

DESIGNED TO INSPIRE

food + recipes + conscious living + lifestyle tips

column and photography by **Sandra Yearms Joblonicky**

February is Natural Awakenings month of friendship. Appropriately named, it hosts the annual anniversary of the Feast of St. Valentine. It is the day we share tokens of love to honor friends, family and those special loved ones who make our hearts go pitty-pat. Hand crafted indulgences are truly gifts from the heart because it takes thoughtfulness, time and energy. I can't prepare and deliver a gift to each of you but I can give you a Gift of Love, Health & Wellness for your body with this Congee recipe. So simmer up a batch, fill your recycled 1/2 pint or quart jars and deliver to your special Valentines. Nothing says heartfelt like something home made.



History Lesson. Research shows the roots of Valentine's day probably began in ancient Rome as the feast

of Lupercalia. An annual pagan fertility celebration that included the sacrifice of a goat, a dog and whipping of the willing young women with the hides of the slain animals. The revelers believed this custom would help make them fertile. All things do change and Circa 496 the customs were reinvented as a Christian feast by Pope Gelasius I. Find a very colorful, detailed article titled 'Dark Origins of Valentine's Day' at npr.org.

Congee: What it Is



Congee is a bland, silky textured water based porridge generally made with Arborio rice. Considered part of traditional Chinese

medicine it is 'food therapy' that gives the digestive system a well-deserved rest. One of my food heroes is Dr. Weng Weijian of the Beijing College of Traditional Chinese Medicine who believes in the rejuvenating and healthful powers of food. In NINA SIMONDS'S... cont'd →



Sandra Joblonicky
Raw Culinary Arts Chef

Questions and Requests

SandraJ@HealthyLivingWithStyle.com

Website: www.HealthyLivingWithStyle.com

"A Spoonful of Ginger", he lists a Wild Shiitake and Miatake Mushroom Congee recipe that bolsters the immune system but is also therapeutic for fighting flu, colds and life threatening diseases. And from personal experience, it beats by far the old "hair of the dog" myth for After The Party Blues.



Congee with sweet potato garnish



Congee 6-8 Servings

Cooking time 2-3 hours with heat diffuser

Ingredients + Preparation

- + **1 Cup Arborio rice**, washed in cold water to remove talc.
- + **10 Cups liquid.** Purified water only or 8 cups water plus 2 cups antibiotic and hormone free chicken broth. Broth should be light as this is not the traditional rich chicken soup you are accustomed to.
- + **Salt:** none, or large pinch of Himalayan
- + **1 whole onion** peeled and quartered, 1/2 bunch of celery, peeled Korean yam halved, handful of parsley on the stem, 4 slices of one small juice orange.

Step 1: Put washed rice, liquid and all ingredients in heavy pot with lid. Bring to a boil over high heat, uncovered.

Step 2: Lower heat. Put diffuser on heat element and place pot on top to avoid rice sticking and burning to bottom of pot. Partially cover, simmer – not bubbling.

Step 3: Cooking time 1-3 hours. Stir occasionally to bottom of pot, taste and check consistency. Your cooking style will determine if you prefer a watery or creamier version.

Step 4: When cool, discard onion, celery, parsley, orange. Reserve yams for garnish.

Step 5: Serve hot with Korean yams, and add your choice of cooked chicken, shrimp, or leftovers if desired.

Enjoy and be healthy!