



To Be or Not to Be - Peanut Butter

With peanuts (and tree nuts) being such a common allergen these days, and with the evidence about raw nuts being much healthier than roasted nuts, I have been on a quest to discover yummy alternatives to peanut butter. I love peanut butter, though, so this has been a challenge for me, but has resulted in some pretty yummy discoveries! I think the texture, calming qualities, and satisfying nature, and of course unique flavor, of peanut butter are important to include in any pb alternatives. I prefer crunchy or freshly ground peanut butter, but smooth peanut butter is also divine! It is also an amazing food as it can do well for both sweet and savory uses. But thankfully, I have found some pretty satisfying alternative options that I hope you will enjoy too!

Savory:

- Organic red lentils, potatoes / yams / sweet potatoes, sesame / coconut / olive oil, ground flax seed (optional), sea salt

The red lentils (no need to pre-soak before cooking) and super thin-sliced unpeeled potatoes will cook in about 10-15 minutes together in the same pot. Use enough filtered water to cover plus an extra inch or two, but don't make it too soupy - you want to get a thick consistency in the lentils. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 10-15 minutes, covered. Add more water if needed to keep from burning. These lentils tend to boil over rapidly, so be sure to use a big pot and keep an eye on it until it is simmering. Once done cooking (lentils will fall apart), turn off stove, add generous amount of oil and a couple pinches sea salt, and let sit covered for a few minutes to thicken. Mash the potatoes into the lentils to give it a more creamy texture. Stir in some ground organic flax seed for extra thick texture. Eat with celery sticks or over pasta or rice for a hearty meal.

- Organic corn grits, coconut / sesame / olive oil, raw sesame or sunflower seeds (if desired), sea salt

Cook the grits with enough filtered water to cover plus an extra inch or two so that you get a good thick texture to the grits. Use a heavy pot so the grits don't burn, bring to a boil, then simmer and cover until done, about 5 minutes. Grits should be thick and creamy in texture; add more water and stir during cooking if needed. Turn off heat, add oil, sesame or sunflower seeds, and sea salt, stir and let sit a few minutes until cool enough to eat. Eat with celery sticks, apple or cucumber slices, or raw cabbage leaf chips (pull off a whole leaf from the head of cabbage from the bottom of the stem and then tear into bite-sized pieces).



Sweet:

- Organic steel cut oats / ground rice / seven grain & seed cereal / other favorite grain, cinnamon, raw sunflower seeds (if desired), sesame / coconut oil, maple syrup (if desired), sea salt

If you can, buy the grain whole, unground, soak overnight in filtered water (helps with digestion and cooks faster), pour off water in the AM (give to your plants - they love it!), and cook (if you can, grind first before cooking). If you can use ground-up grains, they will cook faster and give more of the consistency of peanut butter. To grind, put grain i.e. rice (uncooked) into blender for a minute or so, stir and continue to blend until grains are well broken down. Cook the grain / cereal in a big pot, using enough filtered water to cover plus an extra two inches. Add sea salt to help prevent boiling over. Bring to a boil, then simmer and cover and cook until done, time varies depending on grain using. Add more water during cooking if needed. When done, grain will be soft and chewy and plump. Let cool a few minutes, then add LOTS of cinnamon, and then some oil and sea salt, as well as seeds if desired. You can also add some maple syrup or other organic natural sweetener if you like, as well as raisins. You want to make a very thick consistency porridge, basically, that you can enjoy eating from the bowl, like you were eating peanut butter from the jar :)

- Ground raw flax seed / sunflower seed, coconut / sesame oil, maple syrup (if desired), cinnamon (if desired) sea salt

If you can get the flax or sunflower seeds raw and unground and then grind them yourself in the blender, that is ideal, as they are fresher and less expensive that way. Put a cup or so of seeds in the blender, dry, blend for a minute or two, stir as needed between blendings, to get a smoothly ground texture. Pour ground seeds into a bowl, add a little oil, a little filtered water, maple syrup, sea salt, cinnamon to get a thick paste-like consistency. If needed, add more ground seeds to mixture to get right consistency. Good with fresh fruit like organic bananas, apples, celery sticks, or as a spread on bread.

- Coconut oil (plain from the jar, slightly cool so it maintains firm texture), cinnamon (if desired), maple syrup (if desired), sea salt

When coconut oil is slightly cool, it maintains a firm, transparent quality to it that is reminiscent of butter, actually. If you mix this with some cinnamon, maple syrup, and sea salt, it can be a delicious spread on bread or fruit, especially bananas!



I hope this is helpful to you in your quest for good food alternatives that everyone can enjoy! Please let me know if you think of any more good new ideas for this so we can share them out there!

All the best,

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