

Bring Back Oatmeal to Your Breakfast Table

By MAUREEN ZEBIAN
Epoch Times Staff

Once thought of as a bland and mushy breakfast, oatmeal is fast becoming again America's breakfast favorite. Its popularity resurgence has come as our quest to gain optimum health. While oatmeal is healthy, it is also delicious when prepared right.

The best tasting oats in my opinion are the slow-cooked rolled oats and old-fashioned oats. The quick cooking oats just don't have the texture and flavor. Instant oats pale in comparison to both the thicker oats and old-fashioned oats. If your children dislike oatmeal, try making your own oatmeal. Your children will probably discover their love for oatmeal, and making it is easy as well as economical.

The benefits of oatmeal are numerous. Oatmeal itself has no cholesterol and almost no fat. It also contains vitamins, minerals, B-complex vitamins, and vitamin A, as well as calcium and iron. Another oatmeal nutrient is fiber, which is great for the heart and digestive process.

Oatmeal does make a very healthy breakfast food with high complex carbs, vitamins, and minerals. Oatmeal also has the advantage of making you feel fuller, giving you enough energy to make it to lunch!

Oatmeal Delight

- 2 cups milk: skim, 1% or soy
- 1 cup old-fashioned oats
- 1 Tbsp. butter
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 1/2 apple, skinned and chopped

Heat milk to a boil, add oatmeal and the rest of the ingredients. Turn down heat to low and cook for 15 minutes. Top with whipped cream.

Overnight Slow-Cooked Oatmeal

- 8 cups water



CUSTOMIZE YOUR OATMEAL: Add raisins, vanilla yogurt, apples, blueberries, bananas, applesauce, honey or caramel syrup to add extra flavor to your oatmeal. MAUREEN ZEBIAN/THE EPOCH TIMES

- 2 cups steel-cut oats
- 1/3 cup raisins
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- 1 Tbsp. butter
- Salt

Before you go to bed, combine all ingredients in a 5-6 quart slow cooker. Turn on heat to the low cook setting. Takes 7-8 hours to cook.

Fruity Oatmeal

- 1 cup apple juice
- 1/2 cup old-fashioned oats
- 1/2 cup apple, skinned, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. chopped walnuts
- 1 Tbsp. honey

Bring juice to a boil. Add oats and reduce heat. Cook on low temperature for 5-10 minutes.

Customize Your Oatmeal

- Cinnamon gives oats an added sweetness.
- Use natural sweeteners like apples, blueberries, cranberries, raisins and apricots.
- Trying to cut down on your fat intake? Use soy milk.
- Honey is an excellent substitute for brown sugar.
- Walnuts or pecans give your oatmeal a grainy texture.
- Top your oatmeal with vanilla yogurt.
- White chocolate morsels will make your kids scream for more.

Know Your Oatmeal

- The term oatmeal usually refers to rolled oats, made with the whole, hulled grain or oat groat. The term steel-cut oats refer to the inner portions of the oat that are cut into pieces.
- Thick rolled oats are made from steamed groats and rolled into flakes. These take the longest to make because of their thick texture.
- Old-fashioned oats are also steamed groats but rolled into a thinner flake so as to reduce cooking time. Cooking time is shorter and the cooked oats are mushier than their thick counterparts.
- Quick oats are made from steel-cut oats but are smaller pieces to reduce cooking time. Instant oats are quick oats are pre-steamed to again speed up the cooking process.

Your Frugal Freezer!

Save money on food by utilizing your freezer more

By CYNDI ROBERTS

When you're trying to make those grocery dollars stretch as far as possible, a home freezer can truly be your budget's best friend!

We all probably realize that extra beef, chicken, etc., can be kept for long periods of time in the freezer, and also that surplus produce from the garden can be preserved easily in the freezer.

I have researched and found some items that can be frozen which some people may not be aware of—and some uses for the

freezer that are a little unusual, too.

Remember to wrap foods with foil or store in airtight containers or zipper bags. Air is the cause of freezer burn. Even bread needs to be double-bagged, as bread wrappers are not airtight.

Dairy products are one thing that you may not realize can be frozen. When you find milk, eggs, butter or cheese at a really good price, you CAN stock up!

Freeze milk in the carton and thaw in refrigerator. Stir or shake before serving.

Butter can be kept for 6 months in its original wrapper in the freezer. Thaw in fridge before using.

You might want to pack cheese in a zipper-top freezer bag before freezing. Shredded cheese can be added to recipes without

thawing.

Eggs take a little more preparation. Mix 1 cup of raw eggs with 1 teaspoon salt. Store in an airtight freezer container. When needed, let thaw overnight in refrigerator. For 1 egg, use about 3 tablespoons of mixture.

If you store your brown sugar in the freezer, it will not harden.

Nuts, shelled or unshelled, retain their freshness when kept in the freezer.

Honey will not crystallize if it is stored in the freezer. It does not freeze solid. Let thaw at room temperature.

Keep marshmallows in the freezer to keep them from turning hard.

To have "fresh" herbs all winter long, put chopped herbs in ice cube trays, fill with water and freeze. When needed, pop a

cube out.

Lemons, limes, and oranges can be frozen whole. When a recipe calls for juice, just defrost as many as you need in the microwave.

Here's a good one: after using, store your soapy steel wool pad in the freezer and it won't rust. Just remove from the freezer while you're cooking supper and it will be ready to use when you do the dishes.

Store your popcorn in your freezer. Pop while it's still frozen and it will pop lighter with fewer unpopped kernels.

If your freezer is not full, it will run more efficiently if you fill up the empty spaces with jugs of water.

Your freezer "can" be your friend if you use it to its full capacity.

Cyndi Roberts' Web site, "1 Frugal Friend 2 Another" will show you ways to save money everyday. Visit her website at: <http://www.cynroberts.com>. Permission to reprint article given by Creativehomes.com.



SAVE MONEY: Buy meat, fish, chicken, and cheese on sale. Then freeze them and use when needed. MAUREEN ZEBIAN/THE EPOCH TIMES

Cookbook Review: DK Children's Cookbook

Designed to have children learn how to cook healthy meals

By JENNIFER WICKES

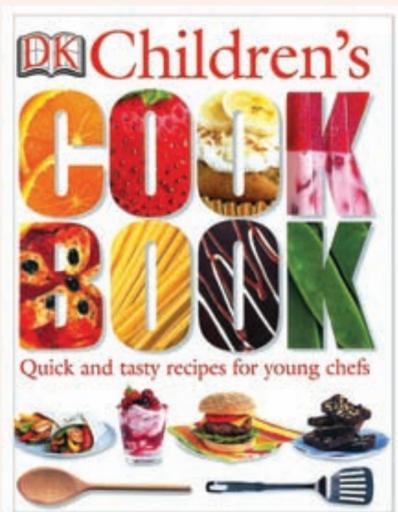
DK Publishing is known for their excellent books. This cookbook is no different. There are fantastic photographs throughout the book. Ingredients, kitchen tools and step-by-step methods are pictured to help children understand how to create each meal. This book is very easy to understand and is set up for beginner cooks.

Another thing that I enjoyed about this book was the way that there were a variety of protein sources, whether it be vegetarian, lamb, chicken or red meat. There are health tips within the book to help educate children on the importance of eating a variety of healthful foods. Food safety tips are explained too.

To help test this book out, I had my five-year-old son look the book over. He found the pictures easy to understand. Being that this book is designed for 9- to 12-year-olds, I did need to help him read. But he did like the cookbook, and could follow the recipes.

There are a variety of recipes in here such as omelets, granola, tomato soup, cheese and potato pockets, chocolate cake, apple pie, vegetable tart, falafel, Naan bread, fruit crisp, fruit pops, roasted chicken, fishcakes, lamb kebabs, roasted vegetable lasagna, a stir-fry recipe, a curry recipe and much more!

If you have a child in the house that is



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interested in cooking, pick this book up!

Jennifer A. Wickes is a freelance food writer, researcher and cookbook reviewer. She has written several eBooks, and has had numerous articles and recipes in printed publications. For more information about Jennifer or her work, please visit her home page: <http://home.comcast.net/~culinaryjen/Bio.html>.

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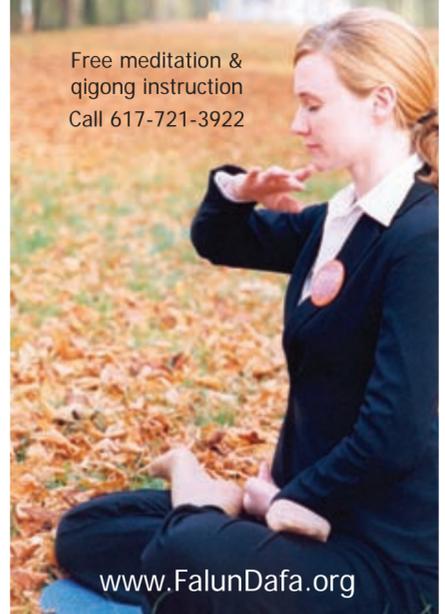
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