

WOLFGANG PUCK'S KITCHEN

HEALTHY AUTUMN
MUFFINS

Healthy oatmeal muffins are perfect autumn brunch treat

You and your guests will be happily surprised by these very satisfying muffins

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Now that we're a good three weeks into autumn, people are beginning to turn their thoughts toward all the holiday entertaining ahead. Thanksgiving is just six weeks away. And then Hanukkah, Christmas and the New Year soon follow. That's a lot of cooking.

Amid all the official holiday entertaining, a weekend brunch, or even a midmorning coffee or mid-afternoon teatime gathering, makes a great way to welcome people into your home. Brunch menus are generally simpler than big, traditional meals and parties, and they frequently feature dishes you can make easily, even



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in advance, rather than recipes that keep you close to the stove.

Still, brunch can present another problem. Brunch recipes sometimes tend to be heavy, featuring egg dishes laden with cheese (not to mention Hollandaise sauce). Or they showcase baked goods like healthy-looking muffins or scones that may actually pack all the calories and fat you'd usually find in extravagant desserts.

That's why, when I was recently developing breakfast and brunch recipes for my latest cookbook, "Wolfgang Puck Makes It Healthy," I set myself and my team the challenge of coming up with morning recipes that really did fulfill the promise of the title. In the end, the task proved surprisingly easy as we

developed an array of recipes ranging from low-fat homemade granola layered in parfait glasses with nonfat yogurt and fresh berries; to whole-wheat pancakes made with twice as many egg whites as yolks and studded with crunchy walnuts; to thick, hearty flat omelets featuring mostly egg whites combined with a cornucopia of vegetables and shreds of lean ham.

One of my favorites of the brunch bunch was a recipe for incredibly tender, rich, flavorful muffins based on a mixture of old-fashioned rolled oats, nonfat yogurt, a couple of eggs, and frozen raspberries. Here, I'm pleased to share with you a variation of that treat using, instead, widely available frozen blueberries.

For easier brunch preparation, you can partially prepare the batter the night before, up to the point at which you combine the egg and oat mixtures.

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Recipe

YOGURT AND OATMEAL
BLUEBERRY MUFFINS

MAKES 2 DOZEN

ingredients

1. 2-1/4 cups (310 ml) old-fashioned rolled oats
2. 2 cups (500 ml) nonfat plain yogurt
3. 2 large cage-free eggs
4. 1-1/4 cups (310 ml) packed dark brown sugar
5. 1 cup (250 ml) canola oil
6. 2-1/2 cups (625 ml) all-purpose (plain) flour
7. 2-1/2 teaspoons baking soda
8. 2 cups (500 ml) frozen unsweetened or fresh blueberries

1. In a large bowl, stir together the oats and yogurt. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour to soften the oats. (If you mix the batter the night before, up to but not including stirring in the flour-baking soda mixture as directed below, there's no need to presoak the oats in the yogurt.)
2. Set the rack in the middle of the oven. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. (175 degrees C).
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs, sugar, and oil. With a rubber spatula or large spoon, stir the egg mixture into the oat-yogurt mixture.
4. In a separate bowl, stir together the flour and baking soda. Stir the flour mixture into the egg-oat mixture until just combined. Do not overstir.
5. Just before baking, fold the blueberries into the batter just until they're evenly distributed.
6. Line 2 dozen muffin tin cups with paper muffin liners. With a spoon, divide the batter evenly among the muffin cups.
7. Bake the muffins until they're golden brown and spring back when pressed lightly and carefully with a fingertip, 30 to 40 minutes, carefully rotating the muffin tins 180 degrees for even baking about halfway through that time.
8. When the muffins are done, transfer the tins to a wire rack to cool at least briefly before unmolding and serving. Serve the muffins warm or at room temperature.

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