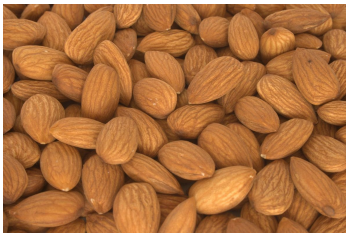




Welcome to Foodspiration!! A Newsletter with food and cooking tips and Stories about inspirational people



Almonds to the Rescue!

Most people who need to eat gluten free or low-carb have developed their own recipes and systems for substituting different kinds of flour for wheat flour. If, however, you are new to the gluten-free world, or you are planning a holiday meal with gluten-free or carb-conscious guests, I have some tips for you concerning Almond Flour.

Almond Flour is one of my favorite substitutions for wheat flour because of the high nutrition value, low net carbs, and just pure staying power of almonds. Plus, I like the flavor of almonds! It can take quite a bit of experimentation with almond flour to get the right consistency, but here are a few tips:

When using Almond Flour, plan on doubling or almost doubling the moisture content of the dough or batter. Moisture content can be added via: Vegetable or other oils (i.e. canola, olive, grape seed, coconut, sunflower, etc), Liquids such as water, milk, or alcoholic beverages; Dairy products, such as butter, sour cream, or eggs; or anything else your imagination can devise!

Be sure to experiment with small batches before the big meal, because batter or

dough using Almond Flour will need to have a “gooier” consistency than your regular batter or dough because almond flour is a lot drier than wheat flour.

If you need to roll out the dough for a recipe, consider freezing the dough first, then as it is thawing, sprinkling a bit of the almond flour onto your dough just as you would if it was regular flour, then rolling it out between sheets of parchment paper. Cooking times could also vary, so be sure to check on it often the first time you make something.

Even if it is not perfect, your gluten-free or carb-conscious guests will appreciate your kindness and consideration in adapting your favorite recipes on their behalf!



My Inspiration!

Inspirational people can surprise us during the most mundane tasks. Mario (I never did learn his last name) is a perfect example of that. Several months ago, I was driving home, and was stopped short by a broken-down car totally blocking east bound traffic. I zipped onto a side street, intending to weave my way back to my route, when my conscience beckoned, so instead I turned around to see if I could help.

By that time, two other people had also stopped to help. One of them was a man riding his bike home from work, named Mario. Between the three of us, we managed to get the car pushed onto a side street far enough that cars could get by. I would have been content to just leave it at that and rush onward with my evening, but Mario’s attitude was “we’ve come this far, let’s do the job right.”

With his encouragement, we managed to get the car (which had run out of gas) pushed nicely against the curb on the side street, safely out of everyone’s way. Thinking nothing of it, Mario then hopped on his bike and continued on his way.

Now when I’m working, my philosophy has always been that the job is not finished until it’s done right, but I confess that when it comes to helping total strangers, I have been known to settle for less than that. I absolutely love that we don’t have to look at celebrities or politicians for inspiration ---- we can be inspired by an ordinary New Mexican setting a high standard in any situation. As I go about each day, I am grateful for the many opportunities to be inspired by the everyday acts of my fellow citizens like Mario.

Crazy for Coconut!



I try to put a lot of thought into my Delights from the Vine food ingredients, and each month I will share information about one ingredient. Since I just mentioned coconut oil up above, I thought this month I would say a few words about the beneficial properties of Flake Coconut and Coconut Oil.

Flake coconut is a high fiber food which is also high in iron and zinc, important minerals for blood and immune system health. It can be an excellent sugar substitute in moderation; Although very low in net carbs due to the high fiber content, flake coconut is high in calories so I do not recommend eating it by the pound!

However, the nature of the saturated fat in coconut oil (medium chain triglycerides) is the basis for its designation as a “super food” by some nutritionists. It is one of the only foods out there that you can not only eat, but slather on your skin for a nice moisturizing effect! Unlike our counterparts in Asia and the tropics, we in the Western World have just recently started to take notice of the possible benefits of coconuts, so there do not appear to be any definitive long-term studies at this time.

If you want to learn more, here are 3 links for articles on the pro’s and cons of coconut.

<http://healthyeating.sfgate.com/benefits-eating-shredded-coconut-4027.html>

<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/top-10-evidence-based-health-benefits-of-coconut-oil>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30395784>

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Be sure to visit us at the Rail Yards Holiday Market in Albuquerque, Dec. 14 & 15, 10 AM - 4 PM. <http://railyardsmarket.org/holiday-market.php>



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