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Carrot Cake Steel Cut, Overnight Oats

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I've always considered things like soup, oatmeal and hot tea wintry traditions. There's just something about warming our bellies that comforts the soul. But now as springtime approaches and warm weather encroaches upon my chilly morning routine, I find myself craving the same comforts.

Sometimes we just don't want to let go, do we? We resist surrendering what seems so comforting simply for the familiarity it offers. Oh, how this truth applies to my humble little human mind far beyond the comforting food routine I find myself in!

I don't want to divert our attention too much to those things it's much better to relinquish for the sake of self-improvement, but since food often serves as a metaphor for my life, I do want to draw up a distinction.

Control verses comfort. I confess control feels a bit comforting, synonymous at times, to me. I believe that's where my tendency towards routine comes from: the comfort in control. Kevin, my husband in heaven, used to keep me on my toes and out of my routine. It was good for me…mostly.

Now, without him I struggle letting go a little and loosening the reins on routine. There's too much to do, too many things to achieve, accomplish and check off the list! Can you relate?

But I remember my life with him and, while it looked and felt a world different than what I live now, a mid-week movie or unprompted backyard bonfire never ruined anything about me. No, it seasoned my life by forcing me to LIVE it more vibrantly!

So, see, it's good for me to get out of my own comfort zone! It's a lesson I take from my past life as a wife. ***Living 'happily whole' really is all about living on the edge of your own authenticity, getting out of your box and living in the ultimate, unexpected comfort coming from following a life you're called to live.***

And listen, in my own life I've been learning how living up to God's calling isn't always in my 'zone'. But it's in His so the result is far more rewarding. It feels creative, authentic and real.

Getting uncomfortable once in a while offers me far more comfort ultimately.

Living WELL, in many ways, might be a little 'out of the routine' for you. But, try it anyways. Perhaps that comfort zone you reside in really isn't the kind of comfort you ultimately desire. ***Maybe there's something more….***

Now, back to this distinction between control and comfort and how it relates to what I'm eating this spring: I'm gonna keep some of the comfort my body (or let's be honest, it's really my mind) still wants. But I think I'll switch it up a little starting by tip toeing out of the box for what's expected of oatmeal.

With a desire for some fun and variation in my morning nourishment, I decided to give steel cut carroty oats a whirl. I'm adding fresh carrots, ginger and fat in the form of walnuts and flax to my ordinary oats. If carrot cake in springtime is the perfect dinner dessert, why wouldn't it be even better for breakfast…or lunch…or leftovers for a little snack?

This recipe took a couple tries but after watching my two girls gobble up two bowls before school, I'm pretty sure I can serve this up with Easter brunch as a side dish (or the main one for me).

Come on…..let go just a little with me! You don't have to do it all at once. But, let something go to try something slightly strange or uncomfortable. Perhaps you'll start with a recipe that surprisingly pleases your palate!

Recipe category

Food Fit for the Morning [1]

Restricted to members

1

Ingredients

- 2 ¼ cup steel cut oats*
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 2 tablespoons milled flax
- ¼ teaspoon Celtic Sea salt or pink Himalayan salt
- 3 large or 4 medium carrots cut into small pieces
- ¼ cup raw walnuts or walnut pieces
- 2 teaspoons or 1 inch of fresh ginger coarsely chopped**
- 2 ½ cups almond milk***
- ½ cup water
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup pure maple syrup

Recipe Instructions

- Prepare a 10 cup glass baking dish by lightly spraying with a non-stick spray or spreading a thin layer of butter along the bottom and sides of the dish.
- Place the carrots, ginger and walnuts into a food processor. Process until finely chopped and thoroughly mixed, about 1-2 minutes.
- Add cinnamon, nutmeg, baking powder and salt to the processer and pulse until well combined.
- In a large bowl, whisk together almond milk, water, maple syrup, vanilla and flax.
- Add the mixture from the food processor and the oats to the large bowl and stir thoroughly.
- Pour mixture into your prepared glass dish, cover and refridgerate overnight. This softens the steel cut oats, helps to activate their enzymes and makes morning preparation easier for you!
- In the morning, remove dish from fridge to bring to room temperature. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bake covered for 30 to 40 minutes depending on the depth of your baking dish. Remove from oven. It will be golden around the edges and seem moist in the middle (see photo). Let cool for a few minutes uncovered before serving--the center will firm up a little.
- ENJOY! (If the oats were baked a bit too long and are dry, add a touch of almond milk and stir well).
- You can keep leftovers in the fridge for a few days. When you reheat, add a bit of milk or water to re-soften the mixture as the oats will have absorbed more.

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Recipe Description

> Inspired by a springtime tradition, carrot cake, this totally nourishing oatmeal breakfast bake fills the belly and nourishes the body. Soaked steel cut oats make for a nutty yet creamy texture and the spices will tickle your taste buds. Carrots offer a burst of beta-carotene while walnuts and flax fill your morning good-fat quota. Enjoy!

Recipe Notes

*You can use old fashioned oats if you are not a fan of the steel cut oats [2] texture. Old fashioned will offer a nuttier flavor and texture while old fashioned will end up creamier. I chose steel cut oats because they are minimally processed.

You can buy the kind of steel cut oats I use here. [2]

Also, if necessary, choose gluten free oats as some are processed on the same press as grains containing gluten.

**If you do not have fresh ginger on hand, you can try a teaspoon of ginger powder...although i do recommend fresh anytime you can because of the flavor and health benefits!

***I use original almond milk (Silk brand without carageen) without vanilla or added sweeteners.

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