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Pumpkin Spice Latte

All-Natural Pumpkin Spice Latte

Craving a pumpkin spice coffee drink? This fall, treat yourself to a real pumpkin latte made with pumpkin puree and maple syrup, for just the right amount of sweetness. With this drink, even though it tastes indulgent, the added sugar is minimal, and you're getting 150 percent of the daily value for vitamin A. It's an excellent source of calcium, with 8 grams of high-quality protein and just 165 calories. This drink saves you 145 calories and 25 grams of carbs compared with coffee-house versions.

8 ounces reduced-fat milk
1 tablespoon pumpkin puree (see note)
4-5 ounces hot strong coffee
½-¾ teaspoon pumpkin spice (or use cinnamon with tiny pinches of nutmeg and ginger)
2 teaspoons maple syrup

Microwave the milk and pumpkin in a glass measuring cup or bowl until steamy, about 1-½ minutes. Use a frother to make foam on top of the milk, or use a blender. Pour the coffee into a 16- to 20-ounce coffee mug or glass. Holding back the foam with a spoon, pour the milk into the coffee. Spoon the foam on top of the latte.

Note: Using canned pumpkin puree is the best way to go for this recipe because it's perfectly smooth. If using homemade pumpkin pureed in a food processor, you'll need to mix this drink in the blender to pulverize fibrous pieces of pumpkin, or press the pumpkin first through a fine mesh sieve.

Per serving: *110 calories, 5 g total fat (3 g saturated fat, 0 trans fat), 210 mg sodium, 0 cholesterol, 17 g total carbohydrate (3 g fiber), 3 g protein.*

FROM MICHELLE DUDASH

Sweet and Sour Monster Smash

Sweet and Sour Monster Smash Potatoes

Cinnamon-infused sweet pumpkin paired with savory chive and sour-cream-flavored purple potatoes brings you the best of both worlds. And the contrast of orange and purple offers a striking presentation. Each ½ cup serving provides 7 grams of fiber and is low in sodium. The color of the potatoes comes naturally from an antioxidant called anthocyanins, which has beneficial anti-inflammatory effects on the body.

Servings: 6 (½ cup each).
Prep time: 20 minutes.
Cook time: 45 minutes.

For the pumpkin

1½ pound sugar pie pumpkin (about 4 inches tall)
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 tablespoon vegan buttery tub spread, or use butter
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon salt
Freshly ground black pepper

For the potatoes

1 pound purple Peruvian potatoes (about 6 medium), cut into bite-size pieces
2 tablespoons light sour cream
1 tablespoon chopped chives or green parts of scallions, plus additional for garnishing
¼ teaspoon salt
Freshly ground black pepper
Light sour cream for dolloping

To make the pumpkin: Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Cut ½ inch off the top of the stem end of the pumpkin, then cut the pumpkin into halves. Scoop out the seeds and pulp with a spoon, then cut the pumpkin into eighths. Place the pieces flesh side down on a sheet pan lined with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat for easier cleanup. Bake until fork-tender, about 45 minutes. Scrape the flesh from the skins, placing the flesh in a food processor. Add sugar, butter, cinnamon, salt and pepper, and puree until smooth.

To make the potatoes: Cover the potatoes completely with water. Bring to a boil, add a pinch of salt to the water, and simmer until fork-tender, about 8 minutes. Drain. Return potatoes to the pot on low heat, stirring to sour cream, chives and salt and pepper.

Gently stir the pumpkin into the potatoes. To serve, dollop with sour cream and garnish with chives.

Per serving: 180 calories, 1 g total fat (0 g saturated fat, 0 trans fat), 120 mg sodium, 2 mg cholesterol, 41 g total carbohydrate (7 g fiber), 4 g protein.

FROM MICHELLE DUDASH

Pumpkin Butter

Pumpkin Butter With Apples and Maple

If you love pumpkin pie, you'll love slathering this pumpkin butter on, well, everything. From toast, muffins and bagels to smoothies and lattes, a dollop of this silky-smooth spread adds a deliciously sweet fall flavor. This version of pumpkin butter relies on sweetness naturally from apples, plus a bit of real maple syrup, without any actual butter or refined sugar. And pumpkin butter is a simple way to add nutrition to your favorite foods, with 40 percent of the daily value for vitamin A and only 15 calories in each tablespoon.

Servings: 22 servings (1 tablespoon each).
Prep time: 10 minutes.
Cook time: 1 hour, 10 minutes (including pumpkin-roasting time).

1- or 1½-pound pumpkin, about 5 inches tall (or 1½ cups pumpkin puree)
1 medium sweet apple, such as Gala, quartered and cored
2 tablespoons maple syrup
½ teaspoon pumpkin-pie spice (see kitchen notes)
¼ teaspoon vanilla
Tiny pinch salt

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Cut ½ inch off the top of the stem end of the pumpkin, then cut the pumpkin into halves. Scoop out the seeds and pulp with a spoon, then cut the pumpkin into eighths. Place the pieces flesh side down on a sheet pan lined with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat for easier cleanup. Place the apples skin side up. Bake until fork-tender, about 45 minutes, removing the apples after 20 minutes. Scrape the apple and pumpkin flesh from the skins, placing the flesh in a food processor. Add syrup, spice, vanilla and salt, and puree until smooth.

Loosely cover and simmer in a saucepan on medium-low heat, scraping the bottom and sides of pan occasionally, about 20 minutes. Reduce heat to low and simmer until mixture is no thick that it stands up on itself, about 5 more minutes.

Kitchen notes: To make your own pumpkin-pie spice, combine ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon, ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg, ½ teaspoon ground ginger and a pinch of ground cloves.

Per serving: 50 calories, 0 g fat (0 g saturated fat), 0 trans fat, 10 mg sodium, 2 mg cholesterol, 41 g total carbohydrate (7 g fiber), 4 g protein.

FROM MICHELLE DUDASH

Pumpkin fries with Chipotle Ketchup

Pumpkin French Fries With Chipotle-Molasses Ketchup

These pumpkin fries are sweet potatoes' sassier sister with a sneaky twist of cumin, chile and chipotle. The sweet and spicy ketchup will elevate any fry. Each serving offers more than two times the daily value for vitamin A and 10 percent of the daily value for iron, for just 110 calories.

Servings: 4 servings (½ cup each with 1 tablespoon ketchup).
Prep time: 20 minutes.
Cook time: 35 minutes.

For the fries

1 (2½-pound) sugar pie pumpkin
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon expeller-pressed canola oil
¼ teaspoon salt and pepper
¼ teaspoon ground cumin
¼ teaspoon chili powder
¼ teaspoon garlic powder

For the ketchup

2 (8-ounce) can tomato paste
2 teaspoons molasses
2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar
½ teaspoon plus ¼ teaspoon reduced-sodium soy sauce
½ teaspoon dried chipotle (ground or flakes)

To make the fries: Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Line a large sheet pan with parchment paper to prevent sticking. Poke the pumpkin with a fork eight times all around and microwave the whole pumpkin for 2-3 minutes, making it easier to peel. Cut off the stem and remove the skin with a vegetable peeler. Quarter the pumpkin from top to bottom and scoop out the seeds and pulp with a spoon. Cut ½ inch off the pointy top and bottom of each quarter, to prevent the tips from burning. Cut the large pieces into ½-inch wide french fries and cut the pointy ends lengthwise into fries.

Spread the fries on the sheet pan. Drizzle with oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and toss with hands. Bake until golden on the edges, about 35 minutes. Sprinkle with cumin, chili powder and garlic powder.

To make the ketchup: Combine all of the ketchup ingredients, plus 2 teaspoons water.

Per serving: 110 calories, 5 g total fat (5 g saturated fat, 0 trans fat), 210 mg sodium, 0 cholesterol, 17 g total carbohydrate (3 g fiber), 3 g protein.

FROM MICHELLE DUDASH

Pumpkin

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Choose firm, bright-colored pumpkins that are free of cuts or nicks. Store pumpkins in a cool, dry place for up to one month. Pumpkins can be stored in the refrigerator for up to three months.

Pumpkins might look intimidating to cook, but they're relatively easy to prepare. First, when cutting pumpkins, use a serrated knife and a sawing motion.

To steam, cut pumpkin in half, remove seeds, pulp and stringy portion. Cut into small pieces and remove the hard skin. Place in a steamer or metal colander that will fit in a covered pot. Steam for about 30 minutes or until tender. If you like, use a blender, food processor or food mill to turn steamed pumpkin into a puree.

To roast, cut pumpkin into quarters, remove seeds, pulp and stringy portion. Place the pumpkin quarters in a baking dish. Add enough water to cover the bottom of the pan. Cover pan with a lid or foil. Bake in a 350-degree oven for 45 to 60 minutes. Allow pumpkin to cool slightly and scoop out flesh. Puree in a blender or food processor or put through a food mill.

Leftover cooked pumpkin can be frozen up to 16 months.

Michelle Dudash is a registered dietitian, chef and publisher of a clean-eating newsletter, DishwithDudash.com.

How to roast pumpkin

There's a treasure inside every pumpkin. The seeds can be turned into flavorful and healthful snacks. Roasted pumpkin seeds are subtly sweet with a nutty undertone. They're a good source of zinc, iron, copper and other minerals. Pumpkin seeds also are a good source of protein and vitamin E.

Here's how to roast them:

1. Use a sharp, serrated knife to cut a lid on the pumpkin. Remove lid.
2. Use your hands to pull out the seeds and place in a colander. Discard any damaged or shriveled ones.
3. Separate pulp and fiber from the seeds. A pumpkin produces about 1½ cups of seeds.
4. Place colander in the sink and rinse well, or until the seeds are free of any pulp.
5. Dry seeds completely with paper towels and preheat oven to 350 degrees.
6. To flavor the seeds, combine ½ teaspoon each of ground cumin, chipotle powder and cinnamon. Add 1 tablespoon of olive, canola or vegetable oil to seasoning and mix well. Toss seeds in the bowl and mix well until all are covered. Salt to taste.
7. Place seeds in a single layer on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Roast until golden brown, about 15 to 20 minutes, moving seeds occasionally to roast both sides evenly.
8. Remove from oven and cool completely. Seeds can be served immediately or stored in a tightly sealed container and kept in a cool, dry place.

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