

Strawberry



Native to North and South America, small wild strawberries have been slowly bred into the big, juicy berries commercially grown today. High in antioxidants and vitamin C, strawberries are a sweet and healthy snack. Local strawberries will be sweetest and most flavorful when they are in season between late May and mid-July. Frozen strawberries are the best option when not in season, as they are picked & frozen at perfect ripeness!

Cooking

For the most nutrients, strawberries should be eaten raw, but they can also be roasted, pickled, or cooked into jam. Soft, overripe berries are perfect for smoothies. Strawberries do not continue to ripen after they have been picked, so look for fully red, ripe strawberries and eat, cook or freeze within 2-3 days.



Storage

Strawberries are best kept loosely wrapped in the fridge. To freeze, remove stems and pre-cut, then spread on a tray lined with plastic wrap. Once frozen, transfer to an airtight container and keep frozen up to 6 months.

Strawberry Banana Breakfast Bars



Serves: 8-10 bars

Total Time: 1 hour

Ingredients:

- 6 tbsp unsalted butter, melted
- 1½ cups + 2 tsp whole wheat flour (or all-purpose)
- 1½ cups oats (rolled or steel-cut, not instant)
- 2 bananas, mashed (overripe is best)
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 pinch of salt
- 3 cups of strawberries, sliced
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp of vanilla extract (optional)

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Grease a 9 x 9" baking dish, and set aside.
2. In a large bowl, mix melted butter, banana, brown sugar, cinnamon, and salt until well combined. Add the oats and 1 ½ cups of the flour, stir until moist and clumpy.
3. Scoop out about 1 cup of oat mixture and set aside for topping. Pour the rest into the baking dish and press down firmly into an even layer on the bottom.
4. In a bowl (you can use the same one without washing), combine strawberries, lemon juice, vanilla (optional), and 2 tsp flour. Stir until evenly mixed, then pour into the baking dish and spread into an even layer, pressing down firmly.
5. Crumble reserved oat mixture over the top. Bake until golden brown and firm, 35-45 minutes. Let cool fully before cutting.

Quick Tips:

- These bars make a great grab-and-go breakfast, afterschool snack, or healthy dessert!
- Cut leftovers into bars and wrap individually in plastic wrap, then refrigerate up to 1 week or freeze up to 3 months.

