

Devin Alexander

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Pumped-Up Pumpkin Pie Bites

From *The Biggest Loser Dessert Cookbook*

These delicious little bites are real crowd-pleasers and are the perfect size for individual servings at a buffet table (instead of asking your guests to cut their own wedge of pie!).

- Butter-flavored cooking spray
- 3/4 cup whole grain, crunchy, high-fiber, low-sugar cereal (I used Kashi 7 Whole Grain Nuggets)
- 2 tablespoons 100% pure maple syrup
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 8 large egg whites
- 1 can (15 ounces) solid pumpkin puree
- 3/4 cup agave nectar
- 2 tablespoons whole wheat pastry flour
- 2 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1-1/4 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2/3 cup "Cut the Crap" Whipped Topping (recipe follows), optional

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly mist an 11" x 7" glass or ceramic baking dish with spray.

Add the cereal to the bowl of a food processor fitted with a chopping blade. Process it for 15 to 20 seconds, or until the cereal is crushed. Transfer it to a small mixing bowl and add the maple syrup and cinnamon. Mix them until well combined. Spoon the mixture into the prepared baking dish. Gently press down on the cereal mixture, spreading it evenly across the bottom of the baking dish. Bake for 7 to 9 minutes, or until slightly browned. Set aside.

Meanwhile, add the egg whites to a large mixing bowl. Using a sturdy whisk, lightly beat them until they bubble very slightly. Still using the whisk, stir in the pumpkin, agave, and flour until well combined. Stir in the vanilla, pumpkin pie spice, baking powder, and salt and continue mixing until well combined. Pour the filling over the baked crust. Using a rubber spatula, spread it into an even layer.

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Bake for 40 to 45 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out dry (a few crumbs are okay). Transfer the dish to a wire cooking rack, allowing it to cool to room temperature. Carefully cut 32 pumpkin "bites" (3 cuts along the width of the pan, 7 cuts along the length, creating 4 x 8 bites). Just before serving, top each bite with 1 teaspoon whipped topping, if desired. Serve immediately or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

Makes 16 servings (32 bites)

Per serving: 94 calories, 3 g protein, 21 g carbohydrates (15 g sugar), trace fat, trace saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 2 g fiber, 102 mg sodium

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“Cut the Crap” Whipped Topping

From *The Biggest Loser Dessert Cookbook*

It's important to use this topping within about 1 day or to freeze any excess. After a day in the refrigerator, it begins to separate. In the freezer, it will stay as made for weeks and never gets hard so it's great for topping anything, as the cravings hit.

Though you may be tempted to use a double boiler for this recipe, unless you have a very large double boiler insert, I would highly recommend using a saucepan and a large metal or heavy-duty glass mixing bowl that sits on top the pan (and isn't too much larger than the pan). For maximum results, you need a large bowl so that a lot of air whips into the egg whites, creating volume. I've found that most double boiler inserts aren't quite big enough to allow that. Please note that every time I have made this, it yields a different amount of whipped topping, ranging from as few as 6 cups to as many as 8-1/2 cups. I've noticed that even slight variations in the size of the egg whites, temperature of the egg whites, the type of beaters you use, the size of the bowl, etc. make a difference. I've calculated the nutritional information based on the recipe making only 6 cups to give you a good sense of what you're consuming, “worst case scenario”. If it makes more, as it likely will, it has even fewer calories per tablespoon.

¾ cup light agave nectar

3 large egg whites, room temperature

½ teaspoon cream of tartar

Add water to a medium saucepan until it is about ¼ full. Bring the water to a boil over high heat. Off the heat, combine the agave, egg whites, and cream of tartar in a large metal or heavy duty glass mixing bowl (that will fit onto the top of your saucepan). Beat on medium-high with an electric mixer fitted with beaters until well blended. Place the bowl over the pot of boiling water. (For safety, be sure to wear an oven mitt while holding the bowl over the heat, as it will get very hot). Beat for about 7 minutes, occasionally running the beaters around the sides of the bowl to scrape any of the mixture, until stiff peaks form. Remove the bowl from the water and continue beating for 5-7 minutes more, rotating the bowl and scraping down the sides with the beaters as you do, or until the mixture is thick, very fluffy, and has very stiff peaks.

Makes about 6 cups. Each (1 tablespoon) serving has: 8 calories, trace protein, 2 g carbohydrates (2 g sugar), 0 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 0 g fiber, 2 mg sodium