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The perfect combination of tart and sweet make these muffins burst with flavor

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Pumpkin Cranberry Muffins Photos Susie Iventosch

Cranberries and pumpkin are a perfect food combination, especially at this time of year. The colors are so festive, and the flavors are so good together. I use fresh as opposed to dried cranberries for this recipe, and even though they are fresh, mine are most often frozen. Why? Because I buy them up in the fall when they are readily available in produce sections and then freeze them for using the rest of the year. We like to barbecue turkeys in the summer, and cranberry sauce is a must in our house for turkey dinner.

In these muffins, the little burst of tartness you get from the fresh cranberries complements the sweetness of the rest of the muffin. We love that pop of flavor, and plus they keep the muffins nice and moist. I generally just toss the frozen cranberries into the batter, but if you have fresh ones, just toss them in as they are. The streusel topping for this recipe is made with oil instead of butter, and the liquids in the batter are apple juice, oil

and egg, so this entire recipe is nondairy. By the way, you can certainly add chopped nuts to the streusel for a bit more crunch. I'd recommend pecans if you do.

This recipe makes 12 regular muffins but is easily doubled and that might be really helpful during the busy holidays. They freeze very well, and you won't regret having an extra dozen on hand to feed your family and holiday guests.

A quick note - if you don't have pumpkin pie spice, you can blend cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, and allspice together for a similar flavor. Some people add a dash of cloves to this mixture too. Use more cinnamon than the other ingredients, but you can play with the quantities of each that you like best.

Pumpkin Cranberry Muffins

(Makes 12 regular muffins)

INGREDIENTS

Muffin Batter

- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 1/2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 cup pumpkin puree
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil (like canola)
- 1/4 cup apple juice
- 1 cup fresh cranberries (or frozen)

Streusel Topping

- 2 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup light brown sugar

1/2 tsp. cinnamon

1/4 tsp. cardamom or pumpkin pie spice

2 tbsp. canola oil

DIRECTIONS

Line a muffin tin with paper or parchment liners. Preheat oven to 350 F.

Place all dries (flour, brown sugar, baking soda, salt and pumpkin pie spice) in a large mixing bowl.

In a medium bowl, blend pumpkin puree, oil, egg, apple juice and cranberries. Stir the liquid ingredients into the dries and blend with a large spoon until integrated.

Spoon the batter into the prepared muffin tins. Sprinkle a spoonful of the streusel topping over each.

Bake for about 25 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean and the centers of the muffins spring back when touched with your finger.

Remove from oven and either eat immediately or cool and refrigerate. These muffins also freeze well, in case you are doing some early holiday baking!





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