

Plums give a fresh taste to a classic crisp

ALISON LADMAN

Associated Press

When we think of winter desserts, we often think of spiced flavors and butter-laden richness.

But while that butter may bring comfort at the end of a chilly winter day, it also adds tons of unnecessary fat and calories. But winter treats don't need to put a chill on healthy eating.

A good place to start when looking for more healthful desserts is fruit, which not only packs plenty of its own no-added-sugar sweetness, it also tends to have gobs of fiber and nutrients.

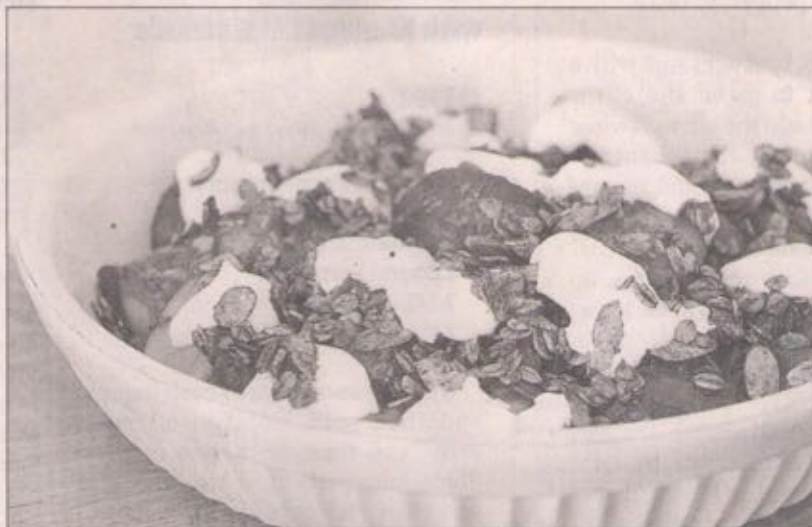
For this dessert, we chose tangy citrus and sweet plums. Plums naturally caramelize beautifully, adding deep flavor to the dish. To complement the fruit and bring out its natural sweetness, we add just a touch of honey.

Everybody likes a good spiced crisp topping, but nutritionally it often doesn't add up. Crisp topping usually makes a good start with healthy fiber-rich oats, but goes downhill with a pile of sugar and butter. To remake this topping, we stayed true to its oat roots, but added a handful of healthy-fat almonds, a generous dose of spices and a touch of honey.

For a creamy topping we opted for a spoonful of fat-free plain Greek-style yogurt. It adds the creamy dairy mouth feel that whipped cream offers, but with no added fat and a great serving of calcium. We sweetened it up just a touch with honey and a couple drops of almond extract.

Don't be intimidated by the number of ingredients in this recipe. It comes together quickly and most of it is done right on the stove.

Spiced Plum Crisp



A Spiced Plum Crisp dish. A good place to start when looking for more healthy desserts is fruit, which not only packs plenty of its own no-added-sugar sweetness, it also tends to have gobs of fiber and nutrients. *AP*

1/4 tsp. ground ginger
1/4 tsp. nutmeg
1/8 tsp. ground cloves
1/8 tsp. allspice
Pinch salt
1 tablespoon canola oil
1 tablespoon honey
3/4 cup rolled oats
1/4 cup sliced almonds

For the yogurt topping:
5.3-ounce container plain fat-free Greek yogurt
1 teaspoon honey
Several drops almond extract

For the plums:
6 plums, quartered and pitted
2 Tbsp. honey
2 Tbsp. water
Pinch salt
1/2 tsp. lemon zest
1/2 tsp. orange zest
Juice of 1 lemon
Juice of 1 orange
1 Tbsp. cornstarch

In a small bowl, whisk together the cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves, allspice, salt, oil and honey. Add the oats and almonds, then toss to coat evenly. Spread the mixture evenly over the prepared baking sheet and bake for 10 minutes, or until golden brown and crisp, stirring once or twice.

Meanwhile, make the yogurt topping. In a small bowl, stir together the yogurt, honey and almond extract. Set aside.

In a large skillet, combine the plums, honey, water, salt, lemon zest and orange zest. Heat over medium, stirring occasionally, until the plums are just softened, about 10 minutes.

In a small bowl, combine the lemon juice, orange juice and cornstarch. Stir into the plums and bring up to a simmer for 1 minute, or until the juices are thickened.

Spoon the warm plums into indi-