

Bourbon Autumn Simmer Pot

There are days when I want the house to smell like fall before the weather has quite gotten the message. This is what I put on the stove. Orange and apple give it that warm, unmistakably autumn scent, while cinnamon, star anise, rosemary, and spice make the whole house smell as though something wonderful has been baking for hours.

The beauty of a simmer pot is that nothing needs to be exact. Bruised apples, the end of an orange, a rosemary sprig beginning to look a little tired, all of it is perfectly useful here. Add everything to a pot, cover it with water, and let the stove do the rest.

Ingredients

1 orange, sliced
1 apple, sliced
3 cinnamon sticks
3 whole star anise
1 teaspoon whole allspice berries
6 to 8 whole cloves
½ teaspoon ground ginger
2 to 3 sprigs fresh rosemary
4 to 6 cups water, plus more as needed

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1. Add orange, apple, cinnamon sticks, star anise, allspice, cloves, ground ginger, and rosemary to a medium saucepan or simmer pot.
 2. Pour in enough water to generously cover the ingredients.
 3. Bring just to a gentle simmer over medium heat, then reduce heat to low.
 4. Allow to simmer uncovered for 2 to 4 hours, adding additional water whenever the level begins to get low. Never allow the pot to simmer dry.
 5. When finished, remove from heat and allow to cool completely before discarding.

A Few Notes

You can reuse the same simmer pot for a second day. Cool it completely, cover and refrigerate overnight, then add fresh water before reheating. For a stronger fragrance, gently press some of the orange and apple slices with the back of a wooden spoon after they have softened.