

Weekly Newsletter!! ~ Week of March 16th, 2020

Hello all Donna's Home Fitness members! I hope you are all doing well in quarantine and enjoying Donna's live Zoom workouts to help you stay active during this trying time! Since I'm home from school and will have more time on my hands, I wanted to start this newsletter thing back up again since cooking and baking can be a great activity while you're all at home!

This time around I'm doing a little different format. I'm not doing a full newsletter format as I did last time; instead, I'll be doing more of a Word/Google Doc with the information so that it's easier to share longer recipes and articles, and add some of my commentary. Additionally, I will be creating these on a WEEKLY basis, instead of monthly as I did before! Since this one is coming later in the week it is only a recipe (this is one of my favorite recipes!!!), but the newsletters to come will include a recipe (with notes from your truly) and an article pertaining to wellness!

For the recipes, I will do my best to include ones that only need pantry staples, although since they are healthier recipes they will have what I would call "healthy pantry staples", such as almond flour, oat flour, coconut oil, stevia, coconut sugar, flax seed, etc. I will try to make notes of substitutes that can be used or feel free to Google substitutes if you decide to make a recipe but don't have an ingredient. Additionally, I'm mostly trying to include recipes that I have tried and enjoyed so I know that I'm providing you with recipes that will turn out well (and hopefully not even taste healthy!). That being said, most (if not all) recipes will be gluten free since I am gluten free so I only make and eat gluten free recipes, but feel free to look up a substitution of wheat/all-purpose flour if you only have that or prefer baking with it!

Without further ado, check out the next page for the first recipe!!

~ Lauren Puscheck

P.S. If you have an Instagram and make one of the recipes I share, tag me @laurensfoodfeed if you make a post about them!!

Pumpkin Oatmeal Bars

Lauren's Note: these bars are SO GOOD!!! I've made them twice now and between my mom and I, we make them disappear fast! The first time I made them my mom even asked me "Are those pumpkin bars you made healthy because I've been eating a lot of them"! Yes, they are healthy, but they sure don't taste like it!

Recipe from Shuangy's Kitchen Sink (my notes are in parentheses)

Ingredients:

- 2 cups oats
- ½ cup oat flour*
- 2 tsp pumpkin pie spice**
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 1 cup pumpkin purée
- 1 ¼ cup oat milk or other milk of preference (I usually use almond)
- 2 flax eggs or regular eggs***
- ⅓ cup maple syrup
- 2 tbsp coconut sugar or stevia****
- any mix-ins you'd like (optional but highly recommended) - chocolate chips, pecans, dried cranberries, walnuts, etc.

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 375F. Grease or line a 9x9 baking dish with parchment paper.
2. In a mixing bowl, whisk together all the wet ingredients (pumpkin purée, maple syrup, flax eggs, and milk). Then, add in the dry ingredients (oats, pumpkin spice, baking powder, sea salt, and coconut sugar). Combine gently with a spatula.

3. Fold in mix-ins.
4. Pour the mixture into the baking dish and sprinkle extra mix-ins on top (optional but highly recommended). Bake 35-40 minutes or until tooth pick comes out clean.
5. Let it cool in the pan for 10 minutes then take it out onto a cooling rack. Cut into squares and enjoy! (This is what the recipe recommends, but I found that leaving it in the pan on the stove for a while, then transferring it to the fridge still in the pan and letting it cool in there for a while before cutting works best! It's hard to be that patient to try them but the cutting process will go a lot smoother this way!)

Notes:

*If you don't have oat flour, you can replace the oat flour with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup oats, and bake an additional 5-10 minutes. It will be a little on the denser side, but still chewy and yummy! You can also make your own oat flour by blending the rolled oats in a high-speed blender.

**If you don't have pumpkin pie spice (although you really should it's one of my favorite spices), you can use just cinnamon or you can make your own pumpkin pie spice by mixing cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, and cloves if you have all of those.

***To make flax "eggs", mix 2 tablespoons of ground flax seeds and 4 tablespoons of filtered water or dairy-free milk (I usually use water). Let it sit for 10 minutes to "gel" up (I've tried this recipe once with regular eggs and once with flax eggs and both turned out great so it's up to you which method you want to try!)

****If you prefer sweeter, add 1-2 extra tablespoons of coconut sugar/stevia (I actually forgot the stevia the second time I made these but you couldn't even tell—they were still delicious and sweet enough because of the chocolate chips!).