&linkCode=as2&tag=scramomm-20&linkId=DRMTMWT6TUNEX2RC)
* 2 Tablespoons whole cloves or 1½ Tablespoon ground cloves (I think whole have a stronger scent and [I love these cloves](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00AJRKKI6/ref%3Das_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00AJRKKI6&linkCode=as2&tag=scramomm-20&linkId=3V3E4Y3VKKBCYP5X))

**Apple Cider Chai**

* 2 cups water (or enough to cover the fruit and spices)
* 2 cups apple cider
* 2 apples cut into slices or 1 cup dried apple peel or 2 cups fresh peels and/or cores
* 3 [cinnamon sticks](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B001NH8RQS/ref%3Das_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B001NH8RQS&linkCode=as2&tag=scramomm-20&linkId=DRMTMWT6TUNEX2RC)
* 1 Tbs. whole cloves or ½ Tbs. ground cloves ([cloves like this](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00AJRKKI6/ref%3Das_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00AJRKKI6&linkCode=as2&tag=scramomm-20&linkId=3V3E4Y3VKKBCYP5X))
* 1 Tbs. ground cardamom ([these cardamom pods](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00LWVCNTW/ref%3Das_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00LWVCNTW&linkCode=as2&tag=scramomm-20&linkId=6KF43M7NF24SSXBG) are fantastic)
* 1 Tbs. [ground ginger](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000WS3AMU/ref%3Das_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B000WS3AMU&linkCode=as2&tag=scramomm-20&linkId=UFUIZMZLXZ65MNCT) or fresh grated ginger
* ¼ cup brown sugar or raw cane sugar (here's a favorite [fair-trade, raw, organic sugar](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0010XV5T6/ref%3Das_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B0010XV5T6&linkCode=as2&tag=scramomm-20&linkId=WHPIXZPX6XAID2PP))

**Winter Woods Simmering Pot**

* ½ cup juniper berries
* 1 sprig thyme (or 1 teaspoon dried thyme)
* 1 sprig rosemary (or 1 teaspoon dried rosemary)

**Ginger Citrus Simmering Pot**

* ¼ cup grated ginger (or 1 tablespoon ground ginger)
* peel of 2 oranges
* peel of 1 lemon
* 1 bay leaf

**Citrus**

* 1 Orange, Sliced
* 1 Lemon, Sliced
* Cranberry Bliss
* 1 orange
* ½ lemon
* 1 cup cranberries
* 2 cinnamon sticks
* 1 tablespoon cloves