

Super Snacking Ideas

Satisfy A Snack Attack

Super Athlete Natalie Coughlin On Superfruits

(NAPSA)—Today's hectic lifestyle makes snacking between meals a necessity, but convenience often wins out over taking the time to find something healthier. Gold Medalist and World Champion swimmer Natalie Coughlin understands the importance of snacking, and with her busy training schedule she needs to make everything she eats count.

"California Dried Plums are one of my favorite healthy snacks. I sometimes nibble on them like candy and I recommend them to my family, friends, teammates and coaches," says Coughlin. As an avid cook, "foodie" and passionate advocate of healthy eating and lifestyle choices, Natalie is always looking for ways to prepare healthier versions of her favorite snack recipes.

Registered dietitian Leslie Bonci, MPH, CSSD, LDN, author of "Sport Nutrition For Coaches" and team sports dietitian for the Pittsburgh Steelers, says dried plums are bite-size nuggets of superfruit goodness and they're super affordable and easy to fit into your busy life.

Whether whole, chopped or pureed, adding dried plums is a great way to boost nutritional value in recipes. Dried plums also serve as a substitute for unhealthy fats and sugars while maintaining flavor. Natalie uses this trick to prepare scrumptious snack bars by combining California Dried Plums, whole grains and an assortment of seeds into a good-for-you, portable, gluten-free snack bar—perfect for on the road or at home.

Natalie's California Dried Plum Snack Bars

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

Makes: 8 bars

Cooking spray:

- ¼ cup California Dried Plum puree
- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ cup orange juice
- 1 egg white
- 2 teaspoons grated orange zest
- ¼ cup soy flour
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon baking powder



CDPB spokesperson Natalie Coughlin's cooking videos feature Dried Plum Snack Bars at www.californiadriedplums.org.

- ½ cup rolled oats
- ½ cup whole almonds
- ½ cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- ¼ cup raw pumpkin seeds
- ¼ cup raw sunflower seeds

Heat oven to 325° F. Spray an 8-x 8-inch baking pan with cooking spray and line with parchment paper, leaving the paper overhanging on 2 sides. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together dried plum puree, honey, orange juice, egg white and orange zest. In a small bowl, whisk together flour, cinnamon and baking powder. Fold flour mixture, oats, almonds, coconut, pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds into dried plum mixture.

Press mixture evenly into prepared pan. Bake about 30 minutes or until firm to the touch. Cool on rack; remove from pan, using paper to lift it out. Cut in four, then cut across in half to make 8 bars.

Nutrition Information Per Serving (1 bar): 212 calories; 0 mg cholesterol; 12 g total fat; 4 g sat fat; 3 g mono fat; 1 g poly fat; 0 g trans fat; 41 mg sodium; 22 g carbohydrate; 6 g protein; 3 g fiber; 159 mg potassium

For another healthier option that will satisfy your sweet tooth without the empty calories, use

California Dried Plum puree to reduce the amount of refined sugar and fat in a traditional brownie recipe. It keeps the brownies moist and chocolaty and makes them better for you, too. For more recipes and cooking videos featuring California Dried Plums, and for your chance to win a \$1,000 gift card from your favorite grocery store, enter the Super Snacking Sweepstakes at www.californiadriedplums.org.

In addition to providing health benefits as a cooking or baking ingredient, dried plums are ready to eat right from the package as a good-for-you snack. "Dried plums are really an excellent snack for women," says registered dietitian and lead researcher Mark Kern, Ph.D., School of Exercise and Nutritional Sciences at San Diego State University. "Snacking on dried plums is a good way to increase antioxidant intake and also a tasty way to curb the appetite." This is supported by recent research presented at the 2010 Experimental Biology meeting.^{1,2} The research was funded by the California Dried Plum Board.

California Dried Plums:
What's in 'em for you?

- **Improved digestion:** A single serving (four to five dried plums) has 3 grams of fiber to help you maintain good digestive health.
- **Tasty nutrition:** Dried plums are a nutrition powerhouse that includes B vitamins, potassium, magnesium, protective antioxidants, boron and fiber.
- **Antioxidants:** Dried plums have phenolic compounds, which promote good health.
- **Blood sugar control:** Dried plums can help maintain healthy blood sugar levels.
- **Cholesterol management:** Fiber and other compounds in dried plums can help maintain healthy cholesterol levels.
- **A perfect fit for healthful diets:** Dried plums promote satiety and have only 100 calories per serving (four to five dried plums).

1. Kaper S, Howarth LS, Furchner-Evanson A, Petrisko Y, Nemoseck T, Hong M.Y, and Kern M. Dried plums consumed twice daily increase antioxidant capacity after two weeks in adult women. *FASEB Journal* 2010, 24:564.5.

2. Furchner-Evanson A, Petrisko Y, Howarth L, Nemoseck T, Kern M. Type of snack influences satiety responses in adult women. *Appetite*. 2010. 54:564-569.