

My

*Sister's*  
Keeper



*Mendy's Christmas Season  
Favorite Healthy  
Holiday Collection*

## **GREEN BEANS WITH LEMON-ALMOND PESTO**

([www.ohmyveggies.com](http://www.ohmyveggies.com))

Yield: 6<sup>1</sup>

This easy side dish is a twist on the classic combination of green beans and almonds.

### **Ingredients:**

- cooking spray or olive oil mister
- 1 1/2 lbs. green beans, trimmed
- 1/2 c. almonds
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste

### **Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Spray a rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray. Place beans on sheet in a single layer and spray tops with additional cooking spray. Roast for 15 minutes or until tender.
3. Combine almonds, garlic, lemon juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper in food processor and process until roughly chopped. Spoon over green beans before serving.

## **CRUNCHY KALE SALAD WITH COUSCOUS, GRILLED CHICKEN, AND POMEGRANATES**

([www.halfbakedharvest.com](http://www.halfbakedharvest.com))

### **Ingredients:**

1 1/2 cups uncooked couscous

1 1/2 cups water

1 large bunch of kale, torn from stems and torn into pieces

2 boneless skinless chicken breast (about 1 pound)

2 tablespoons olive oil

1/2 cup toasted pine nuts

1/2 cup pomegranate seeds (arils)

1 avocado, chopped

4 ounces goat cheese, crumbled

### **DRESSING:**

1/2 cup olive oil

1 tablespoon tahini

1 large cloves garlic, minced

3 tablespoons lemon juice

1 1/2 tablespoons honey

1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste

1/2 teaspoon pepper, plus more to taste

## Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Preheat grill to medium-high heat. Rub the chicken with olive oil salt and pepper. Grill for 7-8 minutes on both sides or until cooked through. Let cool five minutes and then dice into bite size pieces. Set a side and keep warm.
3. While the chicken cooks start on the kale. In a glass measuring cup or small bowl, mix all the dressing ingredients, whisk to combine and then season with salt and pepper. Taste and if needed add more salt and pepper.
4. Grease a baking sheet and spread kale on the baking sheet. To the kale add 2-3 tablespoon of the dressing (just enough to coat the kale, reserve the rest) massage the kale with the dressing and spread out evenly on the baking sheet and roast for 10 minutes. Toss well and roast for 5-10 minutes more, until slightly crispy but not golden.
5. While kale is roasting bring the water to a boil. Once the water boils, remove from the heat and add the couscous, stir and cover for 10 minutes or until ready to use. When ready to use fluff with a fork.
6. Once the chicken, kale, and couscous are all done combine them in a large bowl. Add the toasted pine nuts, pomegranate seeds, avocado and goat cheese. Toss to combine and then add the remaining dressing and toss one more time.
7. Serve warm.



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## QUINOA, KALE, AND BACON STUFFED BUTTERNUT SQUASH

(www.rachelcooks.com)

**Yield:** 4-5 Servings

**Cook Time:** 1 hour 30 minutes

### **Ingredients:**

- 1 large butternut squash (mine was 5 pounds!)
- 1-2 teaspoons olive oil
- salt and pepper
- 3/4 pound of thick cut bacon, cut into ~1-inch pieces
- 2 cups loosely packed kale, chopped small
- 2 cups cooked red quinoa
- pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
- 1/2 pound extra sharp white cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- thinly sliced green onions (1-2) to garnish

### **Directions:**

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit. Cut squash lengthwise and remove seeds. Rub or spray with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Roast for 40 minutes to an hour or until the flesh is tender. Mine took forever because it was the biggest squash I've ever seen.

2. Meanwhile, in a large frying pan, cook bacon until crispy over medium-high heat. Remove and place on a paper towel lined plate to drain. Reserve 1 teaspoon of the bacon grease and sauté kale in bacon grease over medium heat until wilted.
3. When squash is cooked through, remove from oven and reduce oven temperature to 375 degrees Fahrenheit. Let squash cool slightly so it is cool enough to handle and then scoop out flesh, leaving a half-inch border around the edges. Place flesh of squash in a large bowl and mash up with a fork. Add quinoa, bacon, kale, nutmeg, cheese, and thyme. Mix until well combined. Return this mixture to hollowed out squash and bake at 375 degrees for 30 minutes or until heated through and cheese is melted. Let sit for about 5-10 minutes and then cut into slices and serve, garnished with sliced green onions.

**\*Can be made without cheese. This adds extra fat and calories.<sup>1</sup>**

## **ROASTED YAMS WITH HONEY, WALNUTS, & RAISINS** ([www.theroastedroot.com](http://www.theroastedroot.com))

### **Ingredients**

- 2 large yams, poked with holes and roasted
- 1-1/2 cups walnuts, coarsely chopped
- 1/2 cup golden raisins
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1/3 cup honey
- 3/4 teaspoon cinnamon

- 1/2 teaspoon cardamom
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

## **Instructions**

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees
2. Wash the yams and pat them dry.
3. Poke yams a few times with a fork, wrap them in aluminum foil and bake them in the oven for 45 to 60 minutes (depending on size. Mine took a full hour). The yams are done when thick juice is seeping out of them and they're soft when poked.
4. Remove yams from the oven and set aside.
5. Add all ingredients at the same time to a medium-sized skillet and heat to medium or medium high. Stir with a wooden spoon until honey is coating everything, walnuts become fragrant and raisins plump up, about 2 to 3 minutes, careful not to burn.
6. Once yams are cool enough to handle, quarter them and top with desired amount of topping.
7. Serve hot!

## **ROASTED VEGETABLES WITH FRESH HERBS**

### **Ingredients:**

- 1 (3.5-4 pound) butternut squash, peeled and seeded
- 5 medium red potatoes, rinsed and scrubbed (about 1 1/2 pounds)
- 1 large purple onion
- 1 tablespoon fresh, minced rosemary (strip rosemary from stems prior to mincing)

- 1 tablespoon fresh, minced sage (strip sage from stems prior to mincing)
- 1 tablespoon fresh, minced thyme (do not include any stems that are woody)
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- salt and pepper, to taste

### **Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 450-degrees F. Line two shallow baking pans (1-inch sides all around) with foil; set aside.
2. Dice the butternut squash, potatoes, and onion in approximately 1- x 1-inch pieces. Place in a large bowl. Sprinkle with the fresh rosemary, sage, and thyme.
3. Drizzle the olive oil over the vegetable/herb mixture. Toss lightly until the vegetables are well coated. Distribute evenly between two pans in a single layer. Do not overcrowd the vegetables. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, to taste.
4. Roast for about 20-25 minutes in the oven, rotating pans after ten minutes. The vegetables are ready when they just begin to turn brown in some places and the potatoes pierce easily with a fork or wooden skewer. Do not overcook.<sup>1</sup>



## **ROASTED GARLIC CAULIFLOWER MASHED “POTATOES”**

(www.hummusapien.com)

Serves: 3

### **Ingredients**

- 1 bulb of garlic
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 head of cauliflower
- ½ cup unsweetened almond milk + more to thin (or milk of choice)
- heaping ¼ cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1 tbsp butter, melted
- ½ tsp salt
- pepper to taste
- ¼ green onions, chopped

### **Instructions**

1. Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Slice off the top of the garlic bulb and wrap bulb in foil. Drizzle with 1 tsp olive oil.
3. Chop cauliflower into florets. Spread out on baking sheet in an even layer. Drizzle with remaining 1 tsp olive oil and toss to coat.
4. Roast cauliflower and garlic bulb for about 35 minutes, stirring cauliflower halfway through cooking.
5. Allow cauliflower to cool slightly. Remove garlic cloves from bulb (they should be soft and very easy to remove from skin).
6. In a food processor, blend together roasted garlic, cauliflower, milk, yogurt, melted butter, salt and pepper until smooth and mashed potato-like. Season with more salt and pepper to taste.
7. Fold in chopped green onions and serve.

# PUMPKIN CORN MUFFINS WITH HONEY SAGE BUTTER

([WWW.RUNNINGTOTHEKITCHEN.COM](http://WWW.RUNNINGTOTHEKITCHEN.COM))

These pumpkin corn muffins are the perfect balance between sweet and savory. Serve them with a fall soup, stew or chili or, eat them alongside breakfast.

**Serves: 10**

## Ingredients

- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 egg
- ½ cup whole milk
- ¼ cup full fat Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon melted butter
- 1 cup pumpkin puree

## Honey sage butter

- 2 tablespoons butter
- ½ tablespoon honey
- ½ tablespoon chopped fresh sage

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees and grease a muffin tin.
2. Combine dry ingredients in a large bowl.
3. Whisk together remaining wet ingredients in a medium bowl.
4. Add the wet ingredients to the dry and mix until combined.
5. Spoon the batter into the muffin tins until about  $\frac{3}{4}$  full.



6. Bake for about 15 minutes until tops are starting to turn golden brown around the edges.
7. Remove from oven and let cool for 3-5 minutes in the tin before transferring to a wire rack to cool.
8. While muffins are cooling, mix together the honey sage butter ingredients with a spoon in a small bowl.
9. Serve the muffins warm with the butter.

## **QUINOA STUFFING W/APPLES, SWEET POTATOES, & HAZELNUTS**

**([www.familyfreshcooking.com](http://www.familyfreshcooking.com))**

Yield: 8 servings

### Ingredients

- 1 cup (212 g) dry Quinoa, cook according to package directions
- 2 (265 g) Sweet Potatoes, cut into small wedges
- 2 large Apples, cut into 1/2" pieces (I like Granny Smith)
- 1 table<sup>l</sup>spoon Lemon Juice <sup>2</sup>
- 1/2 cup (100 ml) pure Maple Syrup, divided portion in 1/2
- fine Sea Salt
- 2 tablespoons melted Coconut Oil
- a few pinches ground Cinnamon
- a few pinches ground Ginger
- 1 tablespoon fresh Thyme leaves
- 1 cup Hazelnuts, chopped
- Fresh or Dried Cranberries for garnish

### Method

- Rinse quinoa. Combine with 2 cups water and a pinch of salt. Bring to a boil and then reduce to a simmer for about 20 minutes until all of the water is absorbed. Fluff with a fork and remove from the heat.
- Preheat oven to 400 F with the rack in the middle. Be sure to coat apples with lemon juice so they don't turn brown. Toss sweet potatoes & apples with 1/4 cup of the Maple Syrup, coconut oil and a few pinches cinnamon, ginger and salt. Roast for about 35-40 minutes until tender and fragrant.
- Combine the quinoa with the roasted mixture and the remainder of the maple syrup (1/4 cup) in a large bowl. Fold in thyme and hazelnuts. Season <sup>1</sup> taste with more salt and spices.

## **CLEAN EATING PUMPKIN PIE**

([www.thegraciouspantry.com](http://www.thegraciouspantry.com))

### **Ingredients:**

2 cups prepared pumpkin

1 cup honey

4 egg whites

1 1/2 tsp cinnamon

1/2 tsp ground ginger

1/4 tsp ground cloves

1 1/2 cups fat free milk (or any unsweetened almond, rice, etc)

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**Directions:**

1. Combine all ingredients in a large mixing bowl and mix thoroughly.
2. Pour into 2 pie crusts.
3. Bake at 425 degrees for 15 min
4. Reduce oven to 350 degrees and bake for an additional 45 min

**Nutritional Content:**

1 serving = 1/8 of a pie

Calories: 192

Total Fat: 8 gm

Saturated Fats: 1 gm

Trans Fats: 0 gm

Cholesterol: 0 gm

Sodium: 180 mg

Carbohydrates: 27 gm<sup>1</sup>

Dietary fiber: 6 gm

Sugars: 7 gm

Protein: 6 gm

Estimated Glycemic Load: 11

**CLEAN EATING PIE CRUST**

([www.thegraciouspantry.com](http://www.thegraciouspantry.com))

**Makes 2-3 pie crusts depending on how thick you roll it**

**INGREDIENTS:**

2 3/4 cups whole wheat pastry flour + extra

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1 tsp salt

1/2 cup oil (canola, olive, or safflower)

1/2 cup milk, any type except coconut in can

### **PREPARE YOUR PIE TINS:**

1. Spray pans with spray on olive oil
2. Coat pie tin with 1/8 cup whole wheat pastry flour

### **DOUGH DIRECTIONS:**

1. Combine flour and salt in mixing bowl.
2. Measure your milk and oil into same cup at same time
3. Mix well by hand until you have a firm dough. Don't give up!!!
4. Place your dough on a large piece of parchment paper. Flatten slightly with your hands or rolling pin, and then place another large sheet of parchment paper over the top so the dough is sandwiched in between. Roll with your rolling pin until your dough is about 1/8 in to 1 1/4 inch thick. You may need to lift the parchment occasionally or flip the whole thing over to get rid of wrinkles in the parchment.<sup>2</sup>
5. Remove the top sheet of parchment, and roll out any wrinkles left in the dough by the parchment. You should have a nice, even and smooth piece of dough. Divide your dough in half.<sup>3</sup>
6. Place your tin upside down on your dough. Flip the whole thing over, and mold the dough into your tin, being careful not to rip the dough.
7. Cut the excess dough around the edge of the pan. Keep your knife upright so you get a nice even cut. Crimp with a fork, and then place the whole thing in a large zip lock bag. Place in the freezer and use in future.

## **NO BAKE PUMPKIN PIE CUPS**

**(WWW.CARASCRAVINGS.COM)**

**YIELD: 12 SERVINGS**

### **INGREDIENTS:**

2 tbsp coconut butter, (NOT oil), well-stirred and at room temperature  
1/2 cup 100% cooked pumpkin puree, at room temperature (if your pumpkin is cold, the coconut butter may solidify when it comes in contact; if this happens, simply heat the mixture in the microwave for 20 seconds and stir to melt the coconut butter)

2 Tbsp pure maple syrup, preferably grade B

1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract

1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

1/4 tsp ground ginger

1/8 tsp ground nutmeg

1/8 tsp ground cloves

1 lightly packed cup medjool dates, about 10 pitted

2/3 cup raw pecan (or walnut) halves

1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

### **DIRECTIONS:**

Combine coconut butter, 1/2 cup pumpkin puree, maple syrup, vanilla extract, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and cloves in a bowl. Stir (or whisk) until very smooth.

Combine dates, pecans, and cinnamon<sup>1</sup> in the bowl of a food processor fitted with the steel blade. Process until mixture becomes crumbly and then forms a large ball, about 45 seconds. Remove from food processor. Divide mixture evenly between the 12 cups of a non-stick mini muffin tin. Dip a finger in water and press the mixture into each cup, forming a crust with an indentation in each. Fill each cup with the pumpkin pie mixture; smooth the top. Place muffin tin in the fridge and chill until slightly hardened.

## **CHEWY PUMPKIN COOKIES (gluten free, dairy free)** **([www.texanarian.com](http://www.texanarian.com))**

### Ingredients

- 1¼ cup (133 grams) almond flour or almond meal
- 1 cup (93 grams) oats (gluten-free oats for gluten-free)
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- 1½ teaspoons nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon allspice
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup pumpkin puree
- ¼ cup coconut oil
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 egg
- 6 tablespoons (120 grams) honey

- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 2 teaspoons vanilla

### Directions

- 1 . Preheat your oven to 325°F and line two cookie sheets with parchment paper.
- 2 . In a medium bowl, stir together the dry ingredients. Set aside.
- 3 . In another medium bowl, mix together the wet ingredients. The drained pumpkin won't combine easily at first, but just keep stirring and it'll come together nicely.
- 4 . Add the dry ingredients to the wet and mix just until combined.
- 5 . Shape little balls, about 1" each. Flatten them to the exact size you want them because they don't spread while baking.
- 6 . Bake for 17 minutes. The cookies will still appear soft and they will not brown around the edges. Let cool and then drizzle with melted white chocolate if desired.

**Note: I used refined coconut oil because that's all I have access to. Unrefined coconut oil might have a coconutty taste, but refined does not.**

## LIGHTENED UP APPLE CRISP

([www.sparkpeople.com](http://www.sparkpeople.com))

### Ingredients:

- 3 medium baking apples, cored, sliced thin<sup>1</sup>
  - 1 tsp cinnamon
-

2 Tbsp sugar  
2 Tbsp flour

Topping:

1 cup quick oats  
1 tsp vanilla  
1/2 tsp cinnamon  
1/4 cup brown sugar  
2 Tbsp butter, softened

Directions:

Mix first four ingredients and place into 9-inch (square or round) baking dish.

In small bowl, mix topping ingredients until crumbly. Sprinkle topping over the apples.

Bake at 325 degrees until apples are soft and topping is golden brown (about 30 minutes).

Brussel sprouts with Bacon, Garlic, and Shallots (from Cooking Light magazine) 16 minutes total

Ingredients:

6 strips of bacon, chopped  
1/2 pound sliced shallots (about 1 large  
1 1/2 pounds of Brussels sprouts (trimmed and halved)  
6 garlic cloves, minced or thinly sliced  
3/4 cup low-sodium chicken broth  
1/8 ground pepper

Heat large nonstick skillet over medium high heat. Add bacon, add and cook for 5 minutes. Remove bacon and drippings from pan, but reserve 1 tablespoon of dripping. Put bacon, shallots, and Brussels sprouts in pan for 4 minutes. Add garlic and cook for a few min. until garlic

becomes a little brown. Stir frequently. Add chicken broth and bring to a boil. Cook for a few more minutes until the broth has reduced and the Brussels sprouts are crisp-tender. Remove from heat and add salt and pepper. Serve warm.

Calories 90, Fat 2.4

### **Feta and herb Dip with Crudités** (EatingWell.com)

Fresh chopped herbs add zing to this white bean dish. 30 minutes total

Ingredients:

- 1 can white beans, rinsed
- 3/4 cup of plain yogurt
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon garlic salt
- 1 tablespoon ground pepper
- 1/4 chopped of each of the below:
  - parsley
  - fresh dill
  - fresh mint
  - fresh chives

Place beans, yogurt, feta, lemon juice, garlic salt and pepper all in food processor. Puree till smooth. Add herbs, puree till incorporated. Chill till ready to serve. Server with freshly sliced peppers, rice chips, sugar snap peas, carrots.

## **Mexican Chicken Meatballs** (Healthy Cooking Oct/Nov 2009 ) (low fat meatballs with a ton of flavor )

### Ingredients:

1/2 cup egg beaters  
1 can chopped green chillies  
1 cup crushed cornflakes  
1 cup shredded reduced fat Mexican cheese  
1/2 teaspoon salt 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
1 pound of ground chicken or turkey

Salsa is optional

In large bowl, combine the first 6 ingredients. Crumble chicken over mixture and mix well

Shape into 1 inch balls. Place on baking sheets coated with cooking spray. Bake at 375

degree for 12-15 minutes or until juices are clear. Serve with your favorite side of salsa.

Yields about 5 dozen.

3 meatballs and salsa - approx. 63 calories, 3 grams fat

## Creamy Smashed Turnips

Cut carbs with this low calories side dish. Makes 4 servings. Takes 20 minutes.

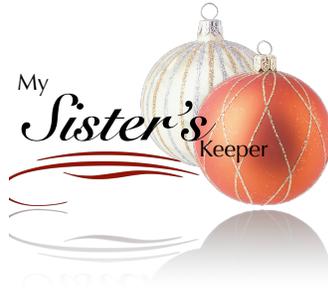
### Ingredients:

1 1/2 pounds of turnips  
2 ounces reduced fat cream cheese, softened  
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

1/4 black pepper  
1/4 kosher salt  
sprinkle on chives

1. Bring a large saucepan or pot of water to boil, then reduce heat and simmer. Cube turnips and add to simmering water. Cover for 25 minutes or until turnips are very tender. Drain well. Return to hot saucepan. Using potato masher, mash the turnips until very smooth. Add cream cheese and mash until combined. Stir in garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Add chives on top.

1 serving= 2/3 cup, 76 calories, total fat 3, chol. 10  
(allrecipes.com)



*More than anything, Christmas is a time to love others,  
share Jesus' birth story, and promote community.*

These recipes are a collection of Mendy's favorite healthy holiday go-to's.

Preparing these meals, sharing them with others, and eating healthy together says to your sister-in-Christ, "I love you and let's keep ourselves focused and fueled so we can endure this hectic season together. It also says, "I care enough to prepare a healthy meal for you so that we have the energy to mother our children and love our husbands with energy and passion."

I encourage you to use these recipes for your family gatherings, parties, and even on a regular old family night.

*Mary Christ dear "Sister in Christ."*

I will be your keeper and hold you up when you feel weak and weary. We will stand for love and proclaim the name of Jesus boldly in our homes, communities and to the world. I will commit to praying for you daily in this hectic season. I promise to get you outside when you struggle with seasonal depression. We will be each others keepers because that's what sisters-in-Christ do.



Personal notes and preferred recipe adjustments:



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