



www.HowardCountySmiles.com • New Patients 410.988.4167 • Current Patients 410.730.4674

Inside This Issue

- A Family of Artists
- Gratitude Is a Healthy Attitude
- Giving Back This Fall
- The Gift of a Beautiful Smile
- Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Cookies
- Meme Corner
- The Most Expensive Ingredients in the World

Cooking With Gold **The Most Expensive Ingredients in the World**

Have you ever wondered what magical ingredients some of the world's most famous chefs are keeping in their spice cabinet or pantry? Wannabe chefs, take note. Here are a few examples of some of the world's most expensive ingredients and why they're priced like precious stones.

White truffle is one of the most sought-after and difficult-to-find ingredients on the planet. Considered a delicacy, white truffles can only be found in the Piedmont area in Italy. This mushroom can cost you up to \$2,000 per pound. Since it's difficult to discover – and getting increasingly difficult each year – special pigs are trained to forage for them. Find them in the most extravagantly creamy pasta or shaved over a scrumptious tortino.

Saffron – the world is just mad about it. This exotic spice is one of the most expensive food items on the planet, as it's so painstaking to grow and harvest. If you've never been lucky enough to see saffron up close – let alone taste it – it

is plucked from the *Crocus sativus* flower. It unravels in thin threads, collected by hand. There are only three threads on every flower, so each thread is like a tiny piece of delicious, red gold. If you're interested in buying a pound of saffron, be prepared to spend up to \$5,000.

Hop shoots, the part of the plant that beer brewers do not use, are being sold for insane prices around the world. Similar to saffron, hop shoots are very troublesome to harvest, and you pay the price for the workers' pain. A pound of hop shoots can cost you around \$500. Sauté them with butter and garlic for a delicacy only heaven could concoct.



Some will say that the taste of ingredients like saffron cannot be duplicated, and that white truffle is the best thing that's ever happened to culinary arts. But with prices like these, a substitute might not be such a bad idea after all.

A Family of Artists

How Dentistry and Art Go Hand in Hand

Ever since I was very young, I've had a strong affinity for art. Back in college, I remember taking the shades off the windows in my dorm room one night and using them as canvases for a giant pencil portrait of one of my favorite skiers. I still have that drawing to this day, and it serves as a reminder that, on a very essential level, I'm an artist.

and is also working on producing his own independent film. My daughter Breanna is an art major with a pre-dental focus. She wants to be a dentist and has since she was only about 4. Amazingly gifted in painting in sculpture, I've never seen a medium she can't impress with. Our youngest daughter, Alexis, is also very gifted in art, in all mediums, but her focus is on baking and pastry creation. She studies at Johnson and Wales, and her intricately beautiful culinary sugar sculptures were used at the fall event for the governor of Rhode Island last year. I'm proud of all my kids for incorporating their art into their vocations.

"Great artists don't always become dentists, but the very best dentists are always gifted artists first."

I wanted to be in the medical field since I was a hospital orderly at age 12, and I went into dentistry because I appreciated the field's attention to craftsmanship and artistry. Throughout dental school, I continued to create art between rigorous coursework, labs, and exams. Drawing, painting, and creating realistic wood carvings was a form of expression and relaxation, and I knew this gift would contribute greatly to my career as a dentist.

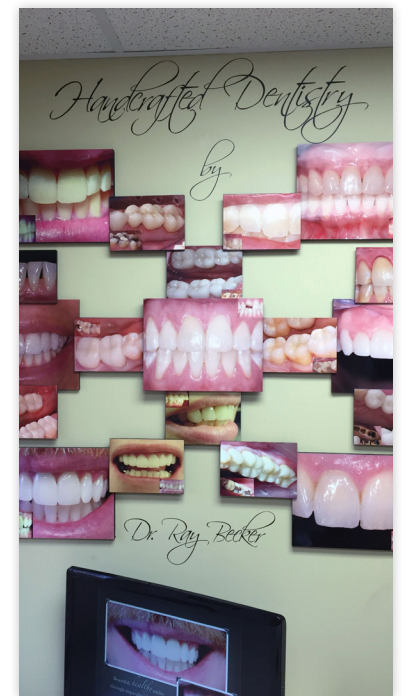
Each of my children took their talent and interest in art and made it part of their career. My son Michael is a film producer and videographer in San Francisco. He has been working on several different film projects,

This Thanksgiving, I'm so excited to have the family together – although we'll have to wait to see Michael when he comes out for Christmas – and just enjoy our usual feast, complete with a big, green egg-cooked turkey and all the trimmings. Most of all, I look forward to catching up with the kids and hearing all about their latest artistic endeavors.

Great artists don't always become dentists, but the very best dentists are always gifted artists first. At my practice, making dentistry an art form is something I champion and teach. Understanding light, symmetry, and other artistic principles of crowns, for example, allows us to deliver high-end



results. We see patients on a daily basis that are blown away by our work, and we've changed the way people understand the word "cosmetic." The lab equipment that we use, combined with my understanding of aesthetics, allows me to create smiles that are truly works of art.



- Dr. Becker

Want to Benefit Your Health? Be Grateful!

Do you have an attitude of gratitude? Beyond letting people know you appreciate what you have, gratitude will do wonders for your own life. "Grateful people take better care of themselves and engage in more protective health behaviors," says UC Davis psychologist Robert Emmons.

Who wouldn't like to reduce stress? Being consciously grateful has that effect. Scientist Paul Mills says that grateful people feel more connected with themselves and their environments. "That's the opposite of what stress does," he says.

Dr. Emmons from UC Davis knows why: "Feelings of thankfulness," he says, "have tremendous positive value in helping people cope with daily problems, especially stress."

Gratitude also has a profound effect on the body. A study by UC San Diego's School of Medicine found that people who are grateful have healthier hearts — especially when they looked at rates of inflammation, plaque buildup, and arrhythmia.

Heart disease is a leading cause of mortality, which means gratitude might be a lifesaving attitude.

Furthermore, "There are some very interesting studies linking optimism to better immune function," says Dr. Lisa Aspinwall, a psychologist at the University of Utah. These studies show higher white blood cell counts in people who demonstrate gratitude and optimism as compared to their more pessimistic peers.

How can you apply this to your own life? Gratitude is a hard thing to keep in mind, especially during tough times. Dr. Emmons recommends keeping a gratitude journal. He's conducted studies that show these journals make people more likely to exercise regularly and have a positive outlook.



And take the time to thank other people frequently and sincerely. Did your co-worker take a big piece of a project for you? Let them know you appreciate it. By showing gratitude, you're doing a favor for both of you. So make every day Thanksgiving, and be thankful and healthy all year long.

In the Service of Community

How Howard County Smiles Is Giving Back — And How You Can Help, Too!

This fall, Howard County Smiles is participating in a couple of charity events — and you're invited to get involved as well.

Throughout the month of November, we'll be giving back to the community with **blissing bags**. If you've never heard of blissing bags, the idea is simple. Each blissing bag is filled with a number of items — granola bars, bottled water, toothbrushes, toothpaste, socks, change, and so on. The supplies are gathered and sorted into one-gallon bags, which are easy to store in a car or give out to people in need in our community.

We'll be creating blissing bags right in our office, and we'll be keeping them on hand throughout the season. Here's how you can get involved: You can take finished blissing bags to give to people who may need them. You may see someone on the street or on the corner in need of the basics, and with blissing bags, you can help them out. If you'd like to learn more about blissing bags, or you're thinking about making your own, find out more on Pinterest at www.pinterest.com/explore/blissing-bags.

Later in the month, we'll be going to **Happy Helpers for the Homeless**. This local, all-volunteer organization works directly with homeless and underprivileged individuals and families. Every weekend, volunteers work to organize supplies and donations to share with needy people within our community. The great thing about Happy Helpers is that anyone can get involved! For more information, including how you can get involved, visit www.happyhelpersforthehomeless.com.

The Gift of a Beautiful Smile A New Way to Achieve Whiter, Brighter Teeth

The holidays are coming up fast, and you want to look your best. That means you may be considering teeth whitening. But with so many options and so little time, where do you start? Well, at Howard County Smiles we have the answer!

We now offer a new way to whiten teeth called Sinsational Smile. It's an effective and convenient alternative to other forms of in-office teeth whitening. And at \$99, it's also affordable.

What makes Sinsational Smile different? It only takes 20 minutes and it can be done during your regularly scheduled hygiene visit to save even more time. Plus, it's

designed to be comfortable. The treatment features a tray your jaw can relax around. You no longer have to clench or hold your jaw in one position for a long period of time, which can be incredibly tiring.

Now, you can reduce the appearance of stains and get your teeth a few shades brighter all in a single, simple treatment. Achieve whiter, brighter teeth, just like that! And with special take-home gel pens, you can touch up your smile as needed — and get the most out of your treatment.

Sinsational Smile also makes an excellent gift and stocking stuffer! Just ask about our



Sinsational Smile gift certificate and surprise your loved ones with the gift of an amazing smile this holiday season.



Recipe courtesy of foodnetwork.com.

Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup canned pumpkin puree
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- 2 cups (12-ounce bag) milk chocolate chips, not semi-sweet

Directions

1. Heat oven to 350 F.
2. Beat butter until smooth, then add in sugars until the mixture is light and fluffy.
3. Beat in eggs, vanilla, and pumpkin.
4. In a separate bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and cloves.
5. Add the flour mixture into the pumpkin mixture.
6. Stir in chocolate chips.
7. Spoon cookie dough onto a greased cookie sheet and bake for 15–20 minutes or until cookies are browned at the edges.

Laughing Gas

