

Blueberry-Banana Muffins

Adapted by Our Young Chefs from "Lighten Up, Y'all," by Virginia Willis

Makes 12 standard-size muffins or 30 mini muffins



If you are looking for a great grab and go breakfast, try blueberry-banana muffins; they are good tasting and good for you. Freezing very ripe bananas, covered with plastic wrap, is a great way to have them on hand and avoid waste, too. If you use frozen bananas and/or blueberries, do not defrost beforehand.

DIRECTIONS

Prepare the muffin tins: Preheat the oven to 325°F for standard-size muffins; 375°F for mini muffins. Grease the cups of a 12-cup muffin pan OR 2 mini muffin pans plus 6 cups of a third mini muffin pan (a total of 30 mini muffin cups) generously with **nonstick cooking spray**, including the top surface.

INGREDIENTS

Pam (nonstick cooking spray)

2 cups (10 to 10.5 ounces) fresh OR
frozen blueberries

Cool/cold water

Prepare the blueberries: If **FRESH** blueberries are used, do not rinse under running **water** because the pressure can damage them. Instead, place the **berries** in a small colander; dip the colander in a large bowl of **cool water**.

Gently swish the colander in the **water**, then remove and allow the **berries** to drain. Pour the **berries** out onto a towel-lined counter OR towel-lined tray in a single layer to drain. Place a towel over the **berries** to pick up surface moisture, very gently pat. Leave the **berries** at room temperature until ready to use. Set aside.

If **FROZEN** blueberries are used, do not defrost, set the **berries** out of the freezer for about 15 minutes. Place the measured amount of **berries** in a small colander, set the colander in a bowl of cold water; gently rinse/swish the **berries**. Empty the bowl of **water**, fill again with cold water; rinse/swish the **berries** again. Lay the **berries** on paper towels in a single layer; gently pat dry with paper towels. Set aside. This will help prevent the **muffin batter** from streaking blue-grey-green. (There may be concern that washing away the **berries'** color is washing away flavor and/or nutrition. There is still a good deal of juice/vitamins and flavor that remain in the **berries**.)

2 ripe, medium bananas, fresh or
frozen, mashed

$\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon lemon OR orange
zest* (or a combination), finely
grated (optional)

Mash the bananas: In a medium flat bowl, mash the **bananas** using a fork OR a pastry blender. Set aside.

Prepare the citrus zest: Wash the **lemon** or **orange** under cool running water with a drop of dish soap; rinse and pat dry. Grate the **zest*** of about $\frac{1}{2}$ of the **lemon** OR



Pastry blender

$\frac{1}{4}$ of the **orange** using a microplane zester OR the "spikey" holes on a box grater. Measure $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of the **grated zest**; add the measured **zest** to the **mashed bananas**. ➡

* **Zest** is the colored layer of the peel of any citrus fruit - lemons, limes, orange and grapefruit. When grating the zest, remove only the colored layer. Avoid grating into the white layer of the peel (the pith), as it has a bitter flavor. Grating into the pith/white layer will impart that bitter character to the recipe.

1 large egg
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (4 ounces) plain 2% Greek yogurt
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (1.9 ounces) canola oil
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (4 ounces) low-fat buttermilk
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla

Prepare the wet ingredients: In a small bowl *OR* 4-cup liquid measuring cup, whisk the **egg** using a fork *OR* small whisk until lighter in color. To the **egg**, add the **mashed bananas (with or without zest), yogurt, oil, buttermilk, and vanilla**. Stir with a fork to thoroughly blend.

2 cups (9 ounces) white whole wheat flour
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (4.65 ounces) granulated sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon *each* ground ginger and freshly grated nutmeg
1 teaspoon baking soda

Prepare the dry ingredients: In a medium/large bowl, combine the **flour, sugar, salt, ginger, nutmeg and baking soda**; stir with a whisk to blend.

Wet ingredients (*prepared earlier*)
Dry ingredients (*prepared above*)
Fresh *OR* frozen blueberries (*prepared earlier*)

Prepare the muffin batter: Use a flexible spatula to *gently* stir the **wet ingredients** into the **dry ingredients**; blend *just until the dry ingredients are moistened*. Use a flexible spatula to *gently* fold/stir in the **berries**. *Do not over-blend* or the batter will become blue-grey-green.

Portion if making STANDARD-SIZE MUFFINS: Divide the **batter** evenly among the 12 **prepared muffin cups**; the **batter** will fill to the **top of the cups**. For convenience, use a $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup measuring cup, a standard-size ice cream scoop *OR* a #12/green-handled disher to scoop the batter into each **muffin cup**.

Bake: Bake the **standard-size muffins** at 325°F for 28 to 30 minutes, until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out mostly clean *OR* until a center **cupcake** registers 204° to 208°F on an instant-read thermometer. Halfway through baking, rotate the **pan**.

Portion if making MINI MUFFINS: Divide the **batter** evenly among the 30 **prepared mini muffin cups**; the **batter** will fill to the **top of the cups**. For convenience, use a $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup measuring cup, a mini ice cream scoop *OR* a #30/black-handled disher to scoop the batter into each **mini muffin cup**.

Bake: Bake the **mini muffins** at 375°F for 18 to 20 minutes, until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out mostly clean *OR* until a center **cupcake** registers 204° to 208°F on an instant-read thermometer. Halfway through baking, rotate/reverse the **muffin pans'** positions; then switch their locations on rack levels (top to bottom, bottom to top).

Cool and serve the muffins: Cool the **muffins** for 5 minutes in the **muffin pan** set on a wire rack; then remove the muffins to sit directly on the wire rack. Serve warm or at room temperature. Store leftover **muffins** in an airtight container for up to 4 days.
