



BENBELLA VEGAN'S

SPRING FEAST

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PLANT-BASED RECIPES

FOR YOUR SPRING CELEBRATIONS

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DINNER MENU

APPETIZER

Carrot & Almond Pâté

2+ SERVINGS

Enjoy this fresh pâté on Super Seed Power Bread (page 182), Chickpea Flatbread (page 184), in a wrap, or as a dip for fresh cut veggies.

STEPS

1. Place everything in a food processor and pulse 5–7 times until well mixed, but maintain some texture.
2. Press into a greased small bowl or container and flip onto a plate or shape with your hands into a dome or square.
3. Serve room temp or chilled.

psst! You can try brown rice or azuki bean miso if you like. Just look for gluten- and soy-free.

—
Try adding some green or red apple to this pâté.

—
Try sautéing onion for 5 minutes, toasting almonds and sunflower seeds, or using roasted carrots for deeper flavor.

—
Here's an entertaining idea: in the food processor, process pâté with a few tablespoons of Cashew Cheese Spread (page 270) until a paste forms. Fill a fancy piping bag and pipe onto Almond Dulse Crackers and top with a dollop of Cashew Cheese Spread and/or a fresh parsley leaf. Pretty.



INGREDIENTS

- ¼ cup almonds, soaked
- ½ cup sunflower seeds, soaked
- 2 tablespoons sesame seeds, toasted
- ½ teaspoon chickpea miso
- 1 large carrot
- 1 small handful parsley leaves
- 1 tablespoon red onion, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon coconut aminos
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- Sea salt to taste
- Black pepper to taste

SOUPS & SALADS

Cream of Broccoli Soup



SERVES 2 | Q | GF | SF | MA | P |

I like to call this “Use Up Your Leftovers Cream of Broccoli Soup” because your leftover rice or baked potato is the secret “cream” ingredient.

- 2½ c broccoli (fresh or frozen), divided
- 2–3 c vegetable broth
- 1 small onion, diced
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ½ c cooked rice or potato, chopped
- 1 c nondairy milk
- basil or thyme (optional)
- nutritional yeast, to taste
- fresh lemon juice (optional)
- red pepper flakes or black pepper for garnish

1. If using fresh broccoli, remove the tough lower stalk but chop the other stalky parts.
2. Line a large pot with vegetable broth and sauté onion and garlic until onion is translucent.
3. Add ½ cup broth and cooked rice or potato and let simmer until rice is waterlogged and extra liquid has all or mostly cooked off; if using potato, cook until potato is very soft and tender. (If using a raw [uncooked] potato, this may take longer and require more liquid than if using a leftover already cooked potato, such as a baked potato from the night before.)

4. If using fresh broccoli, add another ½ cup broth and broccoli, and cook until broccoli is very tender. (Note: If you want a soup with broccoli pieces, scoop some out before they're waterlogged and very soft, and set aside to stir in at the end.)
5. If using frozen broccoli, add broccoli at the end as the rice is finishing up (omit extra ½ cup broth—just a splash will do) or cook briefly in microwave and add to soup with no extra broth.
6. Transfer soup to a blender (or use an immersion blender) and puree with nondairy milk, plus additional broth as necessary to achieve a soup consistency. You can also add fresh or dried basil or thyme, plus salt and pepper to taste here.
7. Return blended soup to your saucepan and let simmer, adding nutritional yeast to taste.
8. Squeeze fresh lemon juice over soup before serving, if desired, and garnish with red pepper flakes or fresh black pepper.

▶▶▶ CHEF'S NOTE:

For a richer soup, blend some raw cashews with water to make a cashew cream and replace the nondairy milk with the cream. To make cashew cream, follow this general rule: 1–2 parts water to 1 part raw cashews (e.g., 2 cups water and 1 cup nuts). If you can, soak your cashews in water overnight before blending. You want a total of 1 cup cream (or thereabouts) for this recipe.

Per serving (with rice): 168 calories, 18g fat, 33.9g carbohydrates, 4.4g fiber, 4.3g sugars, 5.7g protein

Per serving (with potato): 149 calories, 18g fat, 30.3g carbohydrates, 6g fiber, 5g sugars, 5.8g protein



Marinated Asparagus Salad

[MAKES 4 SERVINGS] [NUT FREE, NO OIL] Asparagus makes a refreshing summer salad, adding color and crunch to any meal. It makes a nice light lunch perched on top of a bed of lettuce, or presents an enticing first course to an elegant party meal.

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed
lemon juice
½ tablespoon reduced-sodium
tamari
1 clove garlic, minced
1 bunch asparagus, cleaned and
trimmed

To make the dressing, put the lemon juice, tamari, and garlic in a small bowl and briskly whisk until smooth.

Steam the asparagus until crisp-tender. Put the hot asparagus in a large bowl and add the dressing. Toss gently to coat the asparagus with the dressing. Cover and refrigerate for 3 to 24 hours. Serve chilled on a pretty platter or arranged over a bed of baby greens.

Beet Salad

Serves 2

4 *tablespoons coarse kosher salt*
1 *large red beet*
1 *large golden beet*
1 *large leek, green parts removed*

1 *tablespoon olive oil*
Pinch salt and pepper
 $\frac{1}{4}$ *cup raw pumpkin seeds*
1 *large navel orange*

2 *cups baby arugula*
Shallot-Thyme Dressing (recipe follows)

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Cut 2 square pieces of foil (each large enough to cover a beet completely). Place 2 tablespoons of kosher salt on each sheet of foil. Place the red beet on one foil square and the golden beet on the other and wrap them completely. Bake until the beets are very soft and easily pierced with a knife, about an hour or longer. Allow to cool completely, then unwrap and peel the beets. Roughly dice the beets into 6 pieces $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick. Refrigerate before using in the salad.

Clean the leek by slicing it vertically down the middle and running it under cool water to remove any dirt from the inside. Cut the leek into thin slices and place in a mixing bowl. Toss the sliced leeks, olive oil, salt, and pepper and bake for 10 to 12 minutes, or until

the leeks are beginning to brown. Allow to cool completely before using in the salad.

Keeping the oven heated to 350 degrees, place the raw pumpkin seeds on a baking sheet and bake until deeply toasted but not burned (approximately 10 minutes).

To assemble: Using a sharp knife, cut all the peel off the orange. Carefully cut out segments of orange, slicing on either side of each segment to extract just the flesh of the orange. Place the baby arugula, orange segments, roasted leeks, and dressing in a mixing bowl. Toss in the bowl until the salad is fully dressed. Place the contents of the bowl into the middle of a large plate. Arrange the roasted beets around the salad, and top it off with the toasted pumpkin seeds.

Shallot-Thyme Dressing

Juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ *lemon*

1 *tablespoon whole-grain mustard*
1 *tablespoon apple cider vinegar*
 $\frac{1}{2}$ *large shallot, chopped*
 $\frac{1}{4}$ *cup water*
 $\frac{1}{4}$ *teaspoon caraway seeds*
 $\frac{1}{8}$ *teaspoon fennel seed*
 $\frac{1}{2}$ *teaspoon salt*
 $\frac{1}{8}$ *teaspoon black pepper*
1 *teaspoon agave syrup*
 $\frac{1}{2}$ *cup olive oil*
2 *tablespoons fresh thyme*

In a blender, add all the ingredients except the olive oil and the thyme and blend them at high speed. While blending, slowly add in the olive oil in a thin stream. Add the thyme leaves and pulse in the blender so that the thyme is dispersed and the dressing has green flecks throughout. Once the oil is incorporated and the dressing is emulsified, it's ready to serve.

ENTREES

Del's Stuffed "Beast"

SERVES 4

For me, the baked tofu in this recipe is just a nice way to present my favorite of holiday dishes—the cornbread stuffing. Give me a big bowl of stuffing and some cranberry sauce and I am good to go. There will be stuffing left over from this recipe, so you could make extra tofu and serve even six guests—or you could call me to help you polish it off.

Stuffing

1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped

2 stalks celery, finely chopped

1 teaspoon dried sage

1 teaspoon poultry seasoning

2 cups Cornbread, crumbled

2 cups whole-wheat bread crumbs

1 to 1½ cups vegetable stock

Sea salt and black pepper to taste

Baked Tofu



In a large sauté pan over medium heat, sauté the onion and celery for 8 to 10 minutes, until the vegetables are tender. Add water 1 to 2 tablespoons at a time to keep them from sticking. Add the sage and poultry seasoning. Combine well and remove from heat. Set aside.

Place the crumbled cornbread and bread crumbs in a large bowl. Add the cooked vegetable mixture, 1 cup of the vegetable stock, and salt and pepper to taste. If the stuffing seems dry, add more vegetable stock. Set aside while you make the tofu.

Baked Tofu

SERVES 4

This recipe is great paired with the cornbread stuffing in Del's Stuffed "Beast," but it also can be used in stir-fries or for sandwiches.

1 pound extra-firm tofu, drained

¼ cup maple syrup

¼ cup Bragg's Liquid Aminos or low-sodium soy sauce

3 cloves garlic, finely minced

1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger

½ teaspoon black pepper

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

Press the tofu for 30 minutes between two towels with a weight on top (a cast-iron skillet works great, but so does a large can of juice). Cut the tofu in half diagonally down through the top to create two triangular pieces, then put the triangles cut side down and cut each piece in half so that you have four triangles, each about 2 inches across. Cut a slit most of the way through the middle of each triangle and stuff each piece with some of the cornbread stuffing. Place the tofu on a shallow nonstick pan and set aside while you prepare the marinade.

Combine the maple syrup, Bragg's Liquid Aminos or soy sauce, garlic, ginger, and pepper in a bowl, and then pour it over the stuffed tofu. Let it sit for 30 minutes, then gently turn each piece over, and let the other side marinate. Bake the stuffed tofu for 35 to 40 minutes, until browned.

ALMOND-ENCRUSTED EGGPLANT CUTLETS

MAKES 6 SERVINGS



RECIPE BY CHRISTINA ROSS

1 whole eggplant
1 tablespoon sea salt

FOR THE BREAD CRUMBS

2 cups almonds
4 tablespoons nutritional yeast
¼ teaspoon sea salt
1 tablespoon fresh stemmed rosemary
6 tablespoons flax meal
1 tablespoon sesame seeds
1 teaspoon garlic powder

FOR THE MILK MIXTURE

2 cups almond milk
2 tablespoons fresh thyme
2 tablespoons fresh stemmed rosemary
1 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper
2 tablespoons flax meal

1. Preheat oven to 450°F.
2. Slice eggplant into ¼-inch-thick rounds. Place in a bowl and marinate in 1 tablespoon salt until sweaty.
3. Place the bread crumbs ingredients in a food processor and pulse until you achieve coarse bread crumb–like texture.
4. In a shallow bowl, add all milk mixture ingredients and whisk until well combined.
5. Dip each eggplant round in milk mixture and then coat each side with bread crumbs.
6. Set in baking pan lined with parchment paper. Bake for 8 minutes on each side.
7. Remove from oven, plate, and serve.

TIPS

The cutlets are very versatile as they can be eaten as is, made into vegan eggplant Parmesan, or used in a sandwich.

Serve with a side of veggies or salad or over gluten-free pasta.

Store an extra stash of the bread crumbs for future recipes; you can dehydrate them or bake them in the oven and store them in an airtight container. Try breading other vegetables or simply sprinkle the crumbs over your favorite salad.



SIDE DISHES



savory glazed carrots

PRONUNCIATION TIP
Carottes vichy sounds like "care-rotts vish-she."

SERVES 2

- 1 tsp cornstarch
- vegetable broth, as needed
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp Italian seasoning
- ¼ tsp pure maple syrup
- 4 carrots, skinned and chopped

Carottes vichy is a classic French dish; it's basically butter-glazed carrots with a touch of sugar and herbs. I'm borrowing the herbed, semisweet glaze idea here; but instead of butter, I'm using my favorite French product: Dijon mustard. These carrots are so flavorful and a terrific (easy!) side dish that will complement any meal.

Mix cornstarch into 2 tbsp water and set aside. Line a skillet with a thin layer of broth. Whisk in mustard, Italian seasoning, and maple syrup. Add carrots and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce to medium and sauté carrots until fork-tender or softer, about 4–5 minutes. Stir regularly and add more broth as needed to prevent sticking. Once carrots are cooked, check liquid, adding more broth as necessary. You want a thin lining of broth on the bottom. Reduce heat to low and stir in cornstarch slurry. Continue to cook, stirring constantly, until liquid thickens into a glaze and coats carrots. Serve warm.



PER SERVING

Calories 72, Total Fat 1.2g,
Carbohydrates 15g, Fiber 3.6g,
Sugars 6.8g, Protein 1.4g



PARSNIP MASHED POTATOES

MAKES 4 SERVINGS



RECIPE BY DEL SROUFE

Parsnips add a little zing to otherwise-ordinary mashed potatoes. They also make them a little creamier. While I normally pass over mashed potatoes as a side dish, I can eat a bowlful of this tasty version.

6 medium red or white new potatoes, cubed
3 medium parsnips, peeled and cubed

Dash of cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon sea salt

1. Put the potatoes and parsnips in a large pot with just enough water to cover the vegetables. Bring to a boil, decrease heat to medium, and then cover and let simmer for 20–30 minutes, stirring occasionally with a spoon.
2. Test the tenderness of the potatoes and parsnips with a fork; they should pierce easily and be tender yet firm.
3. Drain any remaining liquid and mash the potatoes and parsnips with a potato masher until there are no visible lumps.
4. Gently stir in the cayenne pepper and salt with a wooden spoon.

DESSERTS



CARROT COLLECTIVE CUPCAKES

Yield: 24 mini cupcakes

Prep time: 25 minutes, plus about 2 hours for frosting to set

CUPCAKE BASE

**4 c. shredded carrot
(approximately 8 carrots)**

2 c. pecans

2 c. raisins

1 c. shredded coconut

¼ c. hemp seeds

2 tsp. agave nectar

4 tsp. almond oil

FROSTING

½ c. cashews

½ c. macadamia nuts

1 c. coconut milk

½ c. melted coconut butter

¼ c. agave nectar

1 tbsp. vanilla extract

1 tbsp. lemon juice

24 whole pecans, for garnish

Ground cinnamon, for garnish

Carrot cake without cream cheese frosting? Some people might say that's heresy, but we know better, don't we? For these cupcakes, I created a frosting with the sweetness of coconut milk and the tang of lemon. They're the most delicious way I know to get in a good dose of (carrot-delivered) beta-carotene.

Line two 12-cup mini cupcake pans with cupcake liners or grease lightly with coconut oil.

To make the cupcake base: Begin by pulsing the carrots in a food processor until pulpy. Add the pecans and raisins and pulse until roughly chopped and combined with the carrots. Add the shredded coconut, hemp seeds, agave nectar, and almond oil and pulse until the mixture holds together. Divide the mixture among the 24 cupcake liners, pressing the dough into the pan. Refrigerate while you make the frosting.

To make the frosting: Place the cashews, macadamia nuts, coconut milk, coconut butter, agave nectar, vanilla extract, and lemon juice in a blender and blend until smooth. Pour into a medium bowl, cover, and place in the refrigerator until firm enough to scoop, about 2 hours.

To assemble: Using an offset spatula, gently remove the cupcakes from the pan. Frost the cupcakes, then garnish each with a whole pecan and a sprinkling of cinnamon. Serve immediately or store in the refrigerator for up to 2 days.



STRAWBERRY-RHUBARB CRISP

Rhubarb is a springtime vegetable that my dad grew in our garden. You cut and cook only the stalks, which are reddish to light green in color. Rhubarb stalks are very sour and cannot be eaten without cooking them down and adding a sweetener. Strawberries and rhubarb both come into season at the same time, making them the perfect dessert pair!

3 cups diced rhubarb
1 pound strawberries, hulled and sliced
⅓ cup and ¼ cup Sucanat, divided
½ cup and 2 tablespoons whole wheat pastry flour, divided
¼ cup pitted and chopped Medjool dates
½ cup whole-grain rolled oats
½ cup finely chopped walnuts
3 tablespoons apple or orange juice

Yields: 6 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes Cook Time: 40 minutes

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a 9 × 9 inch baking pan with parchment paper and set aside.
2. In a large bowl, mix together the rhubarb, strawberries, ⅓ cup of the Sucanat, 2 tablespoons of the flour, and the dates.
3. In a separate bowl, mix together the rolled oats, remaining ½ cup flour, remaining ¼ cup Sucanat, walnuts, and apple juice.
4. Evenly spread the strawberry-rhubarb mixture into the prepared pan. Top with the oats mixture, spreading evenly.
5. Bake for 35–40 minutes, until golden brown and bubbly. Spoon into bowls and serve warm.



From The PlantPure Nation Cookbook

BRUNCH MENU

BREAKFAST HOME-FRY HASH

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes | **COOKING TIME:** 25 minutes

MAKES 4 SERVINGS  

4 large potatoes, scrubbed and sliced
6 tablespoons vegetable broth, divided
1 onion, thinly sliced
1 green bell pepper, diced
4 teaspoons light soy sauce or tamari
¼ teaspoon black pepper
6 cherry tomatoes, cut into quarters
2 green onions, thinly sliced

- 1** | Cut the potatoes into ½-inch cubes and steam them until just tender when pierced with a sharp knife, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.
- 2** | Heat 3 tablespoons vegetable broth in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat, and add the onion and green pepper. Cook, stirring frequently.
- 3** | Add the diced potatoes, 3 tablespoons vegetable broth, soy sauce or tamari and black pepper. Cook, turning gently with a spatula, until the potatoes are golden brown.
- 4** | Garnish with cherry tomatoes and green onions.

From The China Study Cookbook



Mushroom Sausage Farinata

4-6 SERVINGS

Growing up, my grandfather, aka “Daudie,” used to bring us sausage from the local farmers’ market on the weekends. I remember the zesty spices fondly. He’d make sausage sandwiches on buttery homemade bread he baked the day before. And my brother, cousins, and I would just smile at one another eyes wide, mouths full, cheeks puffed out, because no doubt we were loved and this proved it. I wanted to bring back those memories with this dish — I think my grandfather would’ve been proud.

STEPS

1. For the Farinata: In a large glass bowl, whisk together the chickpea flour, salt, and water. Cover with a towel and let batter sit for 4 – 8 hours.
2. Preheat oven to 325°F.
3. Heat a large skillet (preferably cast iron) to medium-high and then add 1 tablespoon coconut oil. Sauté shallots and red bell pepper for 5 minutes, stirring often. Add mushrooms and sauté another 5 minutes. Add garlic and sauté for 3 minutes.
4. Stir all remaining ingredients into cooked veggies for 2 – 3 minutes. Remove from heat.
5. Whisk Farinata batter, and if using cast iron to cook Mushroom Sausage, simply pour batter into skillet and transfer to the oven to bake for 20 – 25 minutes. If not using cast iron, transfer veggies to a greased baking dish, then pour batter into veggies, and bake for 20 – 25 minutes. Serve warm.

psst! You can skip the soaking step for the batter, but I recommend it for the right texture and digestibility.



INGREDIENTS

Farinata

- 1¼ cups chickpea flour
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- 1¼ cups water

Mushroom Sausage

- 1 tablespoon coconut oil*
- 1 cup shallots, diced
- ⅔ cup red bell pepper, diced
- 4 cups Portobello mushrooms, chopped
- 3 tablespoons garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon fennel seed, rough chopped
- 1½ teaspoons Sucanat
- 1 tablespoon sage, chopped
- 2 teaspoons marjoram, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- ⅛ teaspoon liquid smoke
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1½ teaspoons black pepper

vegan “eggs” benedict

G 45 • Makes 4 to 6 servings

One of my favorite cafés in Los Angeles has a vegan benedict that needed some work so I decided to make my own version. I’m delighted by the way it turned out! I’ve never eaten real “eggs benedict” before, so I’m not sure how close this is to the real thing, but it doesn’t really matter because it’s awesome!

8 slices gluten-free bread, toasted
2 tomatoes, sliced ¼-inch thick
1 bunch kale, chopped and blanched
Southwest tofu scramble (page 53) made with
1 teaspoon each of oregano and marjoram
instead of cumin and chili powder

no-oil hollandaise sauce

makes about 2 cups

1 package Mori Nu silken tofu
½ cup nutritional yeast
1 tablespoon white or yellow miso
2 tablespoons tamari
1 lemon, juiced
½ teaspoon turmeric
Dash black pepper
½ teaspoon paprika
1 tablespoon arrowroot
Unsweetened nondairy milk, as needed
(to thin sauce)

Blend all sauce ingredients in a blender until smooth and no lumps remain.

to assemble the benedict:

Place toasted bread on a plate. Layer with tomato slices and kale, then tofu scramble.

Top with *no-oil hollandaise sauce*. Serve immediately.

blissful variation

Layer in *sizzling tempeh bacon*, on page 45, on top of bread.

blissful definition

Miso is a fermented soybean paste that has been traditionally used in Asia for making soup stocks. It offers many health benefits. Miso comes in a wide range of flavors—the darker misos have been fermented longer, have richer flavors, and are more nutritious. Be sure to never boil miso, because that kills the enzymes and healing properties that are naturally inside.

blissful trick

If you're not familiar with blanching, see page 107 for info on various cooking techniques.


CINNAMON FRENCH TOAST

I remember French toast fondly from childhood—and so does hubby. It was the “treat” breakfast we had as kids, probably far easier for our parents to make than pancakes, and a great way to use up odds and ends of bread. This version is much healthier than what I ate as a kid, and I tell you our girls love it just the same.

Serves 3-4

1 cup plus 1-2
tablespoons plain or
vanilla unsweetened
nondairy milk

1 tablespoon white chia
seeds

 1/3 cup soaked and
drained cashews (see
note for nut-free option)

3/4 teaspoon cinnamon

1/4-1/2 teaspoon pure
vanilla extract

1/8 teaspoon sea salt

Sliced bread of choice
(see note)

In a blender or using a handheld blender, puree the milk (starting with 1 cup; see note), chia, cashews, cinnamon, vanilla extract, and sea salt until very smooth and thick (it will get thicker as it sits a little while and the chia swells).

Prepare a nonstick skillet by wiping over with a touch of oil (you need a nonstick skillet, or this will be a sticky event!). Turn heat to high for a few minutes to heat up the pan, then reduce to medium/medium-high. Dip a slice of bread into the batter. Turn over and let it sit in the chia mixture for a few moments to soak, then remove and place in the skillet. Repeat with other slices, frying 2-3 pieces or more at a time, depending on the size of your skillet. Fry for 3-5 minutes on each side, until light brown. Keep the heat high enough to get a good sear/crust on the bread, but reduce if it's scorching. Note that the slices will be sticky until they are ready to be flipped, so be patient. Repeat until all bread is used. Serve with fresh fruit and pure maple syrup. Another fun serving idea is to make sandwiches out of the French toast, slathering some nut butter between two slices, then serving with maple syrup.

Nut-Free Option: Replace 1/3 cup of cashews with 3 tablespoons of hemp seeds.

Bread Note: You may use 6-10 slices of bread, depending on the size of the slices.

Milk Note: After the batter sits for a few minutes it can become quite thick. You can stir through another 1-2 tablespoons of milk if it has gotten too thick with standing (if you have less than half the batter left, use just 1 tablespoon).

Cinnamon French Toast



STOVETOP FRUIT CRISP

MAKES 4 SERVINGS 

I never make fruit crisp in the summer if it means I have to heat up the whole house by turning on the oven. With this version, I don't have to. I use apples in this recipe, but you can use fresh ripe pears or peaches for a nice change.

TOPPING

1 cup rolled oats
¾ cup Two-Minute Date Puree (p. 24) or
½ cup maple syrup
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
pinch sea salt


FILLING

3 cups chopped apples (I like Granny Smith)
¾ cup Two-Minute Date Puree (p. 24) or
½ cup maple syrup
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
pinch nutmeg
pinch sea salt

1. To make the topping, add the oats to a medium saucepan and toast over medium-low heat for 5 minutes until they are fragrant and start to brown. Add the Two-Minute Date Puree or maple syrup, cinnamon, and sea salt. Cook for 5 minutes, until the oats have absorbed most of the syrup. Set aside.
2. To make the filling, combine the apples, Two-Minute Date Puree or maple syrup, cinnamon, nutmeg, and sea salt in a saucepan and cook over medium heat until the apples soften, about 6 minutes.
3. To assemble, spoon the filling mixture into individual serving bowls and sprinkle the oat mixture over it.

From The China Study Quick & Easy Cookbook

TWO-MINUTE DATE PUREE

MAKES 2½ CUPS 

Two-Minute Date Puree is a great alternative to processed sugars, and this version doesn't require you to soak the dates. Medjool dates work best for this puree. They are sweeter, and if you can find fresh dates, they are creamier, but use what you can find. Even pitted dates sometimes have pits, so check them before you put them in the blender.

2 cups Medjool dates, pitted

2 cups water

1. Combine the dates and water in a blender and puree until smooth.
2. Store refrigerated for up to 7 days or in the freezer for up to 3 months.



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