

Home on the Range

Nutty Recipes

When you want crunch, something to munch, excitement for lunch, nutritional punch, reach for nuts.

There are many different kinds of nuts. A nut that's popping up more and more in recipes is the pine nut. It is a seed called a nut that may be used in cooking, sprinkled in salads, in pesto sauce or eaten as a snack like sunflower seeds.

Pine nuts are seeds from a variety of pine trees. The nuts are eaten roasted or salted and may be used in making candy, pastry, and Mediterranean dishes. Pine nuts, sometimes called Indian nuts, pinons, and pignolia nuts, are available at health food stores, larger supermarkets, and farmer's markets.

Pine nuts have a thin reddish-brown or whitish shell and are quite small but can be found up to 1½ inches. Although this seems like a fairly modern ingredient, Betty Light of Lebanon writes that she has a cookbook that was printed in the late 1800s, which lists pine nuts as an ingredient for cookies.

For readers who have black walnut trees, 80-year-old William McPeak of Hackettstown, N.J. wrote that he found an easy way to husk and crack the nuts.

He dries the walnuts with the husk on screens. Cracking nuts is an art acquired only by experience, he writes. A light hammer will bounce off. Use a heavy machinest-type hammer. Lay the nut on a rock. Strike only hard enough to crack the shell and not crush the nutmeat. Use glasses to protect your eyes and keep fingers out of the way.

Nuts are often used as a garnish for topping casseroles. Try to match the flavor of the nuts with the flavor of the casserole. A robust-flavored nut such as black walnut might be too strong for a delicate fish dish. Almonds or pine nuts, on the other hand, have delicate flavors that complement the flavors of delicate dishes.

SPICED GLAZED NUTS

Mix together:

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup water
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon vanilla

Boil until mixture forms a firm ball when a small amount is dropped in cold water. Add 1½ cups nuts. Stir. Pour onto buttered plate to cool.

Linda Boyer
Narvon

BLACK WALNUT CAKE

- ½ cup butter, softened
- ½ cup shortening
- 2 cups sugar
- 5 eggs, separated
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1½ cups chopped black walnuts
- 3-ounces flaked coconut
- ½ teaspoon cream of tartar

Cream butter and shortening, gradually add sugar, beating until light and fluffy and sugar is dissolved. Add egg yolks, beating well. Combine buttermilk and baking soda, stir until soda dissolves.

Add flour to creamed mixture alternately with buttermilk mixture, beginning and ending with flour. Stir in vanilla. Add walnuts and coconut, stirring well. Beat egg whites with cream of tartar until stiff peaks form. Fold egg whites into batter. Pour batter into 3 greased and floured 9-inch cake pans. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until cake tests done. Cool layers in pans for 10 minutes. Remove and cool completely.

Cream Cheese Frosting:

- ¾ cup butter, softened
- 8-ounces cream cheese, softened
- 6¾ cup sifted confectioners' sugar
- 1½ teaspoon vanilla

Cream butter and cream cheese. Gradually add sugar, beating until light and fluffy. Stir in vanilla.

Mary Stickley
Flinstone, Md.

BASIL PESTO

This uncooked seasoning may be used on pasta, about 2 tablespoons to a portion, with equal parts of butter; or 1 tablespoon to a dish of minestrone or on a baked potato. May be made in advance and stored in a cool place. Run a film of olive oil over the top before covering and store refrigerated.

Pound in a mortar about:
1½ cups fresh basil leaves
Parsley may be substituted, but the flavor is very different.

2 cloves garlic
¾ cup pine nuts
Add, until it forms a thick puree:
About ¾ cup thinly grated parmesan cheese

When the mixture is really thick, add very slowly, stirring constantly until the consistency of creamed butter:

- ¾ cup olive oil



Different varieties of nuts offer many different flavors. Some varieties are interchangeable, but try to match the mild food flavors with mild-tasting nuts.

PRESSURE COOKING NUT BREAD

- 1 egg
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup milk
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2¼ cups flour
- 1 cup nuts

Combine egg with sugar and beat lightly. Add milk and sifted dry ingredients. Add nuts. Grease mold and fill ¾ full. Cover mold with three thicknesses of waxed paper and fasten with rubber band or string. Place 3 cups water in pan with rack in place. Put mold on rack, cover pan and turn on heat. When steam flows from vent tube, reduce heat to medium and allow steam to flow for 30 minutes. Set control on vent tube at 5 and cook for 30 minutes after control jiggles. Cool instantly by placing pressure cooker under the faucet.

CHOCOLATE ALMOND OATIES

- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ teaspoon almond extract
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 3 cups rolled oats
- 1½ cups chopped natural almonds, toasted
- 6-ounces semi-sweet chocolate morsels

In large bowl, cream butter with sugar, eggs, vanilla, and almond extract until fluffy. Combine flours, salt, and baking soda; blend into creamed mixture. Stir in oats, almonds, and chocolate morsels. Chill 30 minutes. Drop teaspoonfuls onto greased baking sheets. Bake in 350 degree oven about 10 minutes until lightly browned. Cool on racks. Makes about 6 dozen.

SEVEN LAYER COOKIES

- ¼ cup butter, melted
 - 1 cup graham cracker crumbs
 - 1 cup chocolate chips
 - 1 cup butterscotch chips
 - 1 cup coconut
 - 1 can condensed milk
 - 1 cup chopped pecans
- Melt butter in 9x12-inch pan. Layer remaining ingredients in order listed. Bake at 325 degrees for 25 minutes. Cool. Cut in bars or squares.

Sarah Clark
Breezewood

PINE NUT DIAMONDS

Quick, easy — and unusual! Put through a food chopper:
1 cup dates
1 cup pine nuts
¼ cup candied pineapple
Pound in mortar. Moisten with about 1 tablespoon orange juice. Spread on a plate to dry. Cut in diamond shapes. Dip in confectioners' sugar. Serves 6.
If desired, put a dollop of whipped cream on top when ready to serve.

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Featured Recipe

For homemakers eager to find ways to cut preparation time in the kitchen but wanting to serve nutritious, great-tasting muffins, the answer may lie in preparing a make-ahead baking mix.

The baking mix combines dry ingredients that may be stored in a tight container in the cupboard for up to six weeks or in the freezer for six months.

From this prepared mix, a portion is removed whenever you want to make muffins. Liquid ingredients are added and the mixture is ready to bake.

Here is a recipe enjoyed by Evelyn Kulp of Mt. Pleasant.

OAT BRAN BAKING MIX

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups whole-wheat flour
- 2 cups whole bran cereal
- 1 cup oat bran
- ½ cup nonfat dry milk powder
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt

Mix ingredients together in a large mixing bowl. To store, transfer mix to tightly covered container. Keeps six weeks at room temperature or up to six months in the freezer. Makes 8 cups.

For Zucchini Muffins, use the following ingredients:

- 1 cup oat bran baking mix
- 1 slightly beaten egg white
- 3 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon honey
- ½ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- ½ cup shredded zucchini
- Non-stick spray coating

In a large mixing bowl, stir the oat bran baking mix. In a medium mixing bowl, stir together egg white, water, vegetable oil, honey, and pumpkin pie spice. Add egg white mixture to the baking mix all at once. Stir just until moistened. Fold in zucchini.

Line four muffin cups with paper bake cups or spray with non-stick spray. Spoon batter into muffin cups. Bake in 400-degree oven for 18 minutes or until lightly browned. Serve warm. Makes 4 muffins.

Each muffin contains 145 calories, 4 grams fat, 5 grams protein, 27 grams carbohydrate, 230 milligrams sodium.

Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for the topics listed below, please share them with us. We welcome your recipes, but ask that you include accurate measurements, a complete list of ingredients and clear instructions with each recipe you submit. Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522. Recipes should reach our office one week before publishing date.

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