The Smell of Christmas

When I think of the smell of Christmas I think cinnamon. Others think of the smell of pine and fresh Christmas trees, but for me, it's cinnamon.

I was having a challenge this year getting into the Christmas spirit. The only snow Chicago has seen so far this season happened when I was out of town and was melted before I returned. I love a good snowstorm.

The temperature has been hovering almost 20 degrees above normal. I didn't even need gloves to put up the outdoor decorations. I finally put up our indoor Christmas tree, about 2 weeks later than normal. I am leaving most of the Christmas decorations in storage. We are not doing any big parties this year so why do all that decorating for just the two of us? I'm calling my decorating this year "Essence of Christmas." I'm not going all out.

Don't worry. I'm not going all Grinch.

I think this is one of those years my mother talked about. It feels like I just did Christmas. It has come back around too fast for me this year. So I got out my saucepan.

I knew I needed a Christmas jolt so I headed for my kitchen.

First thing I did was put two cups of water in the pan and 3 cinnamon sticks. Then I rooted around my cupboard for other things that evoke Christmas. I'm calling it "Holiday Aromatherapy."

Heat the water with the cinnamon sticks and then toss in a few other things that remind you of the holidays. Things that smell, to you, like a fresh Christmas and come from your cupboard.

Options include:

- A tsp of dried orange or lemon peel
- Or use fresh peels
- ½ tsp of ground cloves or a tsp of nutmeg
- Maybe a bay leaf
- Or a couple of pieces of star anise

Toss in whatever brings the smell of Christmas into your nose. Don't overdo it. Just three or 4 of these elements will do it. Heat to a boil and then let it bubble for a while. Turn off and the smell of Christmas will fill your kitchen and beyond.

Worked for me!

Enjoy!
Cheers,

Zola

3 Ingredient Peanut Butter Cookies

These cookies are SOOOO good. And no flour!