

Five Things To Do With a Sweet Potato

Description

The sweet potato as well as all potato varieties are incredibly underrated vegetables. Both offer distinctive nutritional benefits, but are completely different vegetables from each other. Sweet potatoes actually come from a completely different family in the plant kingdom. While many sources hold sweet potatoes on a pedestal claiming they are far superior to the regular “baking” potatoes, they both have a welcome place in our diet.



Just like the regular spud, sweet potatoes come in many varieties and range in color from a pasty white to a deep red; each imparting unique tastes and textures. Although sweet potatoes taste sweeter than their distant “white” cousins, they do not spike our blood sugar as much as the regular spuds. One reason is the fact that sweet potatoes have almost double the amount of fiber than their counterparts; fiber plays a major role in slowing digestion and releasing sugar. Both varieties offer similar amounts of vitamins and minerals, but sweet potatoes come out on top for antioxidant content. So, don’t skip out on baked potatoes as they have a lot to offer in flavor and nutrition, but I want to focus on the sweet tuber today.

First, let’s look at how to select your sweet potato. [WHFoods.com](https://www.whfoods.com) has great tips on [how to select and store a sweet potato](#):

Choose sweet potatoes that are firm and do not have any cracks, bruises or soft spots. Avoid those that are displayed in the refrigerated section of the produce department since cold temperature negatively alters their taste.

Sweet potatoes should be stored in a cool, dark and well-ventilated place, where they will keep fresh for up to ten days. Ideally, they should be kept out of the refrigerator in a cool,

dry, dark place not above 60 degrees F / 15 degrees C, which would fit the characteristics of a root cellar. Yet since most people don't have root cellars, we'd suggest just keeping your sweet potatoes loose (not in a plastic bag, but if desired, a brown paper bag with multiple air holes punched in it will work) and storing them in a cool, dark, and well-ventilated cupboard away from sources of excess heat (like the stove).

After selecting a sweet potato or five following the tips above, here are some of my favorite ways to enjoy:



1. Sweet Potato Peanut Stew or Bisque – Eatingwell.com provides a [great recipe](#) I use and change as needed. Instead of the tomato juice their recipe calls for, I use canned chopped tomatoes; sometimes I toss some cubed and cooked chicken breast in after pureeing for a protein boost. The peanut butter provides healthy fat that enables the body to better absorb the beta-carotene in sweet potatoes.



2. Sweet Potato Chocolate Pudding – So good. Cube and steam the sweet potato in the microwave, throw all ingredients in a blender with a little milk, and blend away! Add avocado for extra creamy nutrition; trust me. This is great hot or cold and with or without roasted peanuts added for a little crunch.



3. Roasted Sweet Potato – either cut into fries or simply cubed, I love baking these in a 375 degree oven for 30 – 45 minutes. The roasting brings out the sweetness of the spud and is even better with cinnamon sprinkled on top. For something savory, toss with whole garlic cloves, ground cumin, and parsley to roast in the oven; this is great served cold too!



4. Sweet Potato and Black Bean Chili – If you haven’t combined sweet potato with black beans yet, make this now! When it’s hot outside, make it a cold salad instead by cutting out a few steps. Try adding sliced avocado for a cool and creamy addition with extra nutrition.



Eat Me! seriously

5. Sweet Potato Pancakes – a great change from regular flour pancakes for a special weekend breakfast; try this [recipe I found on Pinterest](#) you will love it! I use half unsweetened applesauce and half plain full fat yogurt instead of just yogurt. Whisk plain yogurt with peanut butter (Like NuttZo!) and honey for a tasty topping; sliced bananas with extra cinnamon is a great way to really up the flavor!

The potato is a versatile food and can be prepared in less than 10 minutes for when you have no time to spare. Kelley and I have found the Jersey Sweet Potato to be our favorite so far; we simply rinse and microwave for 4 -5 minutes and enjoy topped with plain full fat Greek yogurt. Similar to my [squash puree mixtures](#), I sometimes use cooked sweet potato instead; this makes for a very creamy and delicious treat when mixed with frozen berries or bananas.

Don't be scared to eat more potatoes, both sweet and regular are great nutritional powerhouses. Buy organic so you can just rinse the skin and eat it to obtain the vital vitamins and minerals it has within. If you do not buy organic, you might be better off peeling the potato to limit the amount of pesticides you ingest.

How do you enjoy sweet potatoes?

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