



Southern Sweet Potato Fritters

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 20 / **Cook Time** 8 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

fold: to gently and slowly mix a light ingredient into a heavier ingredient so as not to lose air and to keep the mixture tender, such as incorporating whipped egg whites into a cake batter or folding blueberries into pancake batter; folding is a gentler action than mixing or whisking.

fry: to cook in a pan in a small amount of fat.

slice: to cut into thin pieces using a sawing motion with your knife.

whip: to beat food with a whisk or mixer to incorporate air and produce volume.

separate eggs: to remove the egg yolk from the egg white by cracking an egg in the middle and using the shell halves, the palm of the hand, or a device to keep the egg yolk in place while the egg white falls into a separate bowl.

Equipment

- ☐ Skillet
- ☐ Cutting board
- ☐ Kid-safe knife
- ☐ Mixing bowls
- ☐ Dry measuring cups
- ☐ Measuring spoons
- ☐ Liquid measuring cup
- ☐ Wooden spoon

- ☐ Whisk
- ☐ Slotted spoon
- ☐ Plate
- ☐ Paper towels

Ingredients

Southern Sweet Potato Fritters

- ☐ 1 to 2 fresh sweet potatoes (for about 2 C finely chopped sweet potatoes)
- ☐ 2 green onions
- ☐ 3/4 C all-purpose flour ******(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub 3/4 C gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour)******
- ☐ 1/2 C fine cornmeal
- ☐ 1 tsp baking powder
- ☐ 1 tsp salt
- ☐ 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- ☐ 1 C plain yogurt ******(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub 1 C dairy-free/nut-free plain yogurt)******
- ☐ 5 T vegetable oil, divided ****** + more if needed for cooking
- ☐ 1 egg ******(for EGG ALLERGY sub 1 1/2 T water + 1 1/2 T vegetable oil + 1 tsp baking powder)******

Food Allergen Substitutions

Southern Sweet Potato Fritters

Gluten/Wheat: For 3/4 C all-purpose flour, substitute 3/4 C gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour.

Dairy: For 1 C plain yogurt, substitute 1 C dairy-free/nut-free plain yogurt.

Soy: Substitute canola oil or other nut-free high-smoking point oil (can heat to a higher temperature without smoking) for vegetable oil.

Egg: For 1 egg, substitute 1 1/2 T water + 1 1/2 T vegetable oil + 1 tsp baking powder.

Instructions

Southern Sweet Potato Fritters

slice + chop

Slice **1 to 2 sweet potatoes** into rounds first so kids can easily chop them up into little bits. The

potatoes will only cook if the kids chop them into tiny, tiny bits, the smaller the better. This could take a while! Now, let the kids chop **2 green onions** into little bits as well. Set the chopped vegetables aside.

measure + mix

In a large bowl, have kids measure and mix together **3/4 cup flour**, **1/2 cup fine cornmeal**, **1 teaspoon baking powder**, **1 teaspoon salt**, and **1/2 teaspoon black pepper**. This is the dry bowl.

stir + crack

In a medium bowl, stir together **1 cup yogurt** and **3 tablespoons vegetable oil**. Crack **1 egg** and show the kids how to separate the white from the yolk. Set the egg white aside in a separate small bowl. Add the **egg yolk** to the yogurt mixture. This is the wet bowl.

whisk

Gradually whisk the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients until smooth.

whip + fold

In a small bowl, have kids take turns whipping the **egg white** until soft peaks form: Let the kids take turns counting by fives or tens with claps, snaps, or counting backwards! Then fold the egg white into the batter. Now, the kids get to add the tiny bits of chopped sweet potato and green onions and stir everything together.

frying safety

Make sure always to have your skillet lid nearby. Smoke and splatter are hazardous and need to be treated with care. As soon as you finish using the fryer oil, remove the skillet from the heat to ensure it cools as quickly as possible.

cook + crisp

Heat **2 tablespoons of oil** in a skillet over medium heat. Working in batches, carefully drop the batter into your well-oiled skillet. Using 2 to 3 tablespoons of batter for each fritter. Cook, until golden brown and crisp, and flip after about 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer the fritters to a paper towel-lined plate to drain. Repeat with the remaining batter. Serve the fritters immediately. Makes 16 or more mini-fritters. Serve with **Honey Mustard Yogurt Dipping Sauce**. Yum!

Featured Ingredient: Sweet Potato!

Hi! I'm Sweet Potato!

"Sweet potatoes are root vegetables, like beets and carrots! We're very popular in the Fall, especially for holiday dinners, where you might find us baked whole or sliced and diced as part of a side dish. We also pair well with fruit and other vegetables in salads and casseroles."

History

The sweet potato originated in Central or South America, and people began cultivating them in Central America at least 5,000 years ago.

Sweet potatoes have been grown in Peru for almost 3,000 years and remain one of the major crops for people in Peru.

When Columbus arrived in the New World, Native Americans were already growing and utilizing sweet potatoes. Columbus brought sweet potatoes back to Europe, and other explorers brought them from the New World to Asia.

Sweet potatoes were cultivated widely in Colonial America and were a significant form of sustenance for farmers and soldiers during the Revolutionary War.

As far as records show, orange sweet potatoes originally came from Puerto Rico and were named "yams" by Louisiana farmers to differentiate them from the white-fleshed variety grown in other parts of the country. Indeed, the sweet potato is officially the state vegetable of Louisiana! It's also North Carolina's official state vegetable.

George Washington grew sweet potatoes on his estate at Mount Vernon, Virginia.

North American supermarkets import much of their sweet potatoes from the Caribbean.

February is National Sweet Potato month!

Anatomy & Etymology

Sweet potatoes are edible roots, not tubers like potatoes. Actually, sweet potatoes aren't related to potatoes but are part of the Morning Glory family. Plants from this family produce beautiful flowers whose seeds were revered for their laxative properties by the Chinese.

The flesh of sweet potatoes can be white, yellow, orange, or even purple!

Enslaved African-Americans called the sweet potato "nyami" because it reminded them of the starchy, edible tuber from their homeland. "Nyami" is a Senegalese word that was eventually shortened to "yam." Sweet potatoes are often confused with yams, and this is why!

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Sweet potatoes are eaten by people worldwide as they are a hearty crop that packs a lot of nutrition.

It's best to store sweet potatoes in cool, dark, and dry places. They won't last as long in the fridge.

Small, firm sweet potatoes tend to be sweeter and creamier. Large sweet potatoes contain more starch, as they've had more time to grow and develop the starches. Look for smooth, firm, even skin.

Sweet potatoes should be cooked, not eaten raw. You can use them in many savory and sweet recipes.

Sweet potatoes make an excellent side dish—you can bake, mash, or boil them—and their nutritional benefits are increased when combined with healthy fats, like avocado, butter, or olive oil!

If they had their say, sweet potatoes might like to be known as everyday veggies rather than just for special occasions. For example, we in the United States eat more sweet potatoes around Thanksgiving than at any other time. But sweet potatoes are available year-round and should be enjoyed more often because of their benefits!

Nutrition

Sweet potatoes are very nutritious! Their color can tell us which nutrients they contain (like many vegetables and fruits!).

If a sweet potato is orange, it contains beta-carotene (other orange foods that contain this nutrient include carrots, shrimp, and oranges). Can you hear the name of a familiar vegetable in the word "beta-carotene?" Carrot! We know that beta-carotene is good for our eyes and skin. Have you ever been asked to eat your carrots because they are good for your eyes? Beta-carotene is why!

Sweet potatoes also have vitamin K, which helps our blood clot. When we get a cut, our blood clots to stop the bleeding, and vitamin K helps with this!

We often talk about fiber when we reveal our Surprise Ingredients because vegetables and fruits contain a lot of fiber. Sweet potatoes are no exception. So what does fiber help with? Digestion! And which body parts are responsible for digestion? Many, but namely our stomach and intestines.