



Makes 12 cupcakes
Preparation Time: 30 minutes
Cook Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

7 oz. pitted dates (24 Deglet Noor dates or 12 Medjool dates)

1 20-oz. can pineapple tidbits, in juice

½ cup unsweetened dried cherries, roughly chopped

1 tablespoon flaxseed meal

¾ cup whole wheat pastry flour

½ teaspoon baking soda

¼ teaspoon sea salt

2 tablespoons sunflower seed butter

1½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract

¼ teaspoon pure almond extract

¼ cup aquafaba (liquid from canned chickpeas)

1 tablespoon date syrup

Upside-Down Pineapple Cupcakes

When the Dole company sponsored a [pineapple](#) upside-down cake competition in the 1920s, they received over 2,500 entries and sparked a century-long love affair with the [fruity dessert](#). This vegan twist takes the American classic into the modern day and makes 12 cupcakes, each topped with pineapple tidbits and dried cherries. Naturally sweetened with dates, these upside-down pineapple cupcakes are far healthier than their butter- and sugar-laden predecessors. Sunflower butter and almond extract provide enough richness to feel decadent. Flaxseed meal is mixed with water to make a “flax egg,” which helps bind the cupcakes. Drizzle with an easy pineapple-date sauce and add a dollop of aquafaba whipped cream for an entertaining-worthy dessert, or enjoy them plain as a snack during the day.

Tips

Aquafaba Whipped Cream: [Whipped aquafaba](#) can be covered and stored in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. The mixture will lose volume during storage, so just before serving, re-beat with mixer until soft peaks form.

For more inspiration, check out these tasty ideas:

- [Grilled Pineapple Pie](#)
- [Vegan Strawberry Cupcakes](#)
- [Berry and Banana Cupcakes with Vanilla Frosting](#)
- [Fruit-Topped Vanilla Cupcakes](#)

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- 1 Preheat oven to 375°F. In a bowl soak dates in 2½ cups boiling water 10 minutes. Drain well. Drain pineapple, reserving juice. Reserve 1¼ cups of the pineapple tidbits. Divide the remaining pineapple and half of the dried cherries among 12 muffin cups.
- 2 Meanwhile, in a small bowl stir together flaxseed meal and 2 tablespoons water. Let stand 5 minutes. In a large bowl combine flour, baking soda, and salt.
- 3 In a blender or food processor combine reserved pineapple tidbits, 18 of the Deglet Noor dates (or 9 Medjool dates), the flaxseed mixture, sunflower seed butter, and 1 teaspoon of the vanilla. Cover and blend 2 minutes or until very smooth, scraping down sides as needed for even blending. Add pineapple mixture to flour mixture; stir to combine. Spoon batter evenly into prepared muffin cups.
- 4 Bake 18 to 22 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in centers comes out clean. Run a knife around the edges of cupcakes. Using hot pads, place a baking sheet over muffin cups and carefully invert cupcakes onto the baking sheet. Let cool.
- 5 For date sauce, in a blender or food processor combine remaining dates, the almond extract, and ½ cup pineapple juice. Cover and blend until very smooth. Transfer to a small saucepan;

add the remaining cherries. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and simmer 10 minutes. Serve warm or let cool.

- 6 For whipped topping, in a medium bowl beat aquafaba, date syrup, and the remaining ½ teaspoon vanilla with a mixer on high until soft peaks form.
- 7 Serve upside-down cupcakes topped with date sauce and whipped aquafaba.