Banana Nut Oat Muffins

by Amy Sherman

These Banana Nut Oat muffins are some of the best muffins I've ever made.I got out of the habit of baking when my stove was replaced. I use my bread machine and my Breville Smart Oven but it's too small for many things. Fortunately I have a muffin pan that makes 6 muffins that fits in it perfectly. And you know what? Making 6 muffins is much better than making a dozen!

Muffins, like cupcakes are really good when they're fresh, but they get dry and stale quickly. So making smaller batches more frequently makes good sense. These muffins use lots of healthy ingredients like oatmeal, oat bran, bananas, walnuts and a little bit of olive oil so you can feel good about eating them. I used extra virgin olive oil because it's what I have on hand but you could use any olive oil you like.

Olive oil is great for baking, especially in muffins and quick breads. The muffins are moist, with a little crunch from the nuts, a little chew from the oats, and have that buttery texture that comes from using bran, perfect to take when you're running out the door.

I adapted this recipe adding oat bran, increasing the amount of nuts and swapping out olive oil for melted butter but I'm not sure where the original recipe came from. It might seem like a lot of ingredients, but it comes together very quickly. The reason I used rolled oats, oat bran, bananas and walnuts is because they all contain magnesium.

Many people are deficient in magnesium, over half the population in California according USDA research . But the combination is also really delicious, even if you don't need more magnesium in your diet. Just about everyone (unless those with nut allergies) can benefit from more nuts in their diet. Walnuts in particular have amazing heart healthy benefits .

Banana Nut Oat Muffins Makes 6 large muffins

Ingredients:

2/3 cup all purpose flour
1/3 cup oat bran
1/2 cup old fashioned rolled oats
1/3 cup dark brown sugar, firmly packed
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon
3/4 cup mashed very ripe bananas (the skins should be brown)
1 egg
1/4 cup olive oil
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/2 cup walnuts, chopped

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a mixing bowl, stir together the flour, oat bran, oatmeal, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt and cinnamon. In another bowl, mix together the mashed bananas, eggs, oil and vanilla. Add the banana mixture to the flour mixture, stirring with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon just until the dry ingredients are moistened. Do not over mix.

Spoon batter into a well greased or paper-lined muffin pan (grese the top of the pan to make removing the muffins easier). Bake for about 20 minutes or until toothpick inserted into center muffin comes out clean. Let cool in the pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove muffins from the pan and let cool completely or better yet, eat warm.

Enjoy!

Amy Sherman is a San Francisco–based writer, recipe developer, restaurant reviewer and all around culinary enthusiast. She blogs for Epicurious , Bay Area Bites and Cooking with Amy .