



Holiday RAW FOOD

R E C I P E G U I D E



By Dr. Karin Dina, D.C.
with Dr. Rick Dina, D.C.

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Introduction

We love the holidays! But we know the holidays can be a challenging time for healthy eating. Fortunately, it doesn't have to be this way. Over the years, we've developed strategies for healthy eating over the holidays and are happy to share these with you, along with some of the recipes we have created to help us through this fun, festive, and often nutritionally challenged season!

For us, recipes are not only about taste. We eat for nutrient content, health value, and taste all at the same time. We have developed a series of recipes that do not sacrifice any of our criteria, as we believe the holidays should be about the celebration of family, friends, good food, and good health! In sharing these recipes with you, we will also share some of the thinking that goes into the creation of them along with strategies you can use when deciding which flavorful ingredients to use in your recipes that also provide excellent health value.

One very helpful healthy eating strategy can be eating before going to a holiday gathering, to avoid attending an event where hunger may win out over your better judgement. For example, we may enjoy a smoothie or vegetable salad before we go. An equally important strategy is bringing some of our own food to the event. We check with the host ahead of time to let them know of our plans. Since they are usually a family member or friend, they are happy for our offer. In addition to us knowing there will be food we like to eat at the event, this strategy also helps put the host at ease as they don't have to figure out what to make for us. We always bring substantially more of what we can eat on our own to share with party attendees and we have been delighted to see that our food usually tends to disappear quickly, even the salads, but especially the raw pies!

The holidays exemplify the importance of having workable solutions to making raw food, raw food focused, and/or plant-based diets work in the real world. Nutritional content and health value are of the highest priority in our recipe development, but taste is usually the main priority for most other people at the event. Although we may have conflicting values regarding food choices, we want to maintain harmonious relationships with our friends and family members, as that is another very important component of health.

So how does one put these values into practice for real world success to keep everyone happy and healthy? That's what this eBook is all about. We hope you enjoy these recipes designed for maximum nutrient, health, and taste value. Our recipes are made from whole foods with no added oil, table salt, or sugar.

We've included seasonal ingredients in this guide, such as pomegranates, persimmons, and pumpkins, but if you have trouble finding these, feel free to experiment with similar foods available in your area, or make any deletions or additions you would like. Most importantly, have fun!



Pomegranate and Fruit Smoothie Recipes



I absolutely LOVE pomegranates. I always look forward to the months of November and December in anticipation of making and enjoying fresh pomegranate juice, which has a flavor unlike any other fruit I've tried before, along with its deep red color calling attention to its rich antioxidant content.

I wasn't always this enthusiastic about pomegranates. It wasn't until years into my raw food journey that I came to truly appreciate them. After all, pomegranates cannot be easily peeled and eaten or bitten into like so many of the more common fruits we enjoy. Some of you may have experienced this for yourself! The good news is that there are many ways to enjoy pomegranates, the first being juice.

But before we get started, let's take a closer look at what a pomegranate actually is.



Pomegranate and Fruit Smoothie Recipes



When you open a pomegranate, you will see tough fiber interspersed with pockets of individual seeds each surrounded by a dark red fluid-filled pouch. These are called arils. When one juices a pomegranate, they are releasing the dark red fluid from these arils. Please know that using a typical wood or bamboo cutting board for pomegranate preparation may lead to stains. I learned this the hard way, and now I use a cutting surface that doesn't stain.

There are many techniques and juicers that can be used to make pomegranate juice, with our favorite method being the use of our manual citrus press.

We find that using a press does not break down the white pomegranate seeds, but rather, separates the juice from the seeds and fiber, resulting in a dark red colored juice which we love. We have found that the use of some electrical juicers breaks down the white pome-



granate seeds, yielding a lighter tasting pink juice which is a combination of red pomegranate juice and broken down white pomegranate seeds. Our taste preference is the dark red juice.



In order to get as much juice as possible out of our pomegranates, we usually cut the pomegranates into quarters. Cutting the pomegranates in half also works, but we have found that we get more juice if we cut the fruit in quarters. If you do not have a manual citrus press, a hand-held citrus juicer will work as well. However, you may not get quite as much juice out of the pomegranates as you would with a citrus press.



Before we purchased our citrus press, we used a hand-held citrus juicer and had good results. Please be aware that juicing with either press method may lead to the red juice spraying onto surrounding countertops, walls, and clothing. We know this from experience!

We have found that juicing very ripe pomegranates produces juice which is notably less astringent than less ripe pomegranates. How can you tell when a pomegranate is truly ripe? When the skin is cracked.



We've rarely seen pomegranates with cracked skin for sale in stores; we've mostly seen them growing on trees in yards, such as this one growing in our yard, or at farmers markets. Does this deter us from purchasing pomegranates without cracked skins? No. We just realize that such pomegranates may have some astringency to their taste.

The flavor of pomegranates can be strong regardless if fully ripe or not, so we often enjoy the combination of pomegranate juice with fresh squeezed orange juice. The orange juice counters the astringency of the pomegranate juice with some sweetness and makes for a nice base juice for our smoothies.



Here is a basic recipe for orange pomegranate juice:

Three medium Valencia oranges
One medium pomegranate

We like to make smoothies with this juice recipe.
Here is one of my favorites:

1 cup orange pomegranate juice (240 ml, 8.1 oz.)
2 cups chopped dandelion greens (110 g, 3.9 oz.)
1 cup dark cherries (154 g, 5.4 oz.)
3 bananas (skins removed) (354 g, 12.5 oz.)
½ cup mango chunks (495 g, 17.5 oz.)



I personally really enjoy this recipe with orange pomegranate juice, but I like straight pomegranate juice even more, especially in my morning smoothies. One of my favorite smoothies is what I call my Ultra-Antioxidant Supercharged Energy Smoothie that I enjoy a couple hours before I go on a run at this time of year when pomegranates are in season.

½ cup pomegranate juice (120 ml, 4.05 oz.)
2 cups chopped dandelion greens (110 g, 3.9 oz.)
½ cup blackberries (72 g, 2.54 oz.)
½ cup blueberries (74 g, 2.6 oz.)
3 bananas (skins removed) (354 g, 12.5 oz.)



Here are some nutrient highlights of the ingredients used to create this smoothie:

	Smoothie
Vitamin B1	0.55 mg
Vitamin B2	0.74 mg
Vitamin B3	4.84 mg
Folate	230 mcg
Vitamin C	120 mg
Vitamin E	7 mg
Calcium	277 mg
Iron	6 mg
Magnesium	188 mg
Potassium	2543 mg
Zinc	2.5 mg

Nutrient data from the USDA Nutrient Database and ESHA Food Processor Nutrition Software

Given that this smoothie has 672 calories, this nutrient profile is impressive!

In addition to pomegranate juice, there are so many additional ways to enjoy pomegranates around the holidays. I was recently asked how to remove the seeds from pomegranates to use in recipes. So, here are the steps I use:

First, I change into clothing I am not concerned with staining, then I use a knife to score across the middle of the pomegranate skin without cutting through the whole fruit:



Then, I separate the two halves of the pomegranate by essentially tearing the two halves apart over a bowl in the kitchen sink to catch any juice that comes out in the process. Manually inserting a spoon into the score can assist with separating the two halves.



To get the fluid-filled seeds (arils) out of the halves, I turn the halves inside out.



Then I remove the arils by hand over a bowl filled with water. The arils will sink to the bottom of the bowl and the pith will float.





I then remove the floating pith pieces and drain off the water from the arils. Here is a photo of the drained arils:



Now, what do we do with these pomegranate arils? We love them in salads.

Many people ask us how much salad we eat regularly and are surprised when they see the actual amount. Over my almost 28 years of being on this raw food path, my salads seem to get bigger every year. When I first started, I thought for sure I would be hungry on raw food because my raw vegetable intake reference point was a small dinner-sized salad with about a cup or two of lettuce, half of a tomato, and a slice of onion drenched in some type of store-bought dressing. After shifting to a more raw plant-based diet, my salads obligatorily grew significantly in size. Now my salads look more like this:





Here are the ingredients in this salad:

- 5 cups shredded cucumber (520 g, 18.3 oz.)
- 3 cups shredded carrots (330 g, 11.6 oz.)
- 10 cups chopped or torn lettuce (470 g, 16.6 oz.)
- 3 cups chopped or torn dandelion greens (165 g, 5.8 oz.)
- Arils from one 4 inch diameter pomegranate (282 g, 9.9 oz.)

I love dandelion greens, but I know their taste is not for everyone. Nutrient-wise they are a powerhouse, but there certainly are other leafy green choices that do not have as much of an 'acquired' taste, such as frisée greens, escarole, kale, and others.

Here is the nutrient content of the ingredients of the salad:

	Salad with pomegranate arils
Vitamin B1	1.2 mg
Vitamin B2	1.3 mg
Vitamin B3	7.4 mg
Folate	890 mcg
Vitamin C	233 mg
Vitamin E	10 mg
Calcium	684 mg
Iron	13 mg
Magnesium	266 mg
Potassium	4302 mg
Zinc	5 mg

Nutrient data from the USDA Nutrient Database and ESHA Food Processor Nutrition Software



Given that this salad has 602 calories, this nutrient profile is notable!

There are many types of dressings you can add to this salad; we've found that sweeter dressings tend to balance out the bitterness of the dandelion greens. One of our favorites is tomato, sun-dried tomato, chia seeds, and dates, a version of which is found later in this eBook.

Nutrient-wise, pomegranates are rich in folate and potassium, and are appreciated for their notable anthocyanin content and the polyphenol ellagic acid, which has been studied for its antioxidant properties.

Additional Salad Recipes

Our salads are usually composed of a couple different types of leafy greens and a variety of vegetables and other ingredients that can vary with the seasons and what foods are available from our garden, farmers markets, stores, and wholesale organic produce markets where we purchase our produce. In addition to pomegranates, we love persimmons, so here is a salad we made with the addition of a Fuyu persimmon. It's important to note that some varieties of persimmons such as Hachiyas can be astringent tasting until they are fully ripe. So, if you plan to use a persimmon immediately after buying it, be sure to choose a variety such as Fuyus that do not have an astringent taste to them.



Here are the ingredients in this salad:

10 cups chopped or torn red leaf lettuce (470 g, 16.6 oz.)

3 cups chopped or torn dandelion greens (165 g, 5.8 oz.)

¼ cup of basil (7 g, 0.25 oz.)

2 cups heirloom tomatoes (360 g, 12.7 oz.)

1 Fuyu persimmon (107 g, 3.8 oz.)

2 cups shredded carrots (220 g, 7.8 oz.)

3 cups shredded cucumber (331 g, 11.7 oz.)

Here are some the nutrients found in the collective ingredients of the salad:

	Salad with persimmon
Vitamin B1	1.0 mg
Vitamin B2	1.1 mg
Vitamin B3	7.5 mg
Folate	807 mcg
Vitamin C	310 mg
Vitamin E	9.8 mg
Calcium	667 mg
Iron	15 mg
Magnesium	238 mg
Potassium	4212 mg
Zinc	3.6 mg

Nutrient data from the USDA Nutrient Database and ESHA Food Processor Nutrition Software



How about a sprout salad? We love sprouts, especially lentil sprouts, for so many reasons. Here is a recipe we developed that quickly became one of our favorites. It makes a great side dish and is super easy to make with a little planning:

- 1 cup sprouted lentils (118 g, 4.2 oz.)
- 1 cup chopped tomato (180 g, 6.3 oz.)
- 1 chopped green onion (18 g, 0.63 oz.) (optional)
- ¼ medium avocado, cut into cubes (34 g, 1.2 oz.)
- Sprinkle of dulse flakes (optional)



To create this salad, we soaked green lentils in water overnight, then removed the water, and allowed the lentils to sprout for two days at a temperature of about 65°F (18°C). You may need to adjust sprouting time for warmer or cooler temperatures. We then combined the ingredients in a bowl as shown in the photo. Another way to prepare this dish is to press the avocado cubes with a fork, then add the other ingredients and mix together. This preparation spreads the flavor of the avocado throughout the salad:





Dressing Recipes

Since the start of our raw food journeys in 1987 and 1990, we have learned that a well-dressed salad is one of the keys to raw food success! Over the years we have created many dressings with a variety of ingredients, many of which have changed over time to suit our tastes, ingredient availability, kitchen equipment, and nutrient content. For example, back in the late 1980s and early 90s, we had never heard of chia seeds and neither of us owned a high-power blender. Despite this, we made our dressings and sauces from whole natural plant foods.

To this day, our dressings do not contain oil of any kind nor table salt. They are still made from whole foods. Over the years, we have heard people say that they could not imagine eating a salad dressing without some type of oil in it and we can understand why. First of all, oil as part of a salad dressing serves to spread the other tastes in the dressing relatively evenly around the salad and generally sticks to the vegetables or other ingredients in the salad. It also has a rich flavor that is complemented by other ingredients that are traditionally found in salad dressings. These characteristics that many people either consciously or unconsciously find to be desirable about salad dressings can be challenging to reproduce with whole foods. In order to have a salad dressing spread evenly around a salad, one would need to blend the salad dressing to the point of smoothness. This is difficult to achieve with a low power blender; hence my early salad dressings were chunky and did not taste as good as they do now when made with a high-power blender.

We have found from our experience and others that the taste of one's food is of course very important for success with raw food, especially when one is transitioning from a standard western diet or a diet composed primarily of cooked foods.



One's palate is accustomed to excessively strong tastes from these foods, especially when they contain condiments like oil, salt, and sugar. Whole plant foods have much more subtle and delicate flavors to which one might not be accustomed when they embark on a whole food, raw food, or plant-based diet. It's good to know this when getting started, or even after one has been on this path for a while, so one does not get discouraged with the taste of their foods. Their palate may need time to adjust to their whole food dietary choices.

This being said, we'd like to share with you a couple of strategies we use to create whole food dressings we love, based on what we've worked out on our own over the years. There are so many combinations of whole foods one can use to formulate recipes so we encourage you to have fun with your process of recipe creation. Here are some of our considerations:

1. You will need an ingredient that sticks to the ingredients of the salad so that every bite of salad will have some taste of the dressing. This is your base ingredient.
2. You will need an ingredient that is smooth enough to spread around the salad. This ingredient may be the same ingredient as the one described in #1. This is also a base ingredient.

If you have an ingredient (or ingredients) that can achieve #1 and #2, then you next have to decide what tastes you want to have in the dressing and what would work well with the ingredient(s) you have available. For example, do you want a sweet flavored dressing or do you want more of a savory flavor? A good example of a sweet base ingredient would be mango, since when blended it is smooth and sticky enough to spread around the salad and stick to the salad ingredients. A good example of a savory base ingredient would be a seed or nut, like almonds. We find that citrus, such as lemon, lime, or orange added to base ingredients contribute a strong flavor and "bite" to various base ingredients. Lemon and lime are especially good in salad dressings because in addition to their bitter flavor, they also convey a somewhat 'salty' flavor that can decrease the desire to add table salt to a dressing when a salty flavor is desired.

Additionally, we have provided for you a sampling of the dressings we have created over the years. Our prime considerations in our food choices are health and nutrient content, and healthy whole foods can taste great without the need for oil, table salt, and sugar.

Our first recipe is our version of a tomato dressing. We've used this one on salad, over spiralized vegetables, in raw vegetable lasagna-style recipes, as the sauce in a raw pizza recipe, and even on steamed vegetables! The possibilities are really endless...



Tomato Dressing (serves 1 person)

1 one cup chopped fresh tomato (180 g, 6.3 oz.)

4 soaked sundried tomatoes (10 g, 0.35 oz.)

1 Medjool date (pit removed) (15 g, 0.5 oz.)

1 tsp. dried oregano (1.8 g, 0.06 oz.)

½ cup chopped red bell pepper (74.5 g, 2.6 oz.)

2 tsp. chia seeds (7 g, 0.25 oz.)

¼ clove garlic (optional) (0.75 g, 0.03 oz.)

Basil leaf garnish (optional)



All of our produce ingredients are rinsed before preparation. Place fresh tomato in a high-power blender carafe, add date, oregano, bell pepper, and optional garlic. Blend until smooth. Add soaked sundried tomatoes and chia; blend mixture until smooth. We double this recipe to have enough dressing to cover both of our large salads. If red bell pepper is not available, one can substitute ½ cup of fresh tomato. The chia seeds add thickness to this dressing along with the omega 3 fat alpha linolenic acid. If you want a lower fat dressing, you can decrease the amount of chia seeds. The fresh tomato, sundried tomatoes, and chia seeds are base ingredients in this recipe. Various versions of this dressing have been favorites of ours for many years.





Another dressing that has stood the test of time for us is a dressing we first served at the raw and living foods classes we used to teach back in 2005. It was a big hit with our students for, as they would say, it's simplicity, versatility, and taste.

Almond Alfredo Dressing (serves 1 person)

¼ cup soaked raw almonds (34 g, 1.15 oz.)

Juice of 1 small lemon, about two tablespoons of juice (24 ml, 0.8 fl. oz.)

1 cup chopped peeled zucchini (115 g, 4.05 oz.)

½ cup of water (120 ml, 4.05 fl. oz.) (optional)

1 tsp. chick pea miso (10 g, 0.35 oz.) (optional)

Basil leaf garnish (optional)





Pour lemon juice into a high-power blender carafe, add zucchini, and blend until homogenous. Then add soaked almonds and optional miso, and blend until smooth. Add water and blend if mixture becomes too thick. We have rarely added water to this recipe. On occasion we have added some extra lemon juice and/or used the blender tamper to help with blending the ingredients. If you want a lower fat dressing, you can subtract some of the almonds and add more zucchini.



Additionally, at times we've also added chia seeds to this recipe to increase omega 3 content, while removing some of the almonds. One of the many things we love about chia seeds in addition to their nutrient content is their relatively neutral flavor. Addition of them creates a thicker dressing without adding a significant flavor to the dressing. The base ingredients in this recipe are the almonds, zucchini, and chia seeds (if used).

In addition to chia seeds, another ingredient we have added to this versatile dressing is basil for a pesto-related flavor. This version of the dressing was also a hit with our raw and living foods students:

Almond Basil Dressing (serves 1 person)

¼ cup soaked almonds (34 g, 1.15 oz.)

Juice of 1 small lemon, about two tablespoons of juice (24 ml, 0.8 fl. oz.)

1 cup chopped peeled zucchini (115 g, 4.05 oz.)

4 tbsp. (about) chopped fresh basil leaves (8 g, 0.25 oz.)

½ cup of water (120 ml, 4.05 fl. oz.) (optional)

1 tsp. chick pea miso (10 g, 0.35 oz.) (optional)

Basil leaf garnish (optional)



Pour lemon juice into a high-power blender carafe. Add zucchini, basil, and blend until homogenous. Then add soaked almonds and optional miso, and blend again until smooth. If the mixture becomes too thick, add water and blend. Just as with the Almond Alfredo Dressing, we have rarely added water to this recipe, as we prefer to add extra lemon juice if necessary. We give the option to add water if one prefers a less lemon-tasting dressing.





Chia seeds can also be added to this dressing replacing some of the almonds, if desired.

We love salad, and for many raw food enthusiasts a substantial salad plays a central dietary role. This often comes as a surprise to people not familiar with this way of eating, for a couple of reasons. Generally, when people think of salad, they think of a small side salad. So, when I explain the role that salad plays in my daily diet, people often ask me how a small salad could be satisfying. But then, when they see the actual size of the salad, they are now surprised that I eat a salad the size of a large serving bowl.



There are many different permutations of a basic salad one can create. My favorite usually contains a couple types of leafy greens with some other types of vegetables:

- 12 cups chopped or torn lettuce (564 g, 19.9 oz.)
- 2 ½ cups chopped or torn dandelion greens (137.5 g, 4.85 oz.)
- 1 cup chopped tomato (180 g, 6.3 oz.)
- 3 cups shredded cucumber (312 g, 11.0 oz.)
- 3 cups shredded carrots (330 g, 11.6 oz.)

Most raw food enthusiasts eat salad with dressing so here are the nutrient highlights of this salad with the tomato dressing noted above:

	Salad and Tomato Dressing
Vitamin B1	1.21 mg
Vitamin B2	1.23 mg
Vitamin B3	10.55 mg
Folate	991 mcg
Vitamin C	357 mg
Vitamin E	11 mg
Calcium	738 mg
Iron	14.7 mg
Magnesium	290 mg
Potassium	4955 mg
Zinc	4.7 mg
Alpha-linolenic acid	2.2 g

Nutrient data from the USDA Nutrient Database and ESHA Food Processor Nutrition Software

Here is a photo of the salad with all three dressings:



The nutrient content of this salad and tomato dressing together is notable! Especially given that one will eat much more than this in one day since the calorie count for this salad and tomato dressing is only 536. One can expect to get even more of these important nutrients from additional dietary choices.

This is one of the many reasons we eat a diet composed of whole foods. Oil, which is frequently used for dressing recipes, contains little more than fat nutrient-wise. We prefer to use whole foods such as almonds and chia seeds to produce a similar taste and texture with much more nutrition. Additionally, oil is much more calorie-dense than whole foods, which we discuss further in our Mastering Raw Food Nutrition class.

Holiday Pie Recipes

When we have served these dressings and similar salads at our raw and living foods classes, pot-lucks, dinner parties, and holiday parties, they have not lasted long! However, the dishes of ours that have consistently disappeared the quickest at gatherings have been our desserts, even at holiday parties with standard-western eating relatives! Friends and relatives at these events have told us they would eat a helping or two (or more) of our desserts because they enjoyed them free of the guilt and dense feeling that often accompanies the eating of rich desserts. We've even had standard western eaters tell us they enjoy the taste of our desserts better than their standard counterparts. Even though we rarely eat desserts, it's nice to have recipes we enjoy eating along with friends and family on celebratory occasions.

We developed the recipe for one of our all-time favorites after a student of ours asked us back in 2005 if we had a raw recipe for persimmon pie.



Since persimmons are a popular fruit in the late fall and are abundantly available in northern California around the holidays, we created this simple and delicious holiday pie and crust:

Pie Crust for Coconut Persimmon Pie

½ cup chia seeds (70 g, 2.5 oz.)

1 cup shredded dehydrated coconut (93 g, 3.28 oz.)

3 small Fuyu persimmons (250 g, 8.8 oz.)

Grind chia seeds in a clean coffee grinder (we have a coffee grinder we use exclusively for grinding seeds) until a meal-like texture is achieved. Blend persimmons in a food processor until homogenized but still a little chunky. Stir chia meal, coconut, and persimmon mixture together in a bowl. Press crust mix into a pie plate. To avoid the pie crust sticking to the bottom of the pie plate, sprinkle some shredded coconut onto the bottom of the pie plate before pressing crust into the plate. Please note: This pie crust is not super-sweet. If you desire a sweeter pie crust, please see the pumpkin pie crust recipe presented later in this eBook.



Coconut Persimmon Pie

Meat of 4 young coconuts (490 g, 17.28 oz.)

6 small Fuyu persimmons (500 g, 17.64 oz.)

2 ripe fresh bananas with skins removed (236 g, 8.32 oz.)





Cut slices of banana and place in bottom of pie crust. Mix coconut and persimmons in high-power blender until completely smooth and pour coconut/persimmon mixture over bananas. Chill for at least two hours before serving.



Preparation strategy: It is best to have the pie crust with banana slices ready before mixing the coconut and persimmons in the high-power blender, since the coconut-persimmon mixture jells quickly after blending. You want the jelling of the ingredients to take place in the pie crust instead of in the blender. If the mixture jells in the blender, simply re-blend the mixture until smooth and pour it into the pie crust immediately. The filling for this pie also makes a great pudding!



This pie does not last long in our house.





Another recipe request we received from our students back in 2005 was for raw pumpkin pie. Pumpkin tends to be fibrous, so we use pie pumpkins when preparing our pies.



The first time we brought this pie to a family gathering, it was met with skepticism. But soon the pie was gone, and people were asking for more.

Here is the recipe for the pie and pie crust:

Pumpkin pie

4 cups peeled fresh pie pumpkin (500 g, 17.6 oz.)

10 Medjool dates (pits removed) (150 g, 5.3 oz.)

2/3 cup soaked raw almonds (best if soaked for at least 8 hours) (91 g, 3.2 oz)

1 cup water (240 ml, 8.1 fl. oz.)

2 tsp. cinnamon (5.2 g, 0.18 oz.)

1 tsp. ginger (1.8 g, 0.06 oz.)

½ tsp. nutmeg (1.1 g, 0.04 oz.)





Pour water into a high-power blender carafe. Add dates, almonds, cinnamon, ginger, and nutmeg to water and blend until homogenous. Add pumpkin to mixture and blend until smooth. We like the level of sweetness in this pie. For a sweeter pie, one can add additional dates. On occasion, we have reinvented this pie filling recipe with a sprinkle of cinnamon on top as pumpkin pudding!



Pie Crust for Pumpkin Pie

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup chia seeds (123 g, 4.3 oz.)

1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup shredded dehydrated coconut (116 g, 4.1 oz.)

8 Medjool dates (pits removed) (120 g, 4.23 oz.)

Blend chia seeds, dates, and coconut in a food processor until homogenized but still a little chunky.





Press crust mix into a pie plate. To avoid the pie crust sticking to the bottom of the pie plate, sprinkle some shredded coconut onto the bottom of the plate before pressing crust into the plate.



If desired, you can grind the chia seeds in a clean coffee grinder, then blend with dates and coconut in a food processor for a less chunky pie crust.





Additional Dessert Recipe

Carrot Cake Brownies

Another holiday and year-round favorite in our house is our raw plant-based version of carrot cake. One of the many things we love about this recipe is the quick preparation time once all the ingredients are ready to go. Generally, the cake itself takes about 10 to 15 minutes to prepare and the frosting takes about 10 minutes, followed by about 2 - 3 hours in the refrigerator to chill and set. The entire process may take longer the first couple of times you make it, so we encourage you to leave extra prep time the first time around. If you choose to use dehydrated zucchini in the recipe, this will need to be prepared ahead of time (see below). We also encourage you to check the ingredient list ahead of time to make sure that you have the everything on the list.



Carrot Cake Base

- 2 cups peeled and shredded carrots (220 g, 7.8 oz.)
- 3 cups dehydrated zucchini (180 g, 6.3 oz.) (or 1 cup shredded dehydrated coconut or 1 cup lucuma powder)
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds (20 g, 0.7 oz.)
- 7 Medjool dates (pits removed) (105 g, 3.7 oz.)
- ¼ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice mixture (1 g, 0.04 oz.) (optional)

We really love the texture and neutral flavor of the dehydrated zucchini in this recipe, but if you would prefer to not spend the time dehydrating, you can substitute shredded dehydrated coconut or lucuma powder, both of which can often be found in natural food stores. Please note that the texture will change if you use either of these substitutions. Shredded dehydrated coconut will make the cake more “fluffy” and lucuma powder will make the cake denser and more sticky. To create dehydrated zucchini, we washed and peeled 15 medium to small zucchini (averaging 7 inches in length), cut them into thin slices, placed them on dehydrator trays, and dehydrated at 105°F (40.5°C) for 4 - 5 hours. Depending on the thickness of your slices, humidity, and ambient temperature, this time may vary.

Here is one tray of zucchini ready to go into the dehydrator:



When the zucchini is dry, “crinkled,” and slightly flexible, combine 3 cups of the zucchini with 2 tablespoons of chia seeds (ground), 7 Medjool dates (pits removed), and ¼ teaspoon of pumpkin pie spice in a food processor. Process ingredients until the mixture is



homogenous. Before adding the chia seeds to the food processor, we grind them in a clean coffee grinder (we have a coffee grinder we use exclusively for grinding seeds) until a meal-like texture is achieved. Additionally, the pumpkin spice mixture that we use contains cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and cloves.

Here is what some of the zucchini slices look like when dehydrated:



After the mixture is homogenous, add 2 cups shredded carrots and pulse the mixture 4 - 5 times for 1 - 3 seconds each. You want the carrot chunks to be somewhat visible in the final cake so do not blend the mixture continuously or the mixture will become too sticky and less light. Set mixture aside for now.



Carrot Cake Frosting

1 cups walnuts (103 g, 3.6 oz.) (soaked if desired)
1 cup chopped zucchini (non-dehydrated) (115 g, 4.05 oz.)
1 - 3 Medjool dates (pits removed) (15 - 45 g, 0.5 - 1.6 oz.)
½ cup water (120 ml, 4.05 fl. oz.) (optional)



Wash and peel 1 - 2 zucchini (medium to small), cut off ends, and slice into chunks that are easily mixed in a blender. Remove the pits and rinse the Medjool dates. Rinse walnuts. Add 1 cup of the zucchini slices and dates to a high-power blender and blend until homogenous. You may or may not need to add water to the mixture to aid with blending. After the mixture is well-blended, add walnuts, blend on low and incrementally move to high until the mixture is as smooth as possible. Depending on the blender, you may need to use a tamper to achieve desired smoothness. Check mixture to see if it has the desired sweetness for your taste. Regarding walnuts, sometimes older walnuts can have a more bitter taste, so if fresh walnuts are not available in your area, you can substitute macadamia nuts, cashews, or some other creamy nut or seed of your choice. Here in northern California, we can purchase walnuts that are shelled and fresh off the tree directly from farmers. We encourage you to look into options that are available to you in your area or online.



Put aside frosting mixture. Now, scoop the carrot cake mixture into a pie plate or glass dish of your choice, and spread evenly. Scoop and spread the frosting on top of the carrot cake mixture.

We use a 8.5 x 9.5 inch (~21 cm x 24 cm) glass dish:



Using a dish of this size, the recipe serves about 8 to 12 people or more depending on how large you cut the pieces. Keep in mind that this is a rich-tasting recipe and usually one piece is satisfying for most, especially if you have other desserts available for people to try.

Additionally, please keep in mind this recipe was created by long term raw food enthusiasts (us!) who don't consume oil, processed sugar, excessive spices, excessive processed salt products, etc. This allows our taste buds to greatly enjoy the extraordinary natural flavors of this cake. If you are expecting guests who are used to "stronger" tastes, we suggest that you sample the flavors of this recipe before you layer the cake and frosting and adjust accordingly.

We know how challenging it can be to eat healthfully around the holidays, especially desserts. So we are happy to share with you these time-tested recipe creation strategies along with the recipes themselves to show you how simple and tasty whole natural plant foods can be!

We wish you all a holiday season filled with happiness and great health!

Cheers!

