



Cocoa Sweet Potato Power Shakes

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 10 / **Cook Time** / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

blend: to stir together two or more ingredients until just combined; blending is a gentler process than mixing.

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

peel: to remove the skin or rind from something using your hands or a metal tool.

Equipment

- ☐ Can opener
- ☐ Blender (or pitcher + immersion blender)
- ☐ Liquid measuring cup
- ☐ Measuring spoons

Ingredients

Cocoa Sweet Potato Power Shakes

- ☐ 3 bananas
- ☐ 1/4 C canned sweet potatoes
- ☐ 3 T granulated sugar
- ☐ 2 T pure unsweetened cocoa powder ******(for CHOCOLATE ALLERGY sub carob powder)******
- ☐ 1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract ******(for GLUTEN ALLERGY use gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation flavor—check label)******
- ☐ 4 C ice

□ 1 small handful of chocolate chips, optional ******(Omit for CHOCOLATE ALLERGY or sub carob chips, and for DAIRY/NUT/SOY ALLERGY use Enjoy Life brand chocolate chips)******

Food Allergen Substitutions

Cocoa Sweet Potato Power Shakes

Chocolate: Substitute carob powder for cocoa powder. Substitute carob chips for chocolate chips.

Gluten/Wheat: Use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor.

Dairy/Nut/Soy: Use Enjoy Life brand chocolate chips.

Instructions

Cocoa Sweet Potato Power Shakes

peel + chop + add

Peel **3 bananas** and chop into small pieces. Chop up **1/4 cup of canned sweet potatoes**. Add the chopped bananas and sweet potatoes to your blender (or a pitcher for use with an immersion blender).

add + blend

Add **3 tablespoons sugar**, **2 tablespoons cocoa powder**, and **1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract** and blend. Next, add **1 small handful of chocolate chips**, if you like, and blend some more. Finally, add **4 cups of ice**, little by little, and blend until the shake is thick and smooth. Enjoy!

Featured Ingredient: Sweet Potato!

Hi! I'm Sweet Potato!

"Sweet potatoes are root vegetables, like beets and carrots! We're very popular in the Fall, especially for holiday dinners, where you might find us baked whole or sliced and diced as part of a side dish. We also pair well with fruit and other vegetables in salads and casseroles."

History

The sweet potato originated in Central or South America, and people began cultivating them in Central America at least 5,000 years ago.

Sweet potatoes have been grown in Peru for almost 3,000 years and remain one of the major crops for people in Peru.

When Columbus arrived in the New World, Native Americans were already growing and utilizing sweet potatoes. Columbus brought sweet potatoes back to Europe, and other explorers brought them from the New World to Asia.

Sweet potatoes were cultivated widely in Colonial America and were a significant form of sustenance for farmers and soldiers during the Revolutionary War.

As far as records show, orange sweet potatoes originally came from Puerto Rico and were named "yams" by Louisiana farmers to differentiate them from the white-fleshed variety grown in other parts of the country. Indeed, the sweet potato is officially the state vegetable of Louisiana! It's also North Carolina's official state vegetable.

George Washington grew sweet potatoes on his estate at Mount Vernon, Virginia.

North American supermarkets import much of their sweet potatoes from the Caribbean.

February is National Sweet Potato month!

Anatomy & Etymology

Sweet potatoes are edible roots, not tubers like potatoes. Actually, sweet potatoes aren't related to potatoes but are part of the Morning Glory family. Plants from this family produce beautiful flowers whose seeds were revered for their laxative properties by the Chinese.

The flesh of sweet potatoes can be white, yellow, orange, or even purple!

Enslaved African-Americans called the sweet potato "nyami" because it reminded them of the starchy, edible tuber from their homeland. "Nyami" is a Senegalese word that was eventually shortened to "yam." Sweet potatoes are often confused with yams, and this is why!

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Sweet potatoes are eaten by people worldwide as they are a hearty crop that packs a lot of nutrition. It's best to store sweet potatoes in cool, dark, and dry places. They won't last as long in the fridge. Small, firm sweet potatoes tend to be sweeter and creamier. Large sweet potatoes contain more starch, as they've had more time to grow and develop the starches. Look for smooth, firm, even skin. Sweet potatoes should be cooked, not eaten raw. You can use them in many savory and sweet recipes. Sweet potatoes make an excellent side dish—you can bake, mash, or boil them—and their nutritional benefits are increased when combined with healthy fats, like avocado, butter, or olive oil! If they had their say, sweet potatoes might like to be known as everyday veggies rather than just for special occasions. For example, we in the United States eat more sweet potatoes around Thanksgiving than at any other time. But sweet potatoes are available year-round and should be enjoyed more often because of their benefits!

Nutrition

Sweet potatoes are very nutritious! Their color can tell us which nutrients they contain (like many

vegetables and fruits!).

If a sweet potato is orange, it contains beta-carotene (other orange foods that contain this nutrient include carrots, shrimp, and oranges). Can you hear the name of a familiar vegetable in the word "beta-carotene?" Carrot! We know that beta-carotene is good for our eyes and skin. Have you ever been asked to eat your carrots because they are good for your eyes? Beta-carotene is why!

Sweet potatoes also have vitamin K, which helps our blood clot. When we get a cut, our blood clots to stop the bleeding, and vitamin K helps with this!

We often talk about fiber when we reveal our Surprise Ingredients because vegetables and fruits contain a lot of fiber. Sweet potatoes are no exception. So what does fiber help with? Digestion! And which body parts are responsible for digestion? Many, but namely our stomach and intestines.