

Mix it up

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Get your pumpkin spice groove on—at home!

The pumpkin spice craze is just about upon us. During the fall, pumpkin is everywhere—especially in beverages. Pumpkin and a blend of autumnal spices are added to coffee, lattes, tea and smoothies, then topped with whipped cream and maybe a sprinkle of cinnamon. For some, it doesn't feel like fall until they take that first sip. While these drinks are tasty, they typically are loaded with sugar. And don't get us started on the astronomical carb count. Why waste money on these drinks when making them at home is cheaper and you can control the ingredients?



Making pumpkin puree isn't as daunting as you might think. Simply chop off the top of a sugar pumpkin near the stem, halve it like you would a melon, scoop out the seeds, put it face down on a baking sheet and roast until tender. The skin will be so soft that it will peel away. Then, mash it with a potato masher or run it through a food processor to get it nice and creamy. The resulting puree should be used immediately or frozen for six to eight months. Pumpkin year round—yeah!

These drinks come together in mere minutes and are low in calories, carbs and sugar.

—Elizabeth Barbone and Jennifer Harris

Pumpkin Spice Drink Base

- 1 cup pumpkin puree
- ½ cup dark brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg

In a medium saucepan, whisk together the pumpkin puree with sugar, vanilla extract and spices until smooth. Heat over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture just begins to bubble. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Use as directed in drink recipes below. Store the pumpkin spice base in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

Pumpkin Spice Latte

SERVES 2

- 3 tablespoons Pumpkin Spice Drink Base
- 2 cups whole milk
- 2 shots espresso, about ¼ cup, or ½ cup strongly brewed coffee

TOPPING

- ¼ cup heavy cream, whipped with 1 tablespoon powdered sugar until firm peaks form

Combine Pumpkin Spice Drink Base and milk in a small saucepan. Heat until warm, stirring frequently. Turn off heat. Add the espresso and stir to combine.

Divide between two mugs and top with sweetened whipped cream.

Note: To make this drink dairy free, replace the milk with a dairy-free alternative and the whipped cream with either homemade whipped coconut cream or premade whipped topping, like So Delicious' CocoWhip.

Chai Pumpkin Spice Latte

SERVES 1

- ½ cup boiling water
- 1 black tea bag (or gluten-free chai tea bag)
- 1 cup milk or dairy-free alternative
- 3 tablespoons Pumpkin Spice Drink Base
- Pinch freshly ground black pepper

Pour the boiling water over the tea bag and steep for five minutes. The tea should be strong.

While the tea steeps, prepare the milk. Combine milk, Pumpkin Spice Drink Base and black pepper in a small saucepan. Heat until warm. Whisk vigorously to froth. Pour the pumpkin milk into the steeped tea. Stir gently to combine.

Pumpkin Smoothie

SERVES 2

- ¾ cup pumpkin puree
- 1 large frozen ripe banana

- 1 cup milk or unsweetened dairy-free milk
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup or honey
- 1¼ teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Combine all ingredients in a blender. Blend on high speed until smooth. Divide between two glasses. Serve immediately.

Pumpkin Juice

SERVES 2

This is one treat no Harry Potter fan should miss! To make this version taste like the one available in Universal Studios' Wizarding World of Harry Potter, include the optional granulated sugar.

- 1 cup pumpkin puree
- 2 cups apple juice
- 1 cup apricot nectar or apricot juice
- ½ cup water
- 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ cup granulated sugar (optional)

In a small saucepan, whisk together pumpkin puree, apple juice, apricot nectar and water until smooth. Add the pumpkin pie spice, vanilla extract and granulated sugar, if using. Bring to simmer over medium-low heat. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 20 minutes.

Serve warm or chilled.