

COOKING WITH PUMPKIN

HEALTHY BLACK BEAN DIP

1 tsp canola oil
2 jalapeno chiles (seeds and membranes removed) minced
½ cup of green bell pepper, chopped
1 medium yellow or Vidalia onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
3 cups cooked black beans, rinsed and drained
1 cup canned unsweetened pumpkin
3 tbsp fresh lime juice
1-2 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp salt
2-3 tbsp water
¼ cup finely chopped cilantro and one sprig
Assorted corn chips and vegetables

1. Heat the oil in a medium skillet. Cook the peppers and onion over medium heat for about 3 minutes, until they soften slightly. Add the garlic and cook another minutes. Set aside.
2. Place the beans, pumpkin, lime juice, cumin, salt, and water in the bowl of a food processor and puree until partially smooth, stirring with a scraper as needed. Add the onions, peppers, and garlic and the cilantro and pulse a few times until blended but not completely smooth.
3. Scrape the dip into a bowl with the sprig of cilantro and serve with corn chips and vegetables, such as baby carrots and slices of red bell pepper.

SPICY PEPITA NUT MIX

1 ½ cups raw shelled pumpkin seeds (pepitas)
¾ cups pine nuts
¾ cups shelled pistachios
½ cup whole almonds
¼ cup sugar
1 tsp salt
½ tsp cayenne pepper
2 tbsp of canola oil

1. Heat the oven to 300 degrees F
2. Combine the pepitas, pine nuts, pistachios, almonds, sugar, salt, and cayenne in a large bowl.
3. Add the canola oil and toss well to coat.
4. Line a jelly-roll pan with parchment paper or aluminum foil, spray w/ cooking spray, and spread the nut mixture in the pan.
5. Bake for 30-40 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes, until the nuts are glazed and lightly browned.
6. Cool on a rack, stirring occasionally. Serve in a bowl! Yum!

THAI PUMPKIN SOUP

1 tbsp unsalted butter
1 small yellow or Vidalia onion, chopped
1 tbsp peeled and minced fresh ginger
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 cups canned unsweetened pumpkin
1 ½ cups coconut milk
1 ½ cups nonfat milk
½ tsp Thai green curry paste

Pinch of dried thyme
1 tsp freshly squeezed lime juice
½ tsp salt
Freshly ground black pepper
1/3 cup chopped peanuts (optional)

1. Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Sauté the onion, ginger, and garlic in the butter until the onion is soft, about 3 minutes.
2. Place the onion mixture and half of the pumpkin, all of the coconut milk, all of the milk, the curry paste, and thyme into a blender or add these items to the pot along with the onion mixture and puree with a handheld immersion blender.
3. Pour the soup back into the pot (if you had to transfer it to a blender) and add the remaining pumpkin, and continue to cook over medium heat until it is heated through but not boiling, about 3-4 minutes.
4. Season with the lime juice and salt and the pepper to taste. Adjust the seasonings. Serve hot. Scatter a few chopped peanuts, if using, over each serving. Recommend serving with some fresh garlic naan or pumpkin cornbread!

FRESH SALAD GREENS WITH PUMPKIN DRESSING

5 cups of fresh mixed salad greens/chopped romaine/baby spinach
2 tbsp unsweetened canned pumpkin
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
¼ tsp salt
2 tbsp canola oil
2 tbsp pumpkin seed oil
½ cup Chopped dates.
Farmers cheese or freshly grated parmesan

1. Whisk together the pumpkin, vinegar, and salt. Drizzle in the oils slowly, continuing to whisk.
2. Drizzle dressing over mixed greens. Sprinkle with dates and shredded cheese if desired.

NORTHERN ITALIAN PUMPKIN LASAGNA

1 tbsp butter
1 tbsp olive oil
1 large onion (thinly sliced)
2 pounds of fresh pumpkin, seeds and fibers removed, peeled and chopped (about 4 cups)
2 tbsp of oregano (only 1 tbsp if dried, more if fresh and chopped)
Pinch of ground sage
1 tsp salt
Freshly ground black pepper
½ pound bulk sweet Italian sausage (chicken or pork)
2 large garlic cloves, minced

For the sauce:

5 tbsp butter
6 tbsp all purpose flour
5 cups nonfat milk
½ teaspoon salt
¼ tsp white pepper
¼ tsp ground nutmeg
3 cups grated part skim mozzarella
1 ½ cups freshly grated parmesan
12 oven ready/no boil lasagna noodles

1. Heat the butter and oil in a large sauté pan or skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and cook for 5 minutes or until wilted.
2. Stir in the pumpkin and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with the oregano, the salt, and a few grinds of pepper. Add the sausage and cook until it loses its color, about 5 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook for 1 minute longer, set aside.

3. Meanwhile, make the sauce. Melt the butter in large heavy bottomed saucepan over medium heat. Add the flour. Cook for 1 minute, until bubbly. Whisk in the milk and cook, stirring, until mixture thickens and bubbles, about 5 minutes. Add the salt, pepper, and nutmeg and set aside.
4. Combine the two cheeses in a medium bowl.
5. Heat the oven to 375 degrees F.
6. To assemble the lasagna, spray a 9 by 13 by 2 inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray. Ladle $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of sauce on the bottom of the pan and top with 3 noodles, placed crosswise.
7. Pour another $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the sauce over the noodles, then $\frac{1}{3}$ of the pumpkin filling. Sprinkle 1 cup of the cheese mixture over the filling. Repeat the layers of sauce, noodles, filling, and cheese twice. Top this with the remaining noodles, pour over the remaining sauce, and sprinkle w/ the remaining cheese. The lasagna should appear soupy.
8. Spray a sheet of aluminum foil with nonstick spray and cover the top of the pan, with the oiled side facing down. Bake for 45 minutes, uncover, and bake 10 to 15 minutes, or until lightly browned and bubbly. Let the lasagna sit for 15 minutes before cutting and serving. You can sprinkle a bit of fresh chopped oregano or sage leaves over the top for decoration.

OATMEAL CHOCO-PUMPKIN CRISPS

1 cup brown sugar
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened in the microwave for about 30 seconds
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup canned unsweetened pumpkin
2 eggs
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 cup of unbleached all-purpose flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of whole wheat pastry flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground cinnamon
3 cups old fashioned rolled oats
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 cups semi sweet or dark chocolate chips
1 cups chopped pecans or walnuts (optional)

1. Heat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. Beat the sugars and butter together with a hand mixer until well blended and fluffy. Add the pumpkin, eggs, and vanilla and beat until smooth.
3. Sift the flour, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon into the mixture and continue beating at low speed until well blended. Stir in the oats and chocolate chips.
4. Drop by tablespoon-fulls onto the prepared baking sheet. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes, or until lightly browned.
5. Cool the baking sheet on a wire rack for a few minutes before removing the cookies. Cool them completely on wire racks and store in an airtight container. Enjoy!