

Spiced Pear Muffins

Ingredients:

- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- ½ cup caster sugar
- 230g unsalted butter, softened
- 4 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups plain flour
- 2 cups wholemeal flour
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk
- 4 to 5 cups pears, unpeeled and diced small (about 800g whole pears)
- Cinnamon sugar, for sprinkling on top

Method:

1. Heat your oven to 220°C. Spray the wells of two standard muffin tins with non-stick spray.
2. In a mixer on high speed, cream together the sugars and the softened butter until they resemble fluffy frosting, about 1 minute.
3. Mix in the eggs, one at a time until fully incorporated, about 1 minute each.
4. Mix in the vanilla extract.
5. In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, spices, and salt.
6. With the mixer on low speed, mix 1/3 of the flour mixture into the butter-sugar mixture followed by 1/3 of the milk. Continue alternating between the flour and the milk, mixing just until the flour is incorporated. It's OK if there is still some flour on the sides of the bowl. **Do not overmix.**
7. Scrape the sides of the bowl with a spatula and stir gently to incorporate the last of the flour.
8. Add the diced pears and fold them into the batter.
9. Divide the batter between the muffin cups. The batter will fill the cups and mound slightly on top. Sprinkle the tops with cinnamon sugar.
10. Place the muffin tin in the oven and immediately turn down the heat to 200°C. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, rotating the pan once in the middle of baking. The muffins are done when the tops looked cracked and toasted, and when a toothpick inserted in the middle of one of the muffins comes out clean.
11. Let the muffins cool enough to handle, then transfer them to a wire rack to finish cooling.
12. Leftover muffins can be kept in an airtight container at room temperature for 3 to 4 days, or frozen for up to 3 months.