

Pumpkins and What You Can Do with Them!

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Interesting Pumpkin Facts:

- The name pumpkin comes from the Greek word *pepon*, meaning 'large melon'
- The average pumpkin weighs 13 pounds. The world record for the largest pumpkin in the world is 1,810 pounds!
- There are only about 30 calories in one cup of pumpkin
- Pumpkins are often referred to as vegetables; however, scientifically speaking, they are fruits because the seeds are found on the inside
- The shell of a pumpkin contains pulp and seeds, both of which are edible

Healthy Benefits of Pumpkin:

- Pumpkin is high in Vitamin A, which provides benefits for your immune system, vision, reproduction and growth.
- Dietary fat enhances the absorption of Vitamin A because it is a fat-soluble vitamin

Did you know?

Pureeing your own pumpkin, rather than purchasing the pre-canned option, will give you more bang for your buck! Doing it yourself will provide more pumpkin for less money (which means more pie and cheesecake for less!). One large pumpkin makes about 18 cups of fresh pumpkin puree. Don't worry about the canned pumpkin shortage this year, use the instructions below to prepare your own!



How to Roast and Puree a Whole Pumpkin:

- Preheat your oven to 350°F
- Clean the pumpkin and puncture the skin with a knife to allow for sufficient ventilation
- Place the whole pumpkin on a glass baking sheet and roast for 45-60 minutes, depending on the size of the pumpkin. When the pumpkin is completely cooked, the flesh will be a darker color and can be easily pierced with a fork.
- Cut the pumpkin in half to allow it to cool properly.
- Scoop out the seeds for roasting.
- Peel off the skin from the flesh and chop. Place the pieces into a food processor and blend until a smooth puree is formed. Depending on the size of your pumpkin, you may need to make multiple batches.
- The pumpkin puree can be stored in the fridge for one week or store in freezer to use later!

Roasting Pumpkin Seeds:

- Scrape the pumpkin seeds out of the pumpkin and wash them thoroughly in a colander.
- Place seeds on an oiled baking sheet and put them in the oven for 30 minutes at 300°F to dry.
- Toss the seeds in your favorite seasonings for a flavorful treat. Here are a few yummy suggestions:
 - Sugar and cinnamon
 - Parmesan and oregano
 - Brown sugar, chipotle chili powder and cumin
 - Ranch dressing dry seasoning
 - Brown sugar, cinnamon, ground ginger and salt
 - Salt and garlic powder
 - Cayenne pepper, chili powder, salt, oregano and cumin

*Pumpkin seeds are a good source of protein, Iron, Zinc and Magnesium.

Recipe: Pumpkin Scone

Ingredients:

- 1 ¾ cup whole wheat flour
- ¼ cup white, granulated sugar
- 1 tbsp pumpkin pie spice
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- 6 tbsp chilled, unsalted butter
- ¾ cup pumpkin puree
- 1/3 cup buttermilk
- ½ cup macadamia nuts
- ½ cup white chocolate chips
- 1 egg

Directions:

- Preheat your oven at 400°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Mix the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a large bowl. Using a pastry cutter, mix butter into the dry mixture until it resembles coarse crumbs.
- Make a well in the center of the mixture. Stir in pumpkin puree, buttermilk, nuts and white chocolate chips.
- Sprinkle a cleared work space with flour (using no more than 2 tbsp). Place dough onto the floured surface. Shape into a rectangle about 1-inch thick. Fold the rectangle into thirds, sprinkle with more flour as needed, and flatten to 1-inch thick. Repeat two more times.
- Cut final rectangle into six equally sized squares. Cut each square into triangles. Place scones on the prepared baking sheet.
- Bake in the oven until golden brown, about 15 to 20 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.



Annalise Robinson is currently a dietetic intern at Marshall University and plans to become a Registered Dietitian. As one of the nation's food and nutrition experts, she is committed to improving the health of her community. To find a registered dietitian in your area, visit www.eatright.org and click on "Find a Registered Dietitian."