

Food and Fitness

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Holiday Food Safety for Perishable Leftovers

**PLEASE
HANDLE WITH CARE**

PERISHABLE

★★ THANK YOU ★★

In the holiday season, it is a time for gatherings which includes a lot of delicious foods. Once the meal is complete, many times there are leftovers that need to be addressed. Proper handling of leftovers, for perishable foods, is a must due to the harmful bacteria they can grow. Though it may be tempting to leave foods out for guests, it is important for those foods to be kept safe.

Perishable foods have an important two-hour rule. Perishable foods are foods that require refrigeration — like meats, casseroles, dairy based dishes and more. These foods should not sit out for more than two hours. After the two-hour mark, these foods can grow bacteria rapidly, even if they look and smell fine. To keep them safe, refrigerate or freeze these leftovers before the two-hour time is up.

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Holiday Food Safety for Perishable Leftovers

For leftovers, shallow containers are best. Shallow containers allow dishes to cool down faster and more evenly in the refrigerator and freezer. While deep dishes hold heat much longer, they also increase the risk for bacteria growth. When adding those shallow leftover dishes to the refrigerator, make sure they are covered with an airtight lid or plastic wrap.

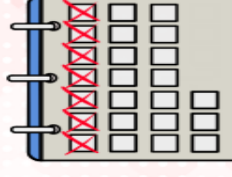
Other things you can do or check for to keep your foods safe:

- Write the date on each leftover item. Most leftovers are good for about 72 hours. After that, most should be discarded.
- Check your refrigerator temperature to make sure it is at or below 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Most refrigerators are temperature-adjustable. Check to make sure they are cold enough by using a thermometer.
- Reheat leftovers to an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit, which kills most bacteria that may have grown. If using a microwave to reheat, make sure to stir about half way through the reheating process to avoid cold spots.

When in doubt, throw it out. When unsure if a food was kept safe or how long it has been lingering in the refrigerator, it is better to be safe than sorry. No one wants food poisoning to come celebrate the holiday season with them, so let's keep ourselves and our loved ones safe.



When things in the fridge start to mold, ooze, or smell, you know it's time to throw them out.



7 Day Rule:
Perishable foods that are opened or prepared should be thrown out after 7 days.

When to Throw Out Food

Food

Salads	Hot dogs	Luncheon meat	Bacon & sausage	Hamburger & ground meats	Raw beef, veal, lamb, & pork	Raw poultry	Cooked meats	Soup & stew	Takeout
Egg, chicken, ham, tuna, & macaroni salads	Opened package	Opened package	Raw bacon	Raw hamburger, ground beef, turkey, veal, pork, lamb, & mixtures of them	Steaks	Whole	Cooked meat or poultry	Vegetable or meat soup	Pizza
3-4 days	1 Week	2 Weeks	7 Days	1-2 Days	3-5 Days	1-2 Days	3-4 Days	3-4 Days	3-4 Days
Refrigerator (40 ° F or below)									
Freezer (0 ° F or below)									
Does not freeze well	1-2 Months	1-2 Months	1 Month	3-4 Months	4-12 Months	1 Year	2-6 Months	2-3 Months	1-2 Months

Herbs and Spices—Bay Leaf

The bay leaf is one of the most unique and essential herbs to find in a home spice rack. It is a herb that is added to many dishes to provide flavor and then is removed prior to eating. Consuming a whole bay leaf is strongly discouraged due to their rigid texture, which presents a choking hazard.

When the bay leaf is added and allowed to simmer, it releases its warm, slightly floral notes with a hint of pine into the dish. It pairs well with foods that simmer or slow cook like soups, stews, and sauces. The bay leaf pairs well with chicken, beef, poultry, seafood, and even vegetable-based recipes. The most common pair for vegetables are tomatoes, potatoes, mushrooms, carrots, and beans. The bay leaf provides an elevated flavor that provides a light fragrance and comfort.

The bay leaf contains small amounts of vitamins and minerals. It contains vitamin A, vitamin C, and several B vitamins like B6. As for minerals, it contains, iron, magnesium, calcium, and manganese.

While the bay leaf isn't actually consumed in most instances, it sure has left a mark in the culinary world for its simple and powerful flavor notes.



Different ways to add bay leaf to the diet

Before cooking rice or other grain meals, add a few bay leaves to for flavour and appeal

To make a great spice mix, combine ground or crushed bay leaves with other herbs and spices.

For a calming herbal tea, use dried bay leaves. Take advantage of the soothing and fragrant effects of bay leaf tea by steeping a few leaves in hot water for a little while.



BAY LEAVES VS. LAUREL LEAVES

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE FOR GLOBAL BUYERS

BAY LEAVES



- More common in North America
- Retail and wholesale packaging
- May refer to semi-selected grades

LAUREL LEAVES



- Preferred in Europe, Middle East
- Mainly industrial packaging
- Often fully hand-selected leaves

Bay Leaf Tree Identification Chart

Bay Leaf Tree Leaves



Bay Leaf Tree Fruit



Bay Leaf Tree Flowers



Bay Leaf Tree



Bay Leaf Tree Bark



Recipe—Bay Leaf & Lemon Shortbread

Ingredients

Cookie

- 3 small dry bay leaves
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 cups butter at room temperature
- 1 tsp lemon zest
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 4 cups flour

Icing

- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 5 small bay leaves
- 1 cup icing sugar
- 1 tbsp meringue powder (see note)



Instructions

Cookie

1. Position a rack in the center of your oven, and preheat to 350°F.
2. Combine the bay leaves with 1-2 tablespoons of the sugar in a spice grinder. Grind until the bay leaves have been reduced to powder (sift out any stubborn bits). Set aside.
3. Using a stand mixer or hand mixer, thoroughly combine the butter, bay/sugar mixture, remaining sugar, lemon zest, and salt.
4. Add flour to the butter mixture a little at a time, mixing until a malleable dough is formed. It should have a consistency rather like playdough.
5. Shape the cookies into rounds. I use 25 g portions (roughly a heaping tablespoon), pressed into cookie cutters for consistency, but you can use any method of shaping that works for you.
6. Bake for 18-20 minutes for larger (25 g) cookies (less for smaller cookies) or until lightly browned at the edges.

Icing

1. Combine the granulated sugar and bay leaves in a spice grinder. Grind until the bay leaves have been reduced to powder (sift out any stubborn bits). Set aside.
2. Using a stand mixer or hand mixer (whisk and paddle attachments both work fine), thoroughly combine the bay/sugar mixture with the remaining icing ingredients. Combine at medium speed until the mixture forms a thick, even, icing.
3. Dip the cooled cookies in the icing and let the excess drip off. Alternatively, you can pipe the icing on if you prefer.
4. Lay the finished cookies out on racks to dry for 12-24 hours. Drying times can depend on the humidity of your home and the thickness of the icing.

Recipe received from: <https://www.diversivore.com/bay-leaf-lemon-shortbread/#recipe>

Brain Exercise

Don't just exercise your body — work out your brain!



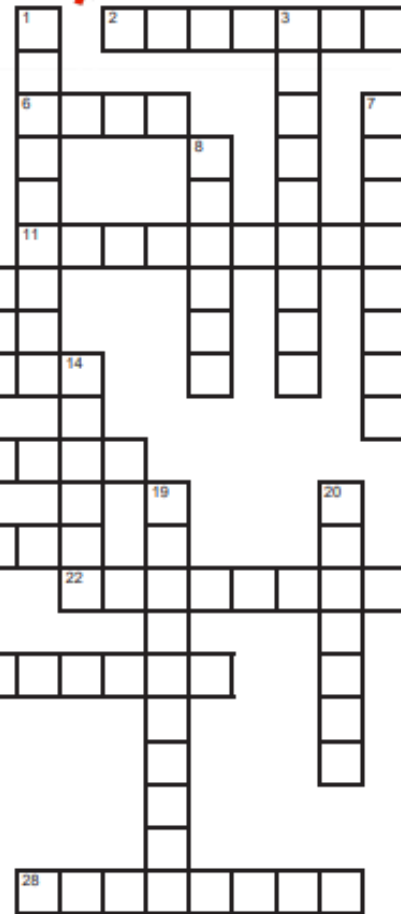
ACROSS

2. Dickens character who hated Christmas
4. Injury caused by exposure to extreme cold
6. White precipitation that covers the ground in winter
9. Shiny decorative strands draped on Christmas trees
11. Type of tree that stays green all winter long
12. Period of anticipation leading up to Christmas
13. Frozen water formations hanging from roofs in winter
17. Singing holiday songs door-to-door
18. Season that officially begins in December
21. Description of holiday lights at night
22. Festival of Lights celebrated in December
23. Full of holiday cheer and merriment
24. Major holiday celebrated on December 25th
25. Santa's preferred entry point on Christmas Eve
27. Last month of the year, full of holiday celebrations
28. Shortest (and longest) day of the year

DOWN

1. Plant hung overhead to encourage holiday kisses
3. Decorative items hung on Christmas trees
5. Winter activity on frozen ponds or indoor rinks
7. Santa's flying helpers during the holiday season
8. Creamy holiday beverage
10. Time off from work or school to celebrate in December

14. Santa's vehicle for delivering presents
15. Red and green plant popular as a Christmas decoration
16. Common practice during the December holidays
19. Jolly gift-giver who visits on Christmas Eve
20. African American cultural celebration in late December
25. December weather that makes you want to bundle up
26. Ancient winter festival that influenced Christmas traditions



Advent	Gift-giving	Santa Claus
Caroling	Hanukkah	Scrooge
Chimney	Holiday	Sleigh
Christmas	Ice skating	Snow
Cold	Icicles	Solstice
December	Kwanzaa	Tinsel
Eggnog	Mistletoe	Twinkling
Evergreen	Ornaments	Winter
Festive	Poinsettia	Yule
Frostbite	Reindeer	

December 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 <i>Cyber Monday</i>	2 <i>National Fritters Day</i>	3 <i>Make a Gift Day</i>	4 <i>National Cookie Day</i>	5 <i>World Soil Day</i>	6 <i>Mitten Tree Day</i>
7 <i>Pearl Harbor Day</i>	8 <i>National Brownie Day</i>	9 <i>National Pastry Day</i>	10 <i>Human Rights Day</i>	11 <i>National App Day</i>	12 <i>Poinsettia Day</i>	13 <i>National Cocoa Day</i>
14 <i>Roasted Chestnuts Day</i>	15 <i>National Lemon Cupcake Day</i>	16 <i>National Chocolate Covered Anything Day</i>	17 <i>National Maple Syrup Day</i>	18 <i>National Regifting Day</i>	19 <i>Oatmeal Muffin Day</i>	20 <i>Go Caroling Day</i>
21 <i>Winter Solstice</i>	22 <i>National Date Nut Bread Day</i>	23 <i>Roots Day</i>	24 <i>National Chocolate Day</i>	25 <i>Christmas Day</i>	26 <i>National Candy Cane Day</i>	27 <i>Lego Build Day</i>
28 <i>Card Playing Day</i>	29 <i>Pepper Pot Day</i>	30 <i>Bacon Day</i>	31 <i>New Year's Eve</i>			

MONTHLY OBSERVATIONS

- *Art and Architecture Month*
- *Bingo Month*
- *Human Rights Month*
- *Made in America Month*
- *National Fruitcake Month*
- *Read a New Book Month*
- *World Food Safety Month*
- *Write a Friend Month*





DECEMBER

Crossword

SOLUTION

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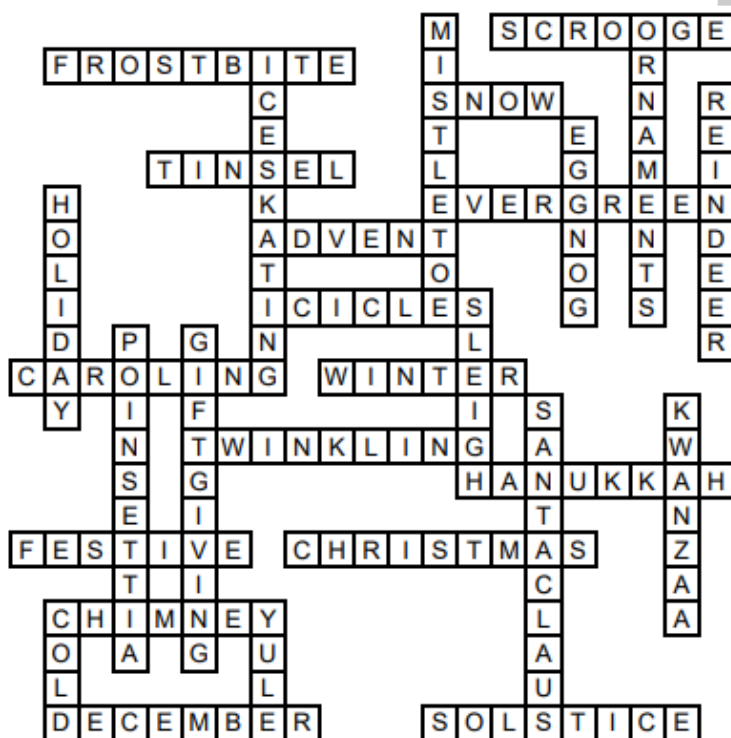
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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

