## **Healthy Habits**

## Prime of Life Fitness

## **Zucchini Chocolate Cake**

For those of you who didn't think avocado butter was weird enough, here's a recipe for chocolate cake that includes not just avocado, but also *5 cups* of shredded zucchini. So whether you're trying to sneak vegetables past a picky eater or get rid of the "gifts" from your pesky gardener neighbor, this recipe is a winner.

3 extra large eggs
1/4 cup canola oil
1/2 of a very ripe avocado
2 c. sugar
1 1/2 c. all-purpose flour
1/2 c. whole wheat flour
1 1/2 t. baking soda
2 t. ground cinnamon
1/2 t. salt
1/4 c. unsweetened cocoa
powder
1 t. vanilla

5 c. shredded zucchini



Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Line a 13" x 9" x 2" pan with parchment paper or grease lightly and dust with additional cocoa powder.

In a blender or food processor, blend the oil and avocado until mostly smooth. In a large bowl, combine eggs, avocado/oil mixture, sugar and vanilla. In a second bowl, sift or whisk together the dry ingredients: white and wheat flours, baking soda, cinnamon, salt and cocoa. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, mixing until all the dry ingredients are incorporated (you can do this by hand; no beating required). Fold the shredded zucchini into the batter. There will be just barely enough batter to coat all the zucchini, and you won't believe that this gloppy mess will turn into a cake.

Spread the batter in the pan and bake for 30-40 minutes, until the center is set and springs back when touched lightly. Makes 24 servings. (Note: this recipe works at Denver's mile-high altitude. At sea level you may need to make adjustments.)

You won't believe how moist this cake is, and you also won't believe that a piece will set you back only 146 calories, 4 grams of fat and 17 grams of sugar. Compare that to a typical piece of chocolate cake which runs 300 calories, 12 grams of fat and 33 grams of sugar. It's still not an everyday item if you're trying to maintain a healthy weight, but you can enjoy an occasional piece without worrying that you've wasted a month's worth of hard work and careful eating.

**Action Item:** Get creative with your recipes this weekend. Can you make over an old favorite into a new, healthy version filled with good-for-you deliciousness?

For more ideas about how to get in shape and stay healthy for a lifetime, check out the <u>Fitness Over 40</u> blog at Prime of Life Fitness.



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