



SMOOTHIES!

I love Michael Pollan's "Food Rules" It all comes down to "Eat food, not too much, mostly plants" Eating whole, minimally processed food is the best for human health. Eating slowly, with family and friends sets us up for the best digestion and nutrition. So what to do in this fast paced world where we can't always achieve this ideal? Whole food smoothies offer a great alternative to most processed foods and are a convenient way to pack a lot of therapeutic food into your diet. Here are some tips for creating delicious smoothies and recipes for a few of my favorites.

1. Make sure you have a blender that is up for the job. Cheap or regular duty blenders will burn out fast. Good brands include Vitamix, Magic Bullet, and Ninja.
2. Don't fill the jar too full. Air space is necessary for efficient processing.
3. Make sure you use enough liquid.
4. Follow your blender's directions to determine the order of ingredients. You generally want ice and more solid ingredients at the top of the blending column so gravity feeds them into the mix.
5. More ice and frozen fruits will make a thicker colder smoothie.
6. Soak nuts and seeds overnight. This releases enzymes that make them more digestible.
7. These recipes are suitable for low carb diets. If you are not restricting carbs you may add some honey or maple syrup for sweetness. If you are restricting carbs and want more sweetness try using stevia.
8. Use fresh, local, organic ingredients whenever possible. (OK, I know you won't be growing mangos in your back yard...)
9. Don't be afraid to experiment!

Fruit Smoothie

2 ice cubes

½ cup of fresh or frozen fruit. Mix and match by the ¼ cup,

Cranberries, blueberries, mangos, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries etc. Remember the more brightly colored the healthier they are! My favorite is cranberry/blueberry

½ avocado (low glycemic/carb) or ½-1 ripe banana (adds body to the smoothie)

Nut mix:

1TBS each Chia seeds, pumpkin seeds, and hemp seed. 2 walnuts 2 Brazil nuts

(This mix has a dynamite balance of protein and minerals!)

¼ cup cultured coconut milk (low carb) or yogurt

1 TBS almond butter

¼- ½ organic lemon with the peel or lime peeled. Cut into chunks.

1 cup of green tea or water.

Blend thoroughly and enjoy this thick high protein smoothie!

Chocolate Kale Smoothie

2 ice cubes
¼- ½ cup frozen fruit: blueberry, strawberry, mango, or peach
¼ cup canned coconut milk
¼ - ½ ripe avocado
2 TBS more or less to taste processed cocoa powder
1/tsp vanilla or almond extract
1 cup of coarsely chopped kale
1 cup of almond or cashew milk (low carb) or milk

Blend thoroughly and enjoy this rich and thick chocolatey smoothie.

Cucumber Spinach Ginger Smoothie

2 ice cubes
¼- ½ cup of frozen fruit: mango, strawberry, peach
¼- ½ ripe avocado
¼- ½ lime, peeled or squeezed
1 end of thumb to end of pinky sized chunk of peeled ginger root.
½ -1 cucumber, peeled
½-1 cup of fresh spinach
1 cup cooled green tea or water.

Blend thoroughly and enjoy this tangy smoothie!

Mango Blueberry Spinach

2 ice cubes
¼ cup each frozen blueberries and mango
½ cup cultured coconut milk (low carb) or yogurt
½ cup raw spinach
½ tsp cinnamon
½ cup almond milk
½ cup green tea or water

Blend thoroughly and enjoy this light refreshing smoothie!

Thanks to the Institute for Functional Medicine for smoothie inspirations.