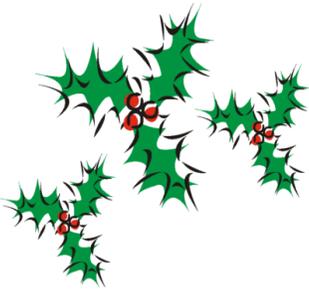


# Natural Health News

December 2017

EVERGREEN SPA & WELLNESS  
ELY, MN

## HYGGE for true winter happiness



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### FALL & WINTER- STORE HOURS:

Tuesday – Saturday  
9 am-5 pm

**CLOSED SUNDAYS  
& MONDAYS**

### SPA HOURS:

By Appointment



Denmark consistently ranks as one of the happiest countries in the world. But why? A concept called “*hygge*,” pronounced “hue-guh,” is believed to be a big part of that. While *hygge* is a year-round concept in Denmark, it is becoming a more commonly adopted practice to help others around the world get through the dark winter months. Think of it as making the ordinary extraordinary. Some of the key ingredients of *hygge* include: togetherness, relaxation, indulgence, presence and comfort. The true essence of *hygge* is the pursuit of everyday happiness and it is engrained in the culture of Denmark. This Danish concept cannot be translated into one single word but encompasses a feeling of cozy contentment and well-being through enjoying the simple things in life. If you’ve ever enjoyed reading a book indoors on a rainy Sunday or a cup of hot cocoa on a snow day you’ve experienced *hygge* without even knowing it. *Hygge* actually comes from a Norwegian word meaning “well-being.” It means creating a warm atmosphere. It is enjoying the good things in life with good people. The warm amber glow of candlelight is *hygge*. Stomping through woods, spending time with family and friends—that’s *hygge* too. The high season of *hygge* is Christmas, when Danes go all out. Danish winters are long and dark, and so the Danes fight the darkness with their best weapon: *hygge*, and the millions of candles that go with it. But it is more than a cozy room full of candles, company and good food. *Hygge* is a philosophy; a way of life that has helped Danes understand the importance of simplicity, time to unwind and slowing down the pace of life. Although this concept may have started in Denmark, you can definitely start practicing it at home! Create space and time to do nothing but enjoy the little things with family and friends and you are on your way to happiness. It will help make winter more bearable, for starters. So, what isn’t *hygge*? Sorry, staring at your cell phone and texting is the least *hygge* thing out there. TV is okay though—but try inviting some friends over to watch movies with you since togetherness is another key part of this concept. What you eat is also essential to creating cozy vibes and it is all about homemade treats, comfort food and hot drinks. The healthiest mood-boosting foods might not always be the first thing on your mind but our brains are wired to turn to food to feel better. Eating a poor diet will damage your mood. A poor mood can actually damage your immune system, slow down weight loss and lead to tension headaches. Fortunately, there are foods that can actually improve your mood. It turns out there is a direct link between what we eat and how we feel. In fact, there are foods that can help make you feel awesome. These foods flood your body with nutrients, allowing the brain to produce neurotransmitters that give you a natural high. That’s why you can successfully fight depression with nutrition. The following mood-boosting foods are proven to leave you feeling better. The next time you are craving a comfort food that is not healthy, turn to these proven mood-boosters instead of empty calories full of processed and artificial ingredients. 1. **Avocado**: this superfood is loaded with health benefits ranging from protecting your heart to improving digestion, but it will also improve your mood by naturally balancing your hormones. It is the number one food to eat to feel happier. 2. **Grapes**: are packed with antioxidants, especially flavonoids, which have been found to affect mood. While you can get some of the antioxidant benefits from red wine, which is made from grapes, alcohol is a known depressant. Keep your spirits up by eating the fruit in its natural state instead. 3. **Shiitake mushrooms**: this meaty mushroom contains a variety of nutrients including vitamin B6. While the entire B vitamin complex is critical for normal physical and psychological functions, B6, also known as pyridoxine, is especially great for improving your mood and feeling good. ~ over ~

Because vitamin B6 impacts the production of serotonin and neurotransmitters, healthy B6 levels are associated with a positive mood and reducing stress naturally. It has also been proven to effectively treat mood disorders and depression. 4. **Raw nuts**: they are loaded with nutrients, healthy fats, antioxidants and most importantly, serotonin, the feel-good-neurotransmitter. While they are healthy, nuts are also high in fat and calories, so a handful or two is usually the right amount. 5. **Salmon**: is one of the best foods for both your mood and brain health. This lean protein contains double your recommended value of vitamin B12. Getting enough of this vitamin is crucial to warding off depression and staying mentally healthy. Salmon also packs a punch of mood-stabilizing essential fatty acids. Make sure to consume wild-caught salmon and avoid farm-raised. 6. **Sesame seeds**: although tiny, these seeds contain tyrosine. This amino acid boosts the brain's dopamine levels, kicking the feel-good hormone into high gear, while balancing out the others. Pretty impressive for such a small seed. Sprinkle sesame seeds on salads or add to a smoothie. 7. **Strawberries**: are rich in vitamins and nutrients, including vitamin A and C and manganese. Strawberries serve as a strong line of defense against brain degeneration, while also boosting serotonin. To create more *hygge* in your life, burn beeswax candles in your home, indulge in clean comfort foods, spend a lot of time together telling stories, appreciate the small moments in your life and focus on being present in the moment. Take time to savor special moments during the holidays. One of my most favorite crafts during Christmas is making spiced orange pomanders to scent the house. It is simple to do and yields both a pretty centerpiece and a natural air freshener. Best of all, it is an all natural decoration and can be made with items around the house. All you need is firm, fresh citrus fruit. Use a corner of the citrus zester to make a few designs in the skin of the orange. Poke a row of holes in the orange with a tooth pick and push whole cloves into the pre-made holes. You can make any design you like on the oranges. If you like, you can finish by rolling the pomanders in ground spices for extra fragrance or adorn them with pretty ribbons. You can arrange the citrus pomanders as a centerpiece, place them in bowls and set them around the house as natural air fresheners. You can also hang your pomander by threading a large needle with a string through the orange, make a knot at the bottom and a loop at the top. You can hang pomanders in a window and smaller pomanders can be hung as fragrant ornaments on your Christmas tree. You can display them in a bowl or on a plate for 3 to 4 days. After that you probably will see some mold. You can lengthen their life by a few days by tucking them into the fridge at night. To keep them preserved longer, suspend them with kitchen twine and hang them in a cool, dark place to dry for about a week. Then display them, just in time for Christmas. The dried pomanders are even more fragrant than the fresh ones! The scent will make your home merry and bright during the Holidays!

## COCONUT MILK EGG NOG

This dairy-free Egg Nog can be made with alcohol or without for a delicious treat!



Heat **6 cups of coconut milk (about 3 cans)** and **1 Tbsp. vanilla** until warm in a medium saucepan. Whisk or blend **6 egg yolks**, **1/4 cup honey** or a few drops of **stevia extract** along with **1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon** and **1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg** in a blender. Slowly add about half of the coconut mixture to the egg yolks to warm it and then add the whole mixture back into the saucepan.

Bring up to low heat and whisk until barely starting to thicken. Stir in rum or brandy and serve hot or cold. Enjoy! ~ Happy Holidays!

*At this holiday season our thoughts turn gratefully to those who have made our progress possible. Thank you so much for your friendship and support!*

*We wish you a merry Christmas and a blessed and healthy New Year!*

*Merry Christmas*



Organic Roots  Bistro

**WINTER HOURS:**

**TUESDAY through SATURDAY 9 AM—5 PM**  
**Closed Sunday & Monday**