

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

The key to successful snacking is to make a snack with a specified and measured or calculated amount and then leave the rest for next time. Put the containers away BEFORE eating. Remove yourself from the kitchen. Go sit down and enjoy. If you eat out of the bag, box, or container, you will likely consume 3-4 times the appropriate amounts of everything. Training your brain to be in control and not your body will prove very beneficial.

RECIPE LIST:

[4 Ingredient Sweet Potato Brownies](#)

[Almond Butter Delight](#)

[Apple Cinnamon Sweet Potato](#)

[Avocad-elicious](#)

[Bomb Bars](#)

[Chocolate Banana Bread](#)

[Dishin' Out Dessert - high calorie](#)

[Glazed Sweet Potato Banana Bars](#)

[Paleo Chocolate Chocolate Chip Cookies](#)

[Paleo Fruit Pizza](#)

[Paleo Pecan Pumpkin Bars](#)

[Protein Pumpkin Pie \(Cake\)](#)

[Pumpkin Bread](#)

[Spiced Party Nuts](#)

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

Dishin' Out Dessert

This is one of my go-to's for a sweet treat or even just a snack sometimes. It is so delicious and with proper measuring, it can be a respectable and responsible sweet tooth fix. It is not a low-calorie snack or dessert, logging just around 350 calories, but it packs a decent 21g of protein (even more if you add powder), and only 15g of carbs if you exclude the granola. With that many calories it is necessary to make sure you are in a deficit on the day BEFORE you dive head first.

Ingredients

1 Cup Oikos Triple Zero Vanilla Greek yogurt
½ Cup Frozen blueberries (fruit of choice)
12 Almonds (nut of choice – servings vary with different nuts)
1 Tbsp Chia Seeds
Optional
21g Granola (no corn syrup)
1 scoop protein powder (mix in yogurt before adding extras)

Directions:

Scoop all ingredients into a bowl and enjoy with pleasure. Eat it slow and experience the delight in every bite.

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

“Paleo Fruit Pizza”

I really had hoped to make this for the Fourth this year but didn't get around to it so I guess I will be trying just for fun in the next week. It takes a little work but for a special event or the right occasion it will DEFINITELY be worth it.

Ingredients

For the crust:

- 2 cups blanched almond flour
- 2 tablespoons coconut flour
- 1/2 teaspoon unflavored gelatin
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon Celtic sea salt
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter (or coconut oil), melted
- 1/4 cup raw honey (I prefer a light honey like clover)
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Filling:

- 1 1/2 cups cashews, soaked overnight, drained
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons coconut milk
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons raw honey
- 1 /4 cup plus 2 tablespoons coconut oil
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup heavy cream or coconut cream, whipped (see instructions above for coconut cream)
- 3 pints berries

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F and adjust rack to middle position. Whisk almond flour, coconut flour, gelatin, baking soda and salt in a large mixing bowl. Stir in melted butter, honey and vanilla until a dough forms. Spoon dough onto a 12-inch diameter round baking pan lined with a round piece of parchment paper (a pizza pan works well for this). Evenly press dough into the bottom of the pan so that it covers the diameter of the pan. Bake for 10-12 minutes until just golden brown. Cool completely.
2. Place soaked cashews, coconut milk, raw honey, coconut oil and vanilla extract in the bowl of a food processor or blender. Blend 3-5 minutes until smooth. Pour into a mixing bowl and fold in whipped cream (or coconut cream). Pour filling over cooled crust and spread filling evenly over the crust using an off-set spatula. Place in the refrigerator and chill for 2 hours. Top with berries and serve.

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

Paleo Chocolate Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup almond flour
- 1/4 cup coconut flour
- 1/3 cup + 4 teaspoons cocoa powder (dutch-process cocoa gives you more 'cookie' cookie.)
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 7 tablespoons coconut oil (if your coconut oil is a little melty, put it in the fridge for about 10-20 minutes or until firmer, like softened butter. If you use slightly melted coconut oil, the dough will be greasy and the chocolate chips will be hard to incorporate.) (can use unsalted butter, room temperature)
- 3/4 cup coconut sugar (can use brown sugar)
- 6 tablespoons natural almond butter, room temperature
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 large egg, room temperature
- 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips, divided (Paleo chocolate chips exist, but I use Enjoy Life chips often for convenience.)

Directions

1. In a medium mixing bowl, stir together the almond flour, coconut flour, cocoa powder, baking soda and salt. Set aside.
2. In a large mixing bowl with an electric hand mixer or using a stand mixer, beat together the fat and sugar at medium speed until well combined, about 1 minute. If you use coconut oil, it may not come together easily. If that's the case, use your hands to combine it and then beat another 20 seconds.
3. Beat in the almond butter and vanilla extract on medium speed and mix until combined. Beat in the egg on low and mix until well incorporated. Stir in the flour mixture until well combined. Then stir in 3/4 cup chocolate chips. If you used brown sugar, skip to the next step. If you used coconut sugar, place the bowl in the refrigerator for about 1 hour or until the dough is firm.
4. Preheat the oven to 350 °F and line a baking sheet with a piece of parchment paper.
5. Roll the dough into 16 balls and place the remaining 1/4 cup of chocolate chips on the top and on the sides of the dough balls. Place 3" apart on the prepared baking sheet. Press the cookies down lightly with the palm of your hand.
6. Bake for 11-14 minutes (if using coconut sugar) or 12-15 minutes (if using brown sugar) or until the surface of the center of the cookies no longer appears wet. They'll be very soft but will continue to cook as they sit on the cookie sheet.
7. Let cool completely on the baking sheet. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Notes

Butter works in these cookies but they're fudgier and in my opinion, better, with coconut oil.

Remove cocoa to make regular chocolate chip cookies.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

Almond Butter Delight

INGREDIENTS

1 lb dry roasted or plain almonds
2 tbsp chia seed
2 tbsp flax seed
1 scoop protein powder
1 tbsp grape seed oil (coconut oil, or any other of your preference) (optional)
2 tbsp honey
¼ lb dark chocolate (79% cacao or more)
additional oil to develop consistency

DIRECTIONS

Add all the ingredients to your food processor. Turn on high for 2-2.5 minutes. Stop. Scrape down sides and work butter around. Blend for another 2-2.5 minutes. Check consistency. Add oil if not creamy enough for your liking and then blend again. Stop and scrape down if contents is no longer turning with blade running.

NOTES

Let the food processor work. It takes a bit to break down those almonds. The powder will cake to the top of the food processor and may not, so you will have to work it down with a spatula. Try adding it in the middle of your ingredients so it isn't all stuck to the bottom or blown to the lid. Also, you may need to press it down and blend again multiple times to get it spreadable.

Enjoy with a spoon, on a banana, in a sandwich, or any other way you normally would regular nut butter.

It's not cheaper necessarily but can be if you find almonds on sale!!! (Sprouts had them for \$4.49/pound!)

Experiment with other ingredients, flavors, and nuts. (Coconut flakes, cinnamon, pumpkin, etc)

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

Almond Flour Pumpkin Bread

INGREDIENTS

2 cups almond flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. baking soda
2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
½ tsp. cinnamon
¼ tsp. nutmeg
¼ tsp. sea salt
3 eggs, lightly whisked
¼ cup coconut oil, melted
¼ cup pure maple syrup
1 (15 oz) can 100% pumpkin puree

For the cream cheese glaze (OPTIONAL – if going for more dessert):

3 oz ½-less fat cream cheese
2 Tbsp powdered sugar
1-2 Tbsp almond milk (or milk of choice)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, pumpkin pie spice, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt. Set aside.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together eggs, coconut oil, maple syrup and pumpkin puree and mix until well combined.
4. Pour the wet ingredients in with the dry ingredients, mixing until there are no clumps.
5. Pour pumpkin mixture into a prepared 9x5-inch loaf pan and bake in the oven for 45 to 50 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
6. Let the pumpkin bread sit for 5 minutes then remove from pan and let cool completely on a wire rack.
7. To make the cream cheese glaze, place cream cheese in a small microwave-safe bowl and heat on high for 30 seconds until softened. Whisk in powdered sugar and almond milk, mixing until smooth and runny.
8. Drizzle cream cheese glaze over top of the bread, serve and enjoy!

NOTES

You can substitute a banana or two for the maple syrup. Add vanilla or unflavored protein powder if desired to beef up the protein. Also, add chia seeds and flaxseed for additional nutrients (fiber and protein) without changing the dynamics of the bread.

NUTRITION

Serving Size: 1 slice • Calories: 206 • Fat: 14.3 g • Saturated Fat: 5.7 g • Carbs: 13.4 g • Fiber: 3.3 g • Protein: 7.3 g • Sugar: 6.3 g

Credits: <http://www.eatyourselfskinny.com/the-best-almond-flour-pumpkin-bread>

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

Apple Cinnamon Sweet Potato

INGREDIENTS

Sweet potatoes (half per person)
Apples (quarter per potato)
Cinnamon (1 tsp per potato)
Paprika (1/2 tsp per potato)
Coconut oil (tbsp per potato)
Chia Seeds (optional – sprinkle on top)
Sea Salt (optional – sprinkle to taste)

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Tear sections of tin foil – one per potato – big enough to wrap an individual potato completely. Wash potatoes and poke with holes. Wash apples and cut into 1/8 sections and cut out seeds.

Place potato on tinfoil. Scoop and spread coconut oil on potato. Using the smallest cut on a cheese grater, shred two apple slices onto potato. Sprinkle with cinnamon, paprika (and chia seeds and salt).

Wrap foil around potato enclosing it completely, rolling the top down to give you a handle orient and keep upright in oven. Bake for 45 min – 1 hr or until the potato is soft enough to gently squeeze and dent sides through the foil.

Unwrap, cut in half, and enjoy!

NOTES

- If oil drips into oven it will smoke ferociously. You may want to put a pan under the potatoes to protect from dripping.
- Most red or yellow apples would work, stay away from green. I used Gala.

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

SPICED PARTY NUTS

Holiday Snacks are always trouble and everywhere you go there is a party or extra treats. Most snack foods that you'll find at parties, at the movies, or at amusement parks are filled with refined sugar and unnecessary fats. Making your own quick and wholesome snack, like these Spiced Party Nuts, is a fantastic way to avoid those fattening snacks without missing out. This recipe is super quick to make — literally 10 minutes of prep. Put a bowl of these out when you have company over, take a bag of them with you for an on-the-go snack, or give it away as a healthy hostess gift.

Courtesy of RealHealthyRecipes.com

Serves 16

What You Need

4 cups mixed nuts – pecans, almonds, pistachio, walnuts, cashews, and/or brazil nuts
1 teaspoon sea salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon sweet paprika
1 teaspoon chili powder
¼ teaspoon ground ginger
½ teaspoon garlic powder
¼ cup coconut sugar
¼ cup water
1 Tablespoon coconut oil

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil.
2. In a large bowl combine the nuts, salt, pepper, cumin, paprika, chili powder, ginger and garlic.
3. In a small skillet combine the coconut sugar, water and coconut oil over medium heat. Mix until the sugar has dissolved, about one minute. Pour the mixture over the nuts and spices. Mix until fully coated.
4. Spread the coated nuts over the prepared baking sheet in a single layer. Bake for 10 minutes in the preheated oven and then stir. Bake for an additional 10 minutes until golden.

Nutrition

One ¼ cup serving equals: 135 calories, 12g fat, 139mg sodium, 6g carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 3g sugar, and 4g protein

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

PALEO PECAN PUMPKIN BARS

Ever since Thanksgiving and after my dabbling in pies, making my first ever pumpkin pie and also pecan pie, I've been planning to create a pumpkin pecan pie! Turns out lots of others thought that was a good idea too. And this is [THE ONE](#) I've landed on trying.

Ingredients

For The Pecan Layer - If you prefer a nut-free bar, you can omit this layer

- 1 1/2 cups pecan halves
- 1 cup dates, softened (I microwaved mine in a small amount of water for a minute)
- 1/3 cup unsweetened coconut flakes
- 1 tbsp raw honey
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon

For the Pumpkin Layer

- 1 cup pumpkin puree
- 1 egg + 1 egg yolk
- 3 tbsp coconut oil melted and cooled
- 1/4 cup organic coconut sugar
- 2 tbsp raw honey
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup coconut flour
- 2 tsp cinnamon*
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg*
- 1/4 tsp ginger*
- 1/8 tsp cloves*
- * You can sub 3 tsp pumpkin pie spice for all of the spices if preferred.

Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees and line an 8 x 8 inch baking dish with parchment paper.
2. **For the pecan layer** - put all the ingredients in a food processor and process on high until you get a dense paste. Press the mixture into the bottom of the parchment-lined baking dish.
3. Bake the pecan layer in the preheated oven for 5-7 minutes, remove from oven, and set aside to cool.
4. **For the Pumpkin Layer** - Mix the pumpkin puree, egg and egg yolk, coconut sugar, honey vanilla, coconut oil, and spices together until smooth. Slowly add the coconut flour and mix well.
5. Spread the pumpkin layer over the pecan layer evenly. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes, or until the center is set and top begins to brown slightly.
6. Remove from oven and let cool completely before cutting into squares.
7. Enjoy!

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

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Avocad-elicious

This takes guacamole to a whole new level. I made it a couple weeks ago and it was a party favorite.

INGREDIENTS

5-7 avocados

1 medium size red onion, diced

1 red pepper, diced

1 green pepper, diced

1-3 jalapenos (depending on desired heat)

2 Roma tomatoes

4 cloves garlic, chopped

1 bunch cilantro

1 lime

1 lb ground turkey

½ cup plain Greek yogurt

Salt & Pepper to taste

Olive oil

DIRECTIONS

Season to taste (onion powder, garlic powder, salt & pepper do great) and brown turkey meat. Set aside. Sautee all peppers and onions and tomatoes and garlic till golden brown. In a food processor, put a couple avocados, some of the cooked vegetables, some cilantro, a squeeze of lime, some meat, and a portion of the yogurt. Process until fully combined and no disproportionate chunks remain. Repeat until all is combined. Scrape into a bowl and serve with black bean chips or other tortilla chips, or in a tortilla, even as a quesadilla.

NOTES

Best served warm so if not eating immediately, microwave in a safe dish to bring up to temperature.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

BOMB BARS – WHOLE30

3/4 cup Pitted dates

1 ¼ cup nuts of choice (I chose ½ cup pecan & ½ cup cashews)

1 oz unsweetened 100% cacao bar (softened in microwave)

1 tsp cinnamon

½ tsp ginger

Put dates in food processor and blend until a little pasty. Microwave cacao bar for about 30 seconds, pour and scrape into processor with dates. Add nuts, cinnamon, and ginger then blend again until finely chopped and all ingredients are thoroughly mixed in a thickened sticky paste.

Scrape with a spatula onto parchment paper, flatten to about ¼ inch in thickness (or roll into 1-inch balls). Place in fridge for an hour and then cut into squares (if not rolling into balls).

Eat (sparingly) as one 3"x1" bar can be 200 calories and you will be tempted to eat seven!!!

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

Glazed Sweet Potato Banana Bars

Dry Ingredients

1 Cup Almond Flour
1 Cup Rolled Oats
1 tsp baking powder
1 ½ tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp nutmeg
¼ tsp cloves
½ tsp salt
1 tbsp chia seeds
2 tbsp ground flax seed
1 scoop protein powder (vanilla)
½-1 cup walnuts

Wet Ingredients

1 ripe bananas (mashed)
1 medium sweet potato (baked, skin removed, mashed)
1 eggs (beaten)

Glaze

1 scoop protein powder
1-2 tbsp almond butter (melted)
Almond milk to thin out
2 tbsp maple syrup

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a baking dish (I used a 9x9 ceramic but you could use loaf pan, baking time would probably be longer) by rubbing coconut oil on the sides and bottom.
- 2) In one bowl mix all the dry ingredients (except nuts) together and in another bowl mix all the wet ingredients. (Beat eggs separately and mash bananas and sweet potatoes on a plate. This allows them to mix together with the others more easily.) Then combine wet and dry ingredients, mixing until a thick batter forms and no dry powder residue is left. Fold in nuts.
- 3) Pour contents into dish and bake for 25-30 min. Check center with toothpick. Bake longer if needed.
- 4) Let cool for 10 minutes, slice and serve.

For the glaze

While it bakes add 1 scoop protein, melted almond butter, maple syrup, and almond milk to makes a spoonable/pourable glaze. Blend well to get all powder chunks mixed thoroughly then spoon and spread.

NOTES

Served warm and fresh is best but reheats well. Needs to be refrigerated.
Great for a quick grab breakfast or serve as dessert!

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

Chocolate Banana Bread

INGREDIENTS

Dry Ingredients

1 Cup Almond Flour

1 ½ Cup Rolled Oats

1 tsp baking soda

1 tsp baking powder

3/8 cup cocoa powder

1 ½ tsp cinnamon

¼ tsp nutmeg

¼ tsp cloves

½ tsp salt

2 tbsp chia seeds

1 scoop protein powder (vanilla or chocolate)

½-1 cup pecans (or walnuts)

Wet Ingredients

3 ripe bananas (mashed)

3 eggs (beaten)

¼ cup almond butter (or other nut butter of choice) – melted

¼ cup vanilla Greek yogurt

2-4 tbsp maple syrup (I used one that was “vanilla infused”)

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a loaf pan by rubbing coconut oil on the sides and bottom.

In one bowl mix all the dry ingredients (except nuts) together and in another bowl mix all the wet ingredients. (Beat eggs separately and mash bananas on a plate. This allows them to mix together with the others more easily.) Then combine wet and dry ingredients, mixing until a thick batter forms and no dry powder residue is left. Fold in nuts.

Pour contents into loaf pan and bake for 45-50 min. Check center with toothpick. Bake longer if needed. Let cool for 10 minutes, slice and serve.

NOTES

Served warm and fresh is best but reheats well. Refrigerate to prolong shelf life.

Smother in nut butter and fruit spread of choice for a decadent treat to start your day or just reheat and eat after supper to finish your meal.

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

4 Ingredient Sweet Potato Brownies

I haven't tried these yet but they are calling my name for my next sweet treat!

INGREDIENTS

1 cup mashed sweet potato

½ cup creamy nut butter

2 Tbsp maple syrup

¼ cup cocoa powder

(optional) handful of chocolate chips

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease with coconut oil a small cake pan or loaf pan and set aside.

In a small microwave safe dish, melt nut butter with maple syrup. (be careful not to burn.)

In a large mixing bowl, add mashed sweet potatoes, nut butter and maple syrup, and cocoa powder. Mix thoroughly. (Stir in chocolate chips if adding them.)

Pour mixture into greased dish and bake for 20 minutes or until cooked through. Remove from oven and allow to cool completely before slicing.

NOTES

These brownies are best kept in refrigerator and best eaten when cooled completely. They are also freezer friendly.

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

Protein Pumpkin Pie (Cake)

This creation has the potential to transform the perspective of the Thanksgiving dessert table. I might be a bit biased but it pretty much rocks!!!

INGREDIENTS

Cake (crust)

1 bag Birch Benders Protein Pancake Mix (any flour of choice will do but this adds to the protein significantly)
2 scoops protein powder (vanilla preferably)
2.5 cups almond milk (or milk of choice)
1 tbsp cinnamon
1 tsp ginger
½ tsp nutmeg
½ tsp cloves
2 tbsp coconut oil

Pie Filling

1 30z can pumpkin pie filling
4 eggs
1 tbsp vanilla
1 ½ - 2 cups almond milk (might have to add more if not liquid enough)
¼ cup maple syrup
1 tbsp cinnamon powder
1 tsp salt
1 ½ tsp ground ginger
1 tsp cloves
1 tsp nutmeg
1 cup pecans (¾ for filling – save ¼ cup for topping)

Cream Cheese Icing

16 oz Cream Cheese
¼ cup monk fruit granulated sweetener
2 tbsp vanilla
1 scoop vanilla protein powder
¼ - ½ cup almond milk (add a little to start – consistency should be thick enough to spread)
2 tbsp coconut oil, melted

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix all ingredients for cake. Line baking sheet with parchment paper. Pour batter into a pan. Bake for 20-30 minutes, checking center with toothpick. Bake until center is done.

While that is cooking, mix all pie filling ingredients together. Batter should be creamy and pourable. Add milk to thin out.

From the Armstrong Kitchen – Desserts/Snacks

Once cake is done, allow to cool just enough to be able to handle. Turn oven up to 425 degrees.

Once cake has cooled, tear about 3/5 of the pan and spread evenly in a 9x13 baking dish. It should cover the bottom completely with about 1/4" layer. (Consistency will be spongy.)

Next, pour the pie filling mixture over the crumbled crust to completely cover it. Then, tear up another 1/5 of the cake on top, then put in the oven for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 degrees and bake for 40-50 minutes or until a knife in the center comes out clean.

While that is baking, whip up the cream cheese icing and refrigerate.

Remove baking dish from the oven and allow to cool for 1-2 hours. Spread cream cheese icing and top with remaining pecans!

Enjoy the delicacy and revel in the honor of the new holiday hero with this healthier treat!!! It has a fraction of the sugar and a boatload more protein!