

USANA TestKitchen:HealthyPre-Holiday Indulgences

[Diana Yin](#)

[Foods](#)

October 17, 2011 at 8:25 AM

Every year about this time we face the same temptations: a mountain of Halloween candy, the heaping plates of turkey and mashed potatoes, the constant parade of sugar cookies, egg nog and chocolate-covered everything. And each year I promise myself I won't gain weight during the holidays, and yet every year I do.

While I don't mind smart, conscious indulgences, it's far too easy during the festive months to fill our bellies with comforting foods, without thinking twice about what that means for our health. Last year, I shared with you [a few tips](#) for staying trim in the face of these temptations. This year, I'd like to share a couple of recipes that might make getting through the holidays a little easier.

The first is a low-fat, but very satisfying, butternut squash recipe that is thickened with **Fibergy Plus** instead of cream.

The second is an Almond Joy-inspired, flavorful Almond Coconut Chocolate Shake that is a healthy, but decadent-tasting alternative to the chocolate treats you'll encounter over the next couple of months.



*

Roasted Apple & Butternut Squash Soup Servings: 10 starter portions

Ingredients

- 1 large butternut squash (3-4 lbs), halved lengthwise and scooped clean
- 2 Tbs olive oil
- 2 apples, peeled, cored and halved lengthwise
- 1 large yellow onion
- 8 fresh sage leaves, shredded
- 6 cups chicken or vegetable stock/broth
- 1/2 tsp fresh grated ginger
- 1/2 Tbs fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1 Tbs Fibergy Plus
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees and line a baking sheet with aluminum foil.
2. Place butternut squash, cut side down, on aluminum foil and bake until tender (about an hour and twenty minutes); drizzle 1 Tbs of oil over the apple halves and place onto baking sheet during the last twenty minutes of roasting.
3. Once tender, remove the baking sheet from oven and allow squash to cool, then scoop out the flesh of the butternut squash and place into into a large bowl with the roasted apples.
4. In a large saucepan over low heat, heat 1 Tbs oil; add onions, half the sage and cook until onions are tender and translucent (about 5-10 minutes).
5. Add stock/brother and squash pulp to saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat; once boiling, reduce heat to low, add fresh ginger, and simmer for 10 minutes.
6. Turn off heat, then mix in add lemon juice, nutmeg and Fibergy Plus. Using an immersion blender (or working in batches if using a blender), puree the soup until smooth.
7. Add salt and pepper to taste.

**Please note that butternut squash has a higher glycemic load than some of its squash counterparts. So while this is a healthy recipe otherwise, do watch your intake if you need to be conscientious about your blood sugar levels.*

Almond Coconut Chocolate Shake

Servings: 3-4



Ingredients

- 2 cups milk or dairy alternative, such as soy or almond milk
- 4-5 Tbs shredded coconut
- 2 cups crushed ice
- 1/2 tsp almond extract
- 6 scoops of Dutch Chocolate or Chocolate Whey Nutrimeal
- (optional) 1-2 teaspoon(s) Truvia, if desired
- (optional) 2 teaspoons of shredded coconut, for garnish

Preparation

1. In a blender, combine milk and shredded coconut; blend for 5-8 seconds (this helps to puree the coconut first so you don't over-blend the shake).
2. Add ice, almond extract, Nutrimeal and optional Truvia to the blender; blend for 10-15 seconds — be careful not to blend it too much or the shake will become too whipped and foamy.
3. Top with a little shredded coconut, if desired, and serve immediately!

Your Turn

Do you have any healthy recipes, tricks or tips that help you get through the holidays?

Eating well is an important part of being healthy. From the [USANA Test Kitchen](#) is a monthly

column offering useful nutrition tips, as well as delicious, healthy recipes that use USANA products in creative ways.