

IRON BELLE



STUDIOS

Festive Treats

**5 SUPERFOODS
FOR A GUILT-FREE
HOLIDAY**





Contents & Key

1. Goji Berry & Walnut Chocolate Bark	GF	Gluten Free
2. Chocolate Pumpkin & Orange Truffles	DF	Dairy Free
3. Nutmeg-Spiced Apple Fudge	LC	Low Carb (<20g per serve)
4. Moroccan Cinnamon-Spiced Oranges	MP	Meal Prep/Freezer Friendly
5. Walnut Cocoa Bites	HP	High Protein (>20g per serve)
6. Bonus Recipe: Homemade Apple Butter	V	Vegetarian
	Q	Quick (under 30 mins)
	N	Contains Nuts





Goji Berry & Walnut Chocolate Bark

Serves 12 | 35 Minutes

4 oz. (115g) dark chocolate
(vegan or regular, 85%
cocoa or higher)

2 oz. (60g) goji berries

2 oz. (60g) chopped
walnuts

½ tsp. vanilla extract

Melt the dark chocolate in a double boiler. Stir in the vanilla extract.

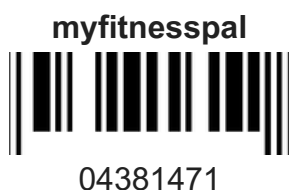
Pour the chocolate onto a parchment-lined tray and spread evenly.

Sprinkle goji berries, chopped walnuts, and a pinch of sea salt over the top.

Chill in the fridge for 30 minutes until set, then break into pieces.

Goji berries are rich in polysaccharides, bioactive compounds known to modulate immune function by enhancing the activity of macrophages and lymphocytes, thus improving overall immune response.

The high levels of carotenoids, particularly zeaxanthin, contribute to eye health by filtering harmful blue light and protecting the retinal cells from oxidative stress. Studies have shown that goji berries can also reduce inflammatory cytokines, which play a significant role in preventing chronic inflammation.



Nutrition Per Serve	Energy	Carbs	Protein	Fat
	107kcal	9g	2g	7g



Chocolate Pumpkin & Orange Truffles

Makes 12 truffles | 40 Minutes

- 4 oz. (115g) pumpkin puree
- 2 oz. (60g) chopped walnuts
- 4 tbsp. ground almonds
- 1 tsp. orange zest
- 2 oz. (60g) dark chocolate (vegan or regular, 85% cocoa or higher)
- 1 tsp. cacao powder (for dusting)

Mix pumpkin puree, chopped walnuts, ground almonds and orange zest in a bowl until well combined.

Roll the mixture into small balls and place them on a lined tray.

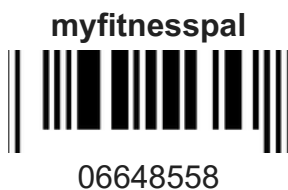
Melt the dark chocolate on a stovetop or microwave in 30-second intervals, stirring until smooth.

Dip each truffle ball into the melted chocolate to coat, then dust with cacao powder while still soft.

Chill in the fridge for 30 minutes to set.

Pumpkin is particularly rich in beta-carotene, a precursor of vitamin A, which not only supports immune function by enhancing T-cell activity but also plays a role in maintaining epithelial tissue integrity, which is essential for respiratory health.

The high fiber content of pumpkins contains both soluble and insoluble fibers, which help with gut motility and the production of short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs) by the gut microbiota, which are essential for gut health and reducing inflammation. Pumpkin seeds also contain L-tryptophan, an amino acid that acts as a precursor to serotonin, contributing to mood stability.



GF DF LC MP V N

Nutrition Per Serve	Energy	Carbs	Protein	Fat
	65kcal	4g	1g	5g



Nutmeg-Spiced Apple Fudge

Serves 16 squares

2 Hours 10 Minutes

4 oz. (125g) Homemade Apple Butter (Bonus Recipe on Page 15)

4.5 oz. (130g) natural peanut butter (no added oils)

3.5 fl oz. (100ml) melted refined coconut oil

3 tbsp. maple syrup

¼ tsp. ground nutmeg (adjust to taste)

Line an 8 x 4-inch loaf pan with parchment paper, leaving some overhang on the sides.

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together apple butter, peanut butter, melted coconut oil, maple syrup, and nutmeg until smooth.

Pour the mixture into the prepared pan and spread evenly. Cover with plastic wrap and freeze for 1-2 hours or until firm.

Once set, lift the fudge out of the pan, place it on a cutting board, and cut into 1-inch squares.

The main psychoactive components in nutmeg, myristicin and elemicin, are believed to influence the central nervous system by modulating serotonin and dopamine pathways, which helps alleviate symptoms of anxiety and depression. Myristicin also inhibits monoamine oxidase (MAO), an enzyme that breaks down serotonin and norepinephrine, allowing these neurotransmitters to remain active longer. Additionally, nutmeg contains anti-inflammatory compounds that inhibit COX-2, a key enzyme involved in the inflammatory process, making it useful for reducing inflammation in the digestive tract and promoting gut health.



GF DF LC MP V

Nutrition Per Serve	Energy	Carbs	Protein	Fat
	122kcal	6g	2g	10g



Moroccan Cinnamon-Spiced Oranges

Serves 6

40 Minutes

3 large oranges, peeled & thinly sliced into rounds

1 tbsp. ground cinnamon

1 tbsp. honey

2 oz. (60g) walnuts, chopped

Arrange orange slices in overlapping layers on a serving platter.

Drizzle with honey and sprinkle ground cinnamon over the oranges.

For added texture, sprinkle chopped walnuts on top. Serve immediately or chill for 30 minutes.

Cinnamon's benefits largely come from its bioactive compound, cinnamaldehyde. This compound not only gives cinnamon its distinct flavor and aroma but also plays a crucial role in reducing insulin resistance by increasing glucose uptake and enhancing glycogen synthesis in muscle cells. Cinnamon also contains proanthocyanidins and other polyphenols that inhibit oxidative stress, reduce lipid peroxidation, and improve endothelial function, which is vital for cardiovascular health. It also influences digestive enzymes like alpha-amylase, slowing carbohydrate breakdown and mitigating blood sugar spikes.



Nutrition Per Serve	Energy	Carbs	Protein	Fat
	114kcal	13g	2g	6g



Walnut Cocoa Bites

Makes 12 bites

17 Minutes

8 oz. (2230g) walnuts

1 oz. (30g) honey

2 oz. (60g) cocoa powder

Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C).

Spread walnuts on a baking sheet and toast for 6 minutes, then shake the pan and roast an additional 6 minutes until lightly toasted. Let cool for 2 minutes.

Melt the honey in a small saucepan over low heat, about 1-2 minutes, or microwave for 30 seconds.

Combine toasted walnuts and melted honey in a bowl, tossing to coat. Add 1½ teaspoon of sea salt and cocoa powder, and toss until walnuts are evenly coated.

Walnuts are one of the few nuts rich in alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), a plant-based omega-3 fatty acid that has been shown to reduce the production of pro-inflammatory markers like C-reactive protein (CRP). They also contain polyphenols, particularly ellagitannins, which are metabolized by the gut microbiota into urolithins—compounds known to have potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. These compounds help reduce oxidative stress and promote autophagy. This process helps clear out damaged cells, crucial for preventing neurodegenerative diseases.

GF	DF	LC	MP	V	Q	N
----	----	----	----	---	---	---

Nutrition Per Serve	Energy	Carbs	Protein	Fat
	161kcal	7g	4g	13g

myfitnesspal



08069559



Bonus: Homemade Apple Butter

Yield about 1.6 lbs. (750g)

2 Hours

3 lbs. (1.4 kg) apples, cored & chopped

1 tsp. ground cinnamon

½ tsp. ground ginger

¼ tsp. ground cloves

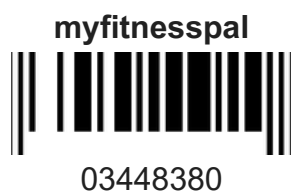
Combine apples, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, and 2 fl oz. (60ml) water in a large pot. Cover and cook over medium-low heat for 1 hour, stirring occasionally, until apples are soft.

Use an immersion blender to puree the apples into applesauce, or mash with a fork for a chunkier texture.

Continue cooking on low heat, uncovered, for another 45 minutes to 1 hour, stirring every few minutes until thickened.

Once thick, transfer to a glass jar. Store in the fridge for up to two weeks or freeze for longer storage.

Note: Nutrition information is given per ~3 oz. (90g)



Nutrition Per Serve	Energy	Carbs	Protein	Fat
	104kcal	25g	1g	0g

Curious About the Science Behind These Superfoods? Check Out These Research-backed Sources:

Vidović BB, Milinčić DD, Marčetić MD, Djuriš JD, Ilić TD, Kostić AŽ, Pešić MB. Health Benefits and Applications of Goji Berries in Functional Food Products Development: A Review. *Antioxidants (Basel)*. 2022 Jan 27;11(2):248. doi: 10.3390/antiox11020248. PMID: 35204130; PMCID: PMC8868247. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8868247/>

Allen RW, Schwartzman E, Baker WL, Coleman CI, Phung OJ. Cinnamon use in type 2 diabetes: an updated systematic review and meta-analysis. *Ann Fam Med*. 2013 Sep-Oct;11(5):452-9. doi: 10.1370/afm.1517. PMID: 24019277; PMCID: PMC3767714. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC3767714/>

Drugs and Lactation Database (LactMed®) [Internet]. Bethesda (MD): National Institute of Child Health and Human Development; 2006–. Nutmeg. 2021 May 17. PMID: 30000898. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30000898/>

Batool M, Ranjha MMAN, Roobab U, Manzoor MF, Farooq U, Nadeem HR, Nadeem M, Kanwal R, AbdElgawad H, Al Jaouni SK, Selim S, Ibrahim SA. Nutritional Value, Phytochemical Potential, and Therapeutic Benefits of Pumpkin (*Cucurbita* sp.). *Plants (Basel)*. 2022 May 24;11(11):1394. doi: 10.3390/plants11111394. PMID: 35684166; PMCID: PMC9182978. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9182978/>

Feldman EB. The scientific evidence for a beneficial health relationship between walnuts and coronary heart disease. *J Nutr*. 2002 May;132(5):1062S-1101S. doi: 10.1093/jn/132.5.1062S. PMID: 11983840. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11983840/>