

Morning Glory Muffins

This recipe, a throwback to the "back to the land" '60s, brings together all kinds of fruits and vegetables in an earthy whole-grain muffin that, despite the description, manages to taste very good indeed. Moist and just sweet enough, Morning Glory are a great "eat in the car" treat. They need the enhancement of neither butter nor jam (though either — or cream cheese — wouldn't be out of place).

1/2 cup raisins
2 cups King Arthur White Whole Wheat Flour or Premium Whole Wheat Flour
1 cup brown sugar
2 teaspoons baking soda
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 cups peeled and grated carrots
1 large tart apple, peeled, cored, and grated (or leave the peel on; your choice)
1/2 cup shredded coconut, sweetened or unsweetened
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
1/3 cup sunflower seeds or wheat germ, optional
3 large eggs
2/3 cup vegetable oil
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1/4 cup orange juice

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Lightly grease a 12-cup muffin tin, or line it with papers and spray the insides of the papers. In a small bowl, cover the raisins with hot water, and set them aside to soak while you assemble the rest of the recipe. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking soda, spices, and salt. Stir in the carrots, apple, coconut, nuts, and sunflower seeds or wheat germ. In a separate bowl, beat together the eggs, oil, vanilla, and orange juice. Add to the flour mixture, and stir until evenly moistened. Drain the raisins and stir them in.

Divide the batter among the wells of the prepared pan (they'll be full almost to the top; that's OK).

Bake the muffins for 25 to 28 minutes, until they're nicely domed and a cake tester inserted in the center of one of the inner muffins comes out clean.

Remove from the oven, let cool for 5 minutes in their pan on a rack, then turn out of pans to finish cooling. Wrap any leftovers airtight, and store at room temperature for several days; freeze for longer storage.

Yield: 12 muffins.