

All about muffins

I like muffins for breakfast. Scrambling up a couple of eggs to be eaten with a freshly baked muffin is a great way to begin my morning. The problem is that I am often lazy and don't want to take the time to stop and make muffins from scratch. The other problem is that although we have a lot of company, there are usually just two of us to eat those 12 muffins in each batch.

The solution is relatively simple. Every so often I make up a batch of muffins for our breakfast and freeze the leftovers for another meal. I even bought a set of the larger muffin tins (6 to a pan) to accommodate our sometimes larger appetites and cut down on freezer space.

Now, a true confession. I will also admit that I'm a muffin back-slider. I often walk by the market baking aisle and notice that a tray of 9 muffins is only \$6. Six dollars? Wow! What a bargain. So I buy them and they're good. But I have to tell you...they're not that good (they taste commercial) and their selection is limited.



Cook's Corner Presented by Betty Kaiser

So I determined to get back on track and start making my own muffins again. I went through my recipes and picked out some of my favorites to start re-stocking and share with you. The first recipe is an effort to cut down on the fat in each muffin. It uses applesauce in place of butter or margarine but has a fair amount of sugar in it.

I still have leftover rhubarb in the freezer from last year's garden, so I can also make the Buttermilk Rhubarb muffins. FYI: If possible I prefer to use buttermilk in quick breads because it results in a moist and tender product.

My favorite muffin of all time is the Morning Glory muffin. Today's recipe is a simplified version that uses dates in place of the usual raisins. Finally, if you need help in getting things going in the morning, try the Refrigerator Bran Muffins. You can make as few as you like or a whole bunch and they're good for you. Enjoy your breakfast!

Apple Walnut Muffins

1 1/2 cups flour
1/3 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 egg
1 cup fat-free milk
1/3 cup applesauce (unsweetened)
1 tablespoon oil
1 1/2 cups raisin bran cereal
1 medium apple, peeled, finely chopped
3/4 cup walnuts, chopped and divided
Preheat oven to 425° F.

Mix flour, sugar, baking powder and cinnamon in large bowl and set aside. Using a wire whisk, beat egg, milk, applesauce and oil in small bowl until well blended. Stir in cereal; let stand 5 min. Add to flour mixture; stir just until moistened (batter will be lumpy). Stir in apples and 1/2 cup walnuts. Spoon batter evenly into 12 greased or paper lined muffin cups. Sprinkle with remaining 1/4 cup walnuts. Bake 20 min or until toothpick inserted in centers comes out clean.

Buttermilk Rhubarb Muffins

Muffins:
1 1/2 cups brown sugar
1/4 cup salad oil
1 egg
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 cup buttermilk
1 1/2 cups finely diced rhubarb
1/2 cups pecan pieces
2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
Topping:

1/3 cup sugar
1 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1 tablespoon melted margarine

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Prepare topping and set aside. Grease 12 large or 24 medium-sized muffin cups.

Combine brown sugar, oil, egg, and vanilla in large bowl. Beat until well mixed. Add buttermilk, rhubarb, and pecans to mixture.

In another bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Add this mixture all at once to rhubarb mixture and stir until all ingredients are moistened. Do not overmix. Fill prepared muffin pan cups 3/4 full with batter.

Sprinkle topping on batter in each muffin cup. Bake in preheated oven on center shelf 15 to 20 minutes.

Morning Glorious Muffins

2 beaten eggs
1 cup oil
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
1-1/2 cups carrot, shredded
1-1/2 cups apple, shredded
3/4 cup coconut
1/2 cup dates, snipped
1/2 cup pecans, chopped
2 cups flour
1-1/4 cups sugar
2 teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons cinnamon

Preheat oven to 375° F.
Spray 12 large (3-inch) muffin tins with cooking spray.

In a large bowl, combine fruits and nuts (carrot, apple, coconut, dates and pecan). Set aside. In another bowl, combine dry ingredi-

ents (flour, sugar, baking soda and cinnamon). In mixer bowl, combine beaten eggs, oil and vanilla. Add dry ingredients and mix until moist. Lightly stir in fruit and nut mixture. Bake 18-20 min.

Note: These are good topped with an orange marmalade glaze: Mix a teaspoon of powder sugar with 2 tablespoons of orange marmalade; heat and drizzle over warm muffins.

Refrigerator Bran Muffins

(As written by my friend Linda L in Colorado)
Put 3 cups whole bran cereal in large bowl
Pour 1 cup boiling water over cereal. Stir and set aside to cool.

Add:
2 eggs, beaten
2 cups buttermilk
1/2 cup salad oil
1 cup currants (or golden raisins)

Combine ingredients below and then add to above:

1 cup sugar
2 1/2 cups flour
2 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt

Stir all ingredients well, cover and refrigerate in large container. When ready to use preheat oven to 400° F. Put amount desired in greased regular sized muffin cups. Bake about 20 min. Note: Pour water in any empty cups!

Keep it simple and keep it seasonal! Betty Kaiser's Cook's Corner is dedicated to sharing a variety of recipes that are delicious, family oriented and easy to prepare. Contact her at 942-1317 or email bchatty@bettykaiser.com



Pet Tips 'n' Tales

by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

After dropping their four-year-old daughter, Nevaeh Grace, off at school, Sheila and her husband, Mike, were returning home when she saw a little black dog on a busy street. Sheila yelled "Stop!"

She walked over to the collarless cutie, but the dog ran and their "game of chase" began. Finally, Sheila took a deep breath, and prayed to the Angels, "Please send me help!"

Then she recalled that sometimes the best action is no action, so she sat on the sidewalk, and commanded "STOP!"

Unbelievably, the dog stopped, trotted towards her, and climbed into her lap!

Mike handed Sheila the dog collar and leash that they carry in the car for just such emergencies.

The little dog stood still while Sheila put the collar on it, and then placidly walked "home" as pretty as you please.

Their veterinarian said the four pound PomChi, Pomeranian/Chihuahua, was a year old and not micro-chipped.

They put signs up all over their neighborhood looking for its owner. No one called, so they named their now third dog, Luna, Goddess of the Moon, to honor her black coat.

Nevaeh, just like her parents, was not expecting to come home from school to a "surprise" dog, but no worries, the little girl and dog fell instantly in love. They are best buddies and every night, just before bed, Nevaeh and her mother sit in their favorite chair and watch their TV with Luna snuggled on their laps.

But what about their other dogs? The family already had two Boxers, Guinness and Jack.

"Guinness and Jack are so attached to Luna," said Sheila, "that they consider themselves her 'older brothers' forming a happy canine family."

Luna loves her brothers and the way they play together makes us laugh. Luna's small size allows her to run around the Boxers and through their legs. The larger dogs have trouble following her, moving as fast as her, turning as quickly, and then

finding her as she zooms under their legs. When the three dogs are playing in the house, chasing Luna in fun, she runs under any available bed because she knows it is a 'safe' zone. It is very funny to watch our joyful K9 family's interactions. I wish all people, big or small, no matter their religion or country of origin, could be like our dogs. These dogs simply love each other and revel in that love."

But! Jack puts his paw down at one thing! He insists that Luna gets more toys, because she "steals" his toys and bones. He responds with his best Boxer "stink eye" look, but he still lets her play with them.

Then a few months later, the family had a scare!

"While walking Luna," explains Sheila, "one of our neighbors approached and exclaimed, 'Good! You have that dog!'"

Her comment made me nervous. I was afraid that the dog, who had stolen our hearts, was her dog. But, the woman added, 'I saw that little dog thrown out of a car! The dog was so fast that I could not catch it. And I did not take a photo of the car's license plate.'

That is 'OK', I said. 'This lovable little dog is a gift. She's a wonderful addition to our family, we are lucky to have her in our lives, and we love her lots.'

By having pets, our daughter has learned to respect and honor animals. She knows that they too have feelings, and that kindness is key where they are concerned. I've also taught Nevaeh that her named spelled backwards is 'Heaven' and that 'dog' spelled backwards is God.

How Luna came into our lives is an inspiration. We believe that the Angels whispered at her to 'STOP' when she was running."

TIPS

Contact Humane Society for neuter/spay assistance. (541) 942-2789

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Feature your pet: angelscribe@msn.com

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The Cottage Grove Sentinel is opening its pages for you to submit your events, fundraisers and other happenings. All information submitted will be part of the new "Service Clubs Briefs," a section that will mirror the current "Community Briefs" section that is included in the paper. And just like "Community Briefs," the service club announcements will run as often as we receive them. Submissions can be sent to cgnews@cgsentinel.com, cmay@cgsentinel.com or brought into the office.

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Nevaeh with her dignified boxers, Jack and Guinness, and her "surprise" little black multi-mystery mix rescue, Luna.



The Humane Society of Cottage Grove

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