



Pumpkins

Is there anything that represents fall more than colorful leaves and orange pumpkins?

Caring for Pumpkins

The vines of a pumpkin can grow fast and aggressively. It's best to plant pumpkins near the edge of your garden and direct the vines outward so they don't completely take over.

Like other squashes, pumpkin leaves are susceptible to powdery mildew if they are too wet. To prevent this, water the plants near the base and avoid watering directly on the leaves. Place straw or cardboard under small pumpkins once they start to form. This will help prevent your fruit from rotting.

Read the Rind

How can you tell when a pumpkin is ready to be picked? When the fruit is bright orange and the stem has started to shrivel and harden, it's ready to pick!

When harvesting, cut the stem at least 2 inches from the pumpkin. The stem will help it store longer. Before storing, cure pumpkins by setting them to dry in the sun for 10 days. Keep them dry and protected from frost. After curing, store them in a dark cool place.



Pumpkin Scarring

Not into the mess when it comes to carving pumpkins? Try pumpkin scarring! When the fruit is still green and immature, take a toothpick or exacto knife and scratch the skin of the pumpkin. Be careful not to cut too deep! As the pumpkin matures, the etching will harden and become like a scar or even cooler, a pumpkin tattoo!

Keep It Looking Fresh

After you've created your masterpiece jack 'o lantern, how do you make it last longer? Keep carved pumpkins fresh by first wiping the inside wall and exposed flesh out with a paper towel right after carving. Then, spread a layer of petroleum jelly over the inside wall and exposed flesh. This will prevent a loss in moisture and keep your carving looking fresh! Also try to keep the pumpkin out of direct sunlight and the rain.



Making Pumpkin Puree

If you don't carve your pumpkin, bake with it! Using fresh pumpkin puree is easy and delicious in all those tasty fall recipes! Start with scooping the pulp and seeds from the center. Slice the pumpkin into large chunks and bake on a baking tray at 350F for 45 minutes (or until fork-tender). Peel the skin from the flesh and puree in a food processor or blender. Use right away, or store in the fridge or freezer for later use.



Pumpkin Pancakes

Recipe inspired by: [The Simple Veganista](#)



Ingredients:

- 1 ¼ cups whole wheat flour
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice or cinnamon
- ½ heaping cup 100% pumpkin puree
- 1 ¼ cups unsweetened almond milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 - 2 tablespoon oil, for griddle

Directions:

- 1) Preheat griddle to 350F, or medium heat.
- 2) In a medium size mixing bowl, add the flour, sugar, baking powder, and spice, mix well. Add in the pumpkin puree and non-dairy milk, mix well but don't over mix.
- 3) Add enough oil to coat the griddle/skillet. Using a ¼ measuring cup, scoop batter and place on griddle. Let cook about 3 minutes, edges will bubble slightly and start to look leathery, flip and cook another 3 minutes. Add oil to the griddle/skillet, and repeat until batter is gone. Enjoy with maple syrup and pecans!