



Sunflower Seed Pate By Joanna Samorow-Merzer

Ingredients:

3 medium-to-large baked potatoes, equivalent of at least 1½ cups, mashed while still hot	1 chopped celery stalk
1 cup raw sunflower seeds	1 peeled chopped carrot
1⅔-2 cups chopped onion	1 peeled chopped parsnip
2 TBSP balsamic vinegar such as sherry wine vinegar or red wine vinegar	3 TBSP Herbs de Provence (or Italian seasonings) ground in a mortar
2 TBSP coconut aminos	1 TBSP cumin
¼ cup ground flax seeds mixed with about ½ cup water and set aside to thicken	2 TBSP garlic powder
	½ cup nutritional yeast
	¼ tsp freshly ground white pepper
	Sea salt to taste

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350 F.

Line a loaf pan with parchment baking paper (to avoid using oil).

Toast the sunflower seeds until golden aromatic (to avoid burning, keep stirring them in a dry pan while heated on low to medium for about 2 minutes).

Sautee chopped onion in water (use enough water to cover the bottom of the saucepan) while stirring it from time to time. Once the water starts evaporating, add the balsamic vinegar and stir well. Then add more water to cover again the bottom of the saucepan and add the chopped celery, carrot, and parsnip. Add the coconut aminos and stir. Add the garlic powder, sea salt, and ground white pepper. Stir in the herbs. Once the liquid evaporates, turn off the flame under the saucepan.

In a food processor, grind briefly the sunflower seeds. Then add to it the mashed potatoes, the thickened flax seed mixture, the sauteed content of the saucepan, the nutritional yeast and cumin powder. Run the food processor but do not overprocess the contents, otherwise everything becomes too mushy.

Remove the mixture from the food processor and fold it into the loaf pan lined with the parchment baking paper. Bake uncovered for about 50-60 minutes. Take it out of the oven and let it cool at room temperature for 15-20 minutes, then take it out of the pan by lifting it together with the parchment baking paper. Now let it sit and cool in the parchment paper on a hard surface for at least an hour. As the pate cools, the parchment paper will start separating from the sides of the loaf; it will be easy to gently pull off the parchment paper from the sides and slice the pate (don't try to pull by force the parchment paper from the sides of the loaf). Once at room temperature, place it in the fridge. After cooling in the

fridge for at least two hours, the pate will become firmer, and it will be easy to cut thin slices. It can be stored in the fridge for 6-7 days, or longer in the freezer (but slice it before freezing it).

The pate can be served with bread, crackers, wraps, tortillas, on polentas, in unfried spring rolls or wrapped with other ingredients in macerated collard greens as green rolls.

Polenta Slices

Ingredients:

Store bought polenta tubes

Tomato sauce (sugar-free and oil-free, if possible)

Toppings:

Sliced sunflower seed pate
Artichoke hearts, marinated

Capers, marinated

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350 F.

Cut tubed polenta into slices. A store-bought polenta will yield about 13 to 14 slices. Place the slices on a baking sheet lined with parchment baking paper (no need for oil). Brush each polenta slice with tomato sauce. (It is possible, but difficult, to buy tomato sauce with no oil and no added sugar.) Bake uncovered for 20 – 30 minutes. Once it cools, put on it a slice of sunflower seed pate, half of a marinated artichoke heart, and a few marinated capers.

These ready decorated polentas can be stored, covered, in the fridge for a day or two before serving, although it is best to skip refrigerating them and make the decorated polentas on the same day of serving.

Tips

If the tomato sauce is too thick and too sour, dilute it with unsweetened almond milk and some dry herbs of your choice. Then brush generously each polenta slice with the sauce and bake.

Other options for the polenta toppings: plain or herb almond or cashew cheese, pesto, a slice of a vegan loaf, a fresh basil leaf, a strip of marinated or grilled red pepper, a pickle slice, sauteed or grilled or marinated mushrooms, a slice of sundried or marinated olive, a slice of tomato, chopped scallions. The ideas for toppings are endless.

My **Mild Herb Almond Cheese** recipe and **Basil Pesto** recipe (both potential toppings for the polentas) can be found in **Off the Reservation**, a novel by **Glen Merzer**. You will also find there another recipe of mine for the **Sunflower Pate**.