



Fall in love WITH FALL FLAVORS

Fall in Love with Fall Flavors

The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God endures forever. Isaiah 40:8

The changing of seasons are part of God's creation. At this time of year, the foods He designed to lighten us up and cool us down during the sweltering days of summer give way to the warm, comforting foods and flavors of fall. God's autumn bounty is ready to nourish us heartily with warming spices, grounding vegetables and flavorful fruits.

From September to November, the autumn harvest brings a variety of healthful and delicious choices, from pumpkin and butternut squash to apples, cranberries and pears. When eaten in the growing season, these foods are at their peak of nutrition and flavor. Add the deliciously warm essences of cinnamon, ginger, and maple, and you can't help but fall in love with the flavors of fall.

To help you enjoy some of the best flavors this season has to offer, here are some of our favorite foods and recipes. As you browse the recipes and learn how their ingredients can benefit your health, can you see the care that God has put in the food He provides for us? What are some healthy changes you can make in your diet this fall? How will you be a good steward of God's creation?

Pumpkins

Fall's signature squash is the brightly colored orange pumpkin. With their rich history and health benefits (plus their famous role in Halloween festivities), pumpkins earn the number one spot on our list. The gourd gets its bright orange color from the antioxidant beta-carotene, which the body converts into vitamin A, a powerful protector of the eyes and booster for the immune system.

Other powerful compounds in pumpkin have been shown to have a wide variety of health benefits, such as lowering cholesterol, triglycerides, blood pressure and blood sugar, improving insulin resistance and suppressing the onset of diabetes. High amounts of Vitamin A, Vitamin C and other antioxidants in pumpkins offer protection against various forms of cancer, including breast, colon, lung and prostate cancer.

Pumpkin seeds are also a good source of omega-3 fatty acids and the amino acid L-tryptophan, a compound important in the production of serotonin which is responsible for feelings of well-being and happiness. Eating a handful of pumpkin seeds regularly can keep your spirits high and prevent depression.

There are many different types of pumpkins—the large jack-o-lantern types, the small “pie” pumpkins, also known as sugar pumpkins, Blue Hokkaido pumpkins, white pumpkins, and Kabocha squash (also known as Japanese pumpkins), to name a few. The flesh from pie pumpkins is the type most pumpkin puree is made from.

Pumpkin can be boiled, baked, steamed, or roasted. Once cooked, the pumpkin flesh can be eaten as is with some butter or spices for flavoring, or it can be pureed and used to make a variety of delicious dishes including oatmeal, smoothies, corn bread, chili, soup, risotto, lasagna, pies, custard, soufflé, muffins and pumpkin bread! The possibilities for healthy food ideas using pumpkin are endless!



Acorn, Butternut and other Winter Squash

Hard-shelled winter squash—like spaghetti squash, acorn, butternut, and Hubbard—share many of the same antioxidants, vitamins and minerals as pumpkin. A great source of vitamin A and potassium, stuffed winter squash is a holiday favorite, but it's also delicious when simply seasoned and served as a side dish. Pureed winter squash is also perfect for use in pie fillings, cakes, and muffins.

Winter squash should not be refrigerated after harvest or purchase. Instead, store them in a cool, dry, well-ventilated spot, where they should keep for about a month. Winter squash can be baked, grilled, sautéed, steamed, boiled, or stir-fried. An easy cooking method is to cut the squash in half, scoop out the seeds and fibers, then bake in the oven for about one hour at 350°F until tender.

Good spices to pair with winter squashes include allspice, basil, bay leaf, celery seed, chives, cilantro, cinnamon, cloves, dill, fennel, garlic, ginger, mace, marjoram, nutmeg, oregano, parsley, pepper, rosemary, sage, savory, sea salt, sesame seeds, and thyme.

Cranberry

Cranberry juice is rich in antioxidants, vitamin C and many minerals such as calcium, magnesium, iron, potassium and zinc—all important for warding off chronic diseases. It also contains B-vitamins, Vitamin E and vitamin K.

Research suggests the phytonutrients present in cranberry juice can help prevent urinary tract infections, respiratory disorders, kidney stones, cancer, and heart disease. It is also beneficial in preventing stomach disorders and diabetes, as well as gum diseases caused by dental plaque.

Unsweetened cranberry juice has been the most studied for its health benefits, but eating raw cranberries is also a good idea. Cranberries are very low in natural sugars, and in fact they are very tart, so most people don't eat cranberries raw. Some people might experience a stomach ache from the fruit's tartness, but from a nutritional standpoint, raw cranberries are a highly nutritious food with no natural toxicity risks.

One good way to incorporate raw cranberries into your diet is to slice them very thin and add them to salads or cooked vegetables. By slicing them thin, you'll get just enough zing to brighten the taste of the dish without an overload of tartness.

Cranberries can also be cooked. Fresh or frozen cranberries make a great cobbler, and can be added to muffins and quickbreads. Of course, cranberries are famously used to make cranberry sauce for holiday meals. They pair nicely with oranges, ginger, cinnamon and cloves.

Skip canned sauce and opt for making it yourself from fresh cranberries.

Warning: Anyone taking the prescription drug warfarin should not consume cranberry juice or fresh raw cranberries, as compounds in the cranberries may interfere with the effectiveness of the medication.

Pomegranate

The health benefits of pomegranates can be enjoyed by consuming them in several ways. You can drink pomegranate juice or you can eat the juicy seeds. They are mostly known for improving heart health, lowering cholesterol and maintaining healthy blood circulation. Other health benefits include being a cure for stomach disorders, cancer, dental conditions, osteoarthritis, anemia, and diabetes.

Use the seeds in salads, beverages, chutney, muffins, puddings, soups, jellies, and sauces. Good spices for pomegranate (depending upon whether your dish is sweet or savory) include allspice, cinnamon, coriander, garlic, ginger, rosemary and thyme.



Apples

Another quintessential fall flavor, these sweet, crunchy favorites are packed with fiber, vitamins and minerals that bestow a long list of health benefits, including weight loss and lowering the risk of cancers (especially lung cancer), diabetes, heart disease, Alzheimer's and Parkinsons, arthritis, gout, and many more.

There are more than 7,500 different types of apples, each with different flavor and nutrient profiles. Fuji apples have the highest concentration of phytonutrients, while Cortland and Empire apples have the lowest. To reap the benefits of apples, make sure to eat the skins, since that's where most of the antioxidants and phytonutrient compounds are located.

Firm apples like Gala, McIntosh, Granny Smith or Jonathan apples are best for baking and pie making, while Pristine and Lodi apples make great applesauce. Apples are delicious when sautéed or baked, too. Apples are versatile and can be used in sweet or savory dishes. Spices to keep on hand for pairing with apples include allspice, anise, caraway, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, fennel, ginger, mace, mint, nutmeg, and rosemary.

Pears

Pears are nutrient-dense fruits that have been widely used and savored for their delicious flavor since ancient times. They have also been valued for their medicinal benefits for thousands of years. They are packed with the nutrients potassium, vitamin-C, vitamin K, folate, dietary fiber, copper, manganese, magnesium, B-complex vitamins and a host of antioxidants.

Some of the health benefits of pears include their ability increase the metabolism and aid in weight loss, improve digestion, improve heart health, lower blood pressure, enhance memory, prevent cancer, boost the immune system, reduce inflammation and protect against osteoporosis, all while supporting healthier skin, eyes and hair.

There are many varieties of pears, serving different functions. The Anjou pear is inexpensive and good for eating—but is not as tasty as the Comice pear, which is considered the best to eat just by itself. The Winter Nellis pear is the best for baking. Winter pears like Anjou, Comice and Winter Nellis will keep for months in the refrigerator, though the ripening process can be expedited by putting them in a brown paper bag along with a ripe apple.

Pears are wonderful in salads and sauces (make pear sauce as you would applesauce), poached, roasted, sautéed, and baked. Season with lemon or red wine and spices like anise, caraway, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, fennel, ginger, mace, mint, nutmeg and rosemary.

Cinnamon

Cinnamon is one of the oldest spices known, dating back to biblical times. It was used in ancient Egypt to spice beverages and as a medicine. The spice comes from the aromatic brown bark of the cinnamon tree which is native to Southeast Asia and the Middle East. When dried, the bark rolls into a tubular form known as a quill (cinnamon stick), or it can be ground into a fine powder.

In the ancient healing system of India, which is still in use today, cinnamon is used for its warming and energizing effect. It stimulates circulation and also increases the absorption of other herbs and spices in meals. Cinnamon has also been a part of Traditional Chinese Medicine dating back to 2700 B.C. Still to this day, doctors of Traditional Chinese Medicine prescribe cinnamon mixed in a tea with another warming spice such as fresh ginger, to ward off colds or flu. The cinnamon/ginger combination can dissolve mucus and help resolve irritating coughs and bronchial congestion.

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Cinnamon (Continued)

Cinnamon's unique healing properties come from a wide variety of volatile compounds contained in the essential oils found in its bark, called cinnamaldehyde, cinnamyl acetate, and cinnamyl alcohol. These compounds have been studied for their anti-inflammatory, anti-viral and anti-blood clotting actions. In 2007, an Israeli researcher took a cue from a Biblical reference to high priests who used a holy oil containing cinnamon, and he developed a potent cinnamon extract which may protect against modern viruses like HIV and the Avian flu.

In recent years, cinnamon has also received much attention for its impact on regulating blood sugar levels and burning body fat. The effects from this thermogenic spice have been found to work better on abdominal fat than anywhere else in the body. Research has shown that just 1/4 to 1 teaspoon of cinnamon a day can boost the body's weight loss ability and slow down the absorption of carbohydrates from meals, preventing blood sugar spikes. Cinnamon also outperforms diabetes drugs for lowering blood sugar levels in people with type 2 diabetes. Cinnamon lowers cholesterol and triglycerides as well.

There are about a hundred different varieties of cinnamon, however the most common varieties used for commercial purposes are Cassia Cinnamon, Saigon Cinnamon (also known as Vietnamese Cinnamon), Korintje Cinnamon and Ceylon cinnamon, which is often referred to as "true cinnamon." Their flavors are similar, both featuring a warm, sweet and fragrant taste, but the cinnamon from Ceylon is sweeter and more subtle.

The Cassia, Saigon and Korintje Cinnamon are all classified under the classification of "Cassia" Cinnamon. This is the less expensive and most common grocery store variety in the U.S., while the Ceylon variety is more rare and often found in specialty markets.

All Cassia type Cinnamon are hard and have high levels of Coumarin, a substance known to cause liver damage if consumed in quantities much higher than normal amounts added to foods, while Ceylon Cinnamon is the only soft and brittle Cinnamon with ultra low Coumarin levels.

If you are taking Cinnamon in supplement form for health reasons, then you should switch to Ceylon Cinnamon. The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) established a tolerable daily intake (TDI) of 0.1 mg/kg body weight of Coumarin in Cinnamon.

Here's a few ways to enjoy more cinnamon in food form:

Sprinkle cinnamon on whole grain toast.

Sprinkle cinnamon over slices of peaches or apples.

Mix cinnamon into your cup of coffee, tea or hot apple cider.

Mix cinnamon into your cup of yogurt, into your morning smoothie, or into your bowl of oatmeal.

Add cinnamon to your baking, into your marinara sauce, soups, beans, or even rubbed onto meats or poultry.

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Ginger

Ginger is the knobby beige stem or root, or underground rhizome, of the ginger plant. Its flavor is pungent and zesty and its effect on the body is powerful and warming. Ginger is best known for its action as a digestive aid—it relieves symptoms of nausea and vomiting, and reduces gas and stomach cramps. Ginger is also very effective in preventing the symptoms of motion sickness, especially seasickness, and contains very potent anti-inflammatory compounds which have been shown to effectively reduce the pain and inflammation of osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis.

The active components of ginger root are volatile oils and pungent antioxidant compounds called gingerols and shogaols. When peeled, the potent inner flesh of the ginger rhizome is yellow, white or red in color, depending upon the variety. The plant is native to southeastern Asia, but has been renowned for millennia in many areas throughout the world. Ginger is mentioned in ancient Chinese, Indian and Middle Eastern writings, and has long been valued for its medicinal and culinary properties.

Ginger root can be consumed fresh or dried, and is a versatile ingredient that can be used in drinks (tea or ale) or in cooking. It can be used to make foods spicy or sweet, depending on the recipe. As mentioned earlier, Traditional Chinese Medicine has employed the use of ginger to promote energy circulation and increase the body's metabolic rate as a way to treat many health conditions, especially gastrointestinal disorders.

Ginger is a potent fat fighter, as it increases core body temperature and helps burn calories.

Ginger's warm, zesty flavor makes it one of the world's favorite spices. Fresh ginger is used as a tea or in savory cooking, while dried or ground ginger is best for sweet dishes. Here are some ways to enjoy more ginger:

Steep fresh slices in a cup of hot water to make ginger tea.

Combine freshly grated ginger, lemon juice, honey and water to make a zesty lemonade.

Sprinkle grated ginger into a pot of rice while cooking to make ginger rice.

Add fresh ginger to stir fries, curries, and soups.

Maple

We can thank Canada and the state of Vermont for making our fall meals just a bit sweeter with pure maple syrup. It is considered as a key flavor component for a number of foods. It adds flavor to sausages, fritters, baked beans, granola and fresh fruit. Drizzle it over baked winter squash, sweet potatoes, pancakes, waffles and French toast. Add it to yogurt, or bake it into scones, cookies, muffins and quickbreads.

The health benefits of pure maple syrup include a healthy heart and a strong immune system. Pure maple syrup is an outstanding source of manganese, and contains calcium, potassium, zinc and antioxidants. There has been a longstanding misperception that the darker Grade B syrup is less processed than Grade A, which is completely untrue. It's never been the case that any one grade is "better" than the other. The state of Vermont is the top producer of pure maple syrup in the country, and the Vermont syrup industry came up with the grading system for their syrup. Grading is done simply by color, and color in turn varies largely based on the weather, with sap from the same tree capable of producing different colors and thus different grades from one day to the next.

Last year Vermont instituted an entirely new labeling system. Now all types of maple syrup will be called Grade A, but with more descriptive names to signify their color and taste: Grade A Golden Color with Delicate Taste; Grade A Amber Color With Rich Taste; Grade A: Dark With Robust Taste; Grade A Very Dark With Strong Taste.

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SAUSAGE AND APPLE STUFFED ACORN SQUASH

2 acorn squash, halved and seeded
1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted
1/4 teaspoon garlic salt
1/4 teaspoon ground sage
dash of sea salt and pepper
1 lb turkey sausage, removed from casing
1/2 cup onion, finely chopped
1 celery rib, finely chopped
2 apples, cored and chopped
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
1 tablespoon pure maple syrup
1 egg, beaten
Preheat oven to 400°F.

Combine the melted butter, garlic salt and 1/4 teaspoon sage. Brush the mixture over the cut sides and cavity of the acorn squash. Sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste.

Place the squash halves cut side up in a large roasting pan. Bake for 1 hour, or until the squash is tender yet still holds its shape.

Meanwhile make the stuffing: Cook the sausage in a skillet until light brown. Remove to a colander to drain. Drain all but 2 tablespoons drippings from frypan. Add onion, celery and saute 4 minutes. Stir in apple and saute 2 more minutes.

Combine the sausage, vegetables in a large bowl.

Taste and season with cinnamon, maple syrup, salt or pepper if needed (depending on your sausage you may not want to add more seasoning).

Stir in the egg.

Fill the squash halves with stuffing-they should be slightly mounded.

Return to oven and bake, covered, for 20 more minutes, until the egg is set.

Makes 4 servings

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HOW TO COOK A PUMPKIN TO HAVE PUMPKIN PUREE TO MAKE PUMPKIN RECIPES

You will need:

A pie pumpkin (see step 1)

A large, sharp serrated knife

A big spoon or ice cream scoop

A large pot or baking dish

Step 1 - Get a pie pumpkin

"Pie pumpkins" are smaller, sweeter, less grainy textured pumpkins than the usual jack-o-lantern types. Grocery stores usually carry them in late September through December.

Just like selecting any squash, look for one that is firm, no bruises or soft spots, and a good orange color.

Yield: Pie pumpkins are small, usually only 6-8 inches in diameter. You can usually obtain about 2 or 3 cups of puree per pumpkin, about the same amount in a 15-ounce can of pumpkin puree.



Step 2 - Prepare the pumpkin for cooking

Wash the exterior of the pumpkin in cool or warm water, no soap. Cut the pumpkin in half. A serrated knife and a sawing motion works best.

Step 3 - Scoop out the seeds and scrape the insides

Scoop out all the seeds and scrape all of the stringy part of the pumpkin that coats the inside surface. A large spoon or heavy ice cream scoop works great for this.

The seeds can be used either to plant pumpkins next year, or roasted to eat this year!

Step 4 - Cook the pumpkin

There are several ways to cook the pumpkin; just choose use your preferred method. You can use a pressure cooker, steam on the stovetop or bake in the oven.

To Steam: Use a large pot and fill it with about 2 inches of water. Add the pumpkin halves to the pot, cover and bring the water to a boil. Allow the pumpkin to steam until it is easily pierced through the skin with a fork or knife, about 20 to 25 minutes.

Note: You may need to cut the pumpkin further to make it fit into the pot. The fewer the number of pieces, the easier it will be to scoop out the cooked pumpkin afterwards.

To Bake: Preheat oven to 350°F. Place the pumpkin halves cut side down in a baking dish and add about 2 cups of water to the pan to help prevent it from drying out. Bake for about 45 minutes to an hour until it is easily pierced through the skin with a fork or knife.

Step 5 - Scoop out the cooked pumpkin

Once the pumpkin is cooked until it is soft, it is easy to scoop out the flesh with a broad, smooth spoon, (such as a tablespoon). Use the spoon to gently lift and scoop the cooked pumpkin out of the skin. It should separate easily and in fairly large chunks. Place the chunks of pumpkin in a large mixing bowl or into the bowl of a food processor.

Step 6 - Puree the pumpkin

Use a hand held mixer, a food processor or a blender to puree the pumpkin until it reaches a smooth creamy consistency with no chunks.

Tip: If your pureed pumpkin is too watery, you can strain it through a cheesecloth.

The pumpkin is now ready to use in recipes or to freeze for later use. Makes 2-3 cups pumpkin puree.

PUMPKIN SPICE LATTE

1 cup unsweetened almond milk or coconut milk (can also use regular milk)
1 tablespoon pumpkin purée
4 drops vanilla crème stevia, more or less to taste
1/4 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
3/4 cup extra strong coffee (regular or decaf), hot

Add the milk and pumpkin to a small saucepan. Heat over medium-low heat, stirring constantly with a whisk, until the mixture begins to simmer. Add in the stevia and pumpkin pie spice. Whisk the mixture until it becomes frothy.

Add the coffee to a large mug, and pour the milk mixture on top. Dust the top with additional pumpkin pie spice if desired. Serve immediately.

Notes: To prepare the extra strong coffee, add twice the amount of coffee grounds to the coffee maker as is required.

Makes 1 serving

POMEGRANATE, PEAR AND AVOCADO SALAD

Dressing Ingredients

2-1/2 tablespoons raw apple cider vinegar
1 tablespoon raw honey
6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Salad Ingredients

1 head Romaine lettuce, washed and roughly-chopped into bite-sized pieces
1 ripe pear, cored and diced
1 avocado, peeled, pitted and diced
2/3 cup shelled pistachios
2/3 cup crumbled goat cheese (or blue cheese, or feta cheese)
1/2 cup diced red onion (about half of a small red onion)
seeds from 1 pomegranate

In a small bowl, whisk all dressing ingredients together for 30 seconds until combined. Set aside.

In a separate large bowl, add all salad ingredients together. Drizzle on the dressing and toss until combined. Serve immediately.

(*Tip: To prevent the diced avocado from browning while sitting out, toss it beforehand in a few tablespoons of lime or lemon juice.)

Makes 4-6 servings.

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CRUSTLESS CRANBERRY-PECAN PIE

This crustless pie is perfect for the holidays with its wonderful fall flavors and vibrant color. It can be baked in an 8-inch pie plate and cut in thin wedges, or in a 9-inch square cake pan and served in thick slices, or in a rectangular pan, and spooned out.

3/4 cup (3 sticks) unsalted butter, melted
1-1/2 cups whole cane sugar or coconut sugar
3 large eggs
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1-1/4 cups sifted whole wheat pastry flour or gluten-free all-purpose baking flour
1-1/2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries
1 cup finely chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 375°F. Coat an 8-inch glass pie plate or 9-inch square cake pan with butter or coconut oil.

Beat butter, sugar, eggs and vanilla until thick and fluffy, about 5 minutes. Fold in flour by hand.

Fold in cranberries and pecans. Pour into prepared pan, and spread evenly.

Bake 45 minutes, or until knife inserted in center comes out clean. Serve hot or cold.

Serves 12

HOT APPLE CIDER

2 cinnamon sticks (3 inches)
1 teaspoon whole cloves
1 teaspoon whole allspice
2 quarts organic unfiltered apple cider
1/2 cup packed whole cane sugar or coconut sugar
1 orange, sliced

Place cinnamon, cloves and allspice on a double thickness of cheesecloth; bring up corners of cloth and tie with a string to form a bag.

Place cider and brown sugar in a 3-qt. slow cooker or pot on the stove; stir until sugar dissolves. Add spice bag. Place orange slices on top. Cover and cook on low for 2-3 hours (slow cooker) or until heated through (on the stove top). Discard spice bag.

Makes 2 quarts.



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BAKED APPLES

Great for a snack or dessert, but also a very satisfying breakfast.

- 4 organic apples, preferably red
- 1/2 chopped dates
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans or walnuts
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup plain or vanilla yogurt (optional)

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Using a corer or paring knife, remove core from each apple without cutting through the bottom. Make the hole 1 inch larger in diameter to accommodate the filling.

Combine the dates, lemon juice and cinnamon in a small bowl, and spoon this mixture into the apples.

Place in an 8-inch baking pan. Fill the pan halfway with water and bake until soft, 30 to 35 minutes. Serve warm with 1/4 cup yogurt on top of each apple. Makes 4 servings.



PUMPKIN SMOOTHIE

- 1/3 cup coconut milk
- 2/3 cup water
- 3 drops liquid stevia
- 1 tablespoon ground flax seeds
- 1 scoop protein powder
- 1 tablespoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1/2 cup pumpkin puree, canned or fresh

Place all ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth and creamy. Serve immediately. Makes 1 serving.

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ORGANIC PUMPKIN PIE

This is the most wholesome pie you've ever tasted. Your guests will never know it's organic and healthy! With just a few simple ingredient upgrades, this holiday favorite is transformed into a healthy dessert. You can use any type of crust or even go crustless by baking just the filling in a well-oiled pie dish.

2 cups homemade organic pumpkin puree OR 1 (15-ounce) can organic pumpkin puree
2-3/4 cup coconut milk
2 large eggs
3/4 cup unrefined organic whole cane sugar or coconut sugar
1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
3/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1 unbaked 9-inch pie crust

Preheat oven to 425°F. Mix sugar, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, and salt in a small bowl. In a separate large bowl, beat eggs. Stir in the pumpkin and then add in the sugar-spice mixture. Gradually stir in the coconut milk and mix until well blended.

Pour into the unbaked pie shell. Bake in the preheated oven at 425°F for 15 minutes, then reduce oven temperature to 350°F and bake for an additional 40 to 50 minutes or until a knife inserted into the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack for 2 hours. Serve immediately or refrigerate. Makes 8 servings

BUTTERNUT SQUASH HASH

1 pound breakfast sausage
1 medium onion, diced
2 dashes sea salt, divided, to taste
dash of black pepper
4 cups diced butternut squash
1/2 cup vegetable stock, as needed
1 bunch kale, stems removed and chopped
5 large eggs, beaten

Preheat a skillet over medium-high heat. Add the sausage, once it starts browning begin to break it apart and continue to cook through. Remove sausage to a paper towel to drain any excess grease.

Leave about a tablespoon of grease from the sausage (add more if necessary). Add the onion, season with salt, and cook for 1-2 minutes until it becomes soft and has taken on some color from the pan.

Add the butternut squash and season with remaining salt. Cover and let the squash cook until it's fork-tender, stirring occasionally and adding the vegetable broth as-needed if the pan seems dry.

Add the kale and stir to combine. Add the sausage back into the pan. Pour in the beaten eggs, add a dash of pepper, and work them around to fold and scramble. Cook until eggs are done. Serve immediately.

Makes 6 servings.

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PERFECT PUMPKIN SCONES (LIKE STARBUCKS, ONLY BETTER!)

These pumpkin scones are both healthy and delicious! These scones are so delicious, we don't want anyone to be left out, so we are offering two versions of the recipe—a whole grain version and a grain-free/gluten-free version.

Whole Grain Scone Ingredients

- 1/2 cup pecans, chopped
- 2 cups white whole wheat flour or whole spelt flour
- 3 tablespoons coconut sugar or whole cane sugar
- 1 tablespoon aluminum-free baking powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon. sea salt (1/4 tsp. if butter is unsalted)
- 1/4 cup butter (half a stick)
- 1 cup pumpkin puree
- 1/4 cup almond milk or coconut milk (can also use regular milk)
- 1-1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Gluten-Free/Grain-Free Scone Ingredients

- 3 large eggs
- 1/3 cup pumpkin puree
- 1/4 cup raw honey
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup coconut flour
- 2-1/2 teaspoons pumpkin spice
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- pinch sea salt
- 2 tablespoons coconut oil, chilled in freezer

Glaze Ingredients

- 1/2 cup powdered xylitol or powdered whole cane sugar (see directions)
- 3 teaspoons coconut milk (can also use regular milk)
- 1/4 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon pumpkin spice

DIRECTIONS FOR WHOLE GRAIN SCONES

Place butter in freezer.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Coat a cookie sheet with coconut oil or line with parchment paper.

While oven is preheating, measure dry ingredients (flour, sugar, baking powder, and spices) into a medium sized bowl and stir to combine.

Remove butter from freezer and either cut into chunks using a knife or grate using the large holes in a cheese grater. Add to dry ingredients and work in with a pastry cutter or fork until butter is in small, pea-sized pieces.

Add chopped pecans to the mixture. Add pumpkin, milk, and vanilla and stir well or mix in using hands.

DIRECTIONS FOR WHOLE GRAIN SCONES (CONTINUED)

Place dough on a floured surface and use hands to press into a round 1-inch thick circle. Cut into eight triangles and place each prepared cookie sheet.

Bake for 16 to 18 minutes until scones are cooked through but not tough.

While scones are baking, prepare glaze by adding all glaze ingredients to a small bowl and using a wire whisk to mix in. If glaze is too runny, add more powdered sugar and if too thick to pour add a small amount more milk.

After removing scones from oven, allow to cool before drizzling each scone with glaze.

DIRECTIONS FOR GRAIN-FREE/GLUTEN-FREE SCONES

Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a cookie sheet with coconut oil or line with parchment paper.

In a large mixing bowl (or in your stand mixer) combine eggs, pumpkin puree, honey, and vanilla extract. Mix until combined.

Add in coconut flour, pumpkin spice, baking soda, and sea salt. Mix until combined. Remove chilled coconut oil and chop into small pieces, add them into the mix and combine.

To shape the scones, simply measure out 1/4 cup and create a round ball like shape. Press it down so that it's about 1" tall. Alternatively, you can use a biscuit cutter to shape the scones. Place biscuit cutter flat on the baking sheet, fill it with 1/4 cup of dough. Press down with your hands to give it shape and lift cutter away. You will be left with a perfectly round shaped scone. Repeat with remaining dough.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes until the tops are golden. Remove and allow scones to cool on the cookie sheet prior to transferring onto a cooling rack.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE GLAZE:

Place the xylitol or sugar into a blender, cover and blend until it reaches the fine powdery consistency of powdered sugar. This should only take a few seconds of blending.

Combine the powdered sugar or xylitol with the remaining ingredients in a small bowl and whisk until smooth. Once scones have cooled off, drizzle them with glaze.

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