**Pumpkin Spice Smoothie**

*Ah Autumn!* That glorious time of year when the leaves begin to change color and gently fall to the ground to beautifully decorate our walkways and paths, when the sun shines but Mother Nature marks her season change with a hint of crisp to the air, and the smells of apple, pear, pumpkin, cinnamon and nutmeg fill the air! It is about this time each year I find myself drawn to the kitchen - *to cook, bake and create more* - enjoying all the sights, smells and tastes of the season! This week's recipe helps me kick off the changing of the seasons with it's delightful seasonal flavor and ease of simplicity, it supports my clean eating lifestyle and is perfect on those busy mornings providing me with the fuel I need to run the day - the ***Pumpkin Spice Smoothie!***

**Ingredients**

* 1 banana
* 1/2 C pumpkin puree (not pumpkin pie filling!)
* 1 scoop vanilla protein powder (I like Trader Joes)
* 2/3 C unsweetened vanilla almond milk (or milk of choice)
* 1/4 tsp. nutmeg
* Ice (to desired thickness)

**Directions**

1. Place all ingredients in blender
2. Pulse on medium high for approximately 2-3 minutes, adding ice a bit at a time until reaching desired thickness (if using a standard blender vs. a ninja or vitamix you may need to stop and temper ingredients with a spoon to ensure even blending)

**Smoothie tips:**

* Did you know you can freeze those overripe bananas to use later? When you start to see your bananas start to go a little too brown simply peel and place them in a large ziplock bag and put them in the freezer to use later! They work great for those “oops I am out of bananas!” moments and the versatility of having them on hand will come in quite handy for other recipes too (a clean eats soft serve anyone?)
* If increasing the amount of frozen ingredients (berries and banana for example) then you will also need to increase the amount of almond milk (or add a bit of water) to your mix as this will better help you blend your smoothie to drinkable consistency.

**Sip and Enjoy!**