



**~32%** adults experience sleep problems due to work demands, parenting, caring for aging parents, and financial strain. If this sounds familiar, try sleep syncing by aligning your daily and nightly routines with your body's natural 24-hour circadian rhythm. Helpful techniques for restorative sleep include setting a consistent bedtime; avoiding distractions like alcohol, caffeine, and screens; timing food intake; exercising earlier in the day; and sleeping in a cool, dark room.



**6** grams of cinnamon daily may help stabilize blood-sugar levels and reduce inflammation. This warming spice improves sensitivity to insulin—a hormone that helps transport sugar through the bloodstream to tissues to keep blood-sugar levels balanced—and provides anti-inflammatory properties. Naturally sweet and aromatic, cinnamon adds flavor without added sugar. Try sprinkling it on yogurt, coffee, or oatmeal to start your day with a simple, health-boosting ritual.



**1** cup of lemon balm and lavender tea is a soothing way to unwind and restore emotional balance during the stressful holiday season. Traditionally, lemon balm has been used to ease nervousness, headaches, and ulcers, and recent research demonstrates its calming effects on anxiety and sleep. Combined with lavender's gentle floral aroma, this blend promotes relaxation and restfulness. Steep 1/4 cup fresh lemon balm leaves and 1/2 tsp dried lavender in 1 cup boiling water for 10 minutes, add honey, and enjoy.

**~100** trillion microorganisms inhabit your gastrointestinal tract, forming a complex ecosystem that communicates with your brain through the gut-brain axis. Research shows this connection plays a vital role in regulating mood and emotional well-being. A 2023 study found that probiotics *Lactobacillus casei* and *Bifidobacterium lactis*, when combined with L-theanine, helped alleviate stress-induced anxiety, depression, and inflammation. These beneficial bacteria thrive in fermented foods like yogurt, kefir, pickles, and kimchi, while L-theanine occurs naturally in tea and certain mushrooms.

**25** million tons of extra waste is generated in the US during the holiday season—but upcycling can help cut that impact. Transform glass jars into candle holders, fabric scraps into reusable wrapping, and citrus slices into fragrant ornaments. Beyond reducing landfill waste, upcycling promotes creativity and mindfulness. Making something new from something old isn't just sustainable; it's also a healthier, more intentional way to celebrate and connect with loved ones.

WINTER  
BRUNCH  
BLISSBAKED BANANA PUMPKIN  
DOUGHNUTS12  
MAKES  
ABOUT

1/2 cup (125 mL) mashed ripe banana, about 1 large banana  
1/2 cup (125 mL) pumpkin purée  
2 tsp (10 mL) vanilla extract  
2 Tbsp (30 mL) maple syrup  
1 Tbsp (15 mL) ground flaxseeds  
4 large organic eggs  
1/4 cup + 1 tsp (75 mL) refined coconut oil, melted,  
divided, plus extra for greasing pans  
1/2 cup (125 mL) buckwheat flour  
1/2 cup (125 mL) spelt flour or whole wheat flour  
1 tsp (5 mL) baking soda  
1/2 tsp (2 mL) baking powder  
1/2 cup (125 mL) chopped dark chocolate  
1/4 cup (60 mL) toasted pumpkin seeds

Preheat oven to 350 F (180 C). Lightly grease doughnut pan with coconut oil and set aside.

In large bowl, whisk together mashed banana, pumpkin purée, vanilla extract, maple syrup, ground flaxseeds, eggs, and 1/4 cup (60 mL) coconut oil until well combined.

In another medium bowl, whisk together both flours, baking soda, and baking powder. Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients and fold together with rubber spatula until well combined. Spoon or pipe batter into prepared doughnut wells so they're three-quarters full.

Bake in preheated oven until golden brown and puffed, about 10 to 15 minutes depending on the size of your doughnut pan. Let cool for 2 minutes in pan before turning out onto wire rack. Repeat greasing pan and baking remaining doughnut batter until all doughnuts are baked.



In double boiler, melt together chocolate and remaining 1 tsp (5 mL) coconut oil. Remove from heat. Spoon cooled glaze over donuts and garnish with a sprinkling of pumpkin seeds. Refrigerate for 10 minutes to let glaze harden or enjoy doughnuts right away.

COOK ALONG WITH THIS  
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## SOCCA *with* BEET, YOGURT, GREENS, *and* EGG

4  
SERVES

4 small red beets, with their greens attached  
3 small yellow beets, with their greens attached  
3 Tbsp (45 mL) grapeseed oil, divided  
1 1/4 cups (310 mL) water, divided  
1 cup (250 mL) chickpea flour  
1 1/2 Tbsp (22 mL) avocado oil, plus more for cast iron pan  
1/2 tsp (2 mL) fine sea salt, divided  
1 cup (250 mL) plain Greek yogurt  
4 organic eggs, either cooked, poached, or sunny side up

Preheat oven to 400 F (200 C).

Separate beets from their greens, reserve, and remove any root taps before scrubbing beets under water to remove any surface dirt. Place beets in baking dish big enough to hold them all in single layer, drizzle with 1 Tbsp (15 mL) grapeseed oil, and pour 1/4 cup (60 mL) water around beets. Cover with lid or a layer of parchment paper (crimping around edges of baking dish to seal) and roast until a paring knife easily pierces through beets, about 40 to 60 minutes.

Meanwhile, make socca batter. In medium bowl, whisk together chickpea flour, remaining 1 cup (250 mL) water, avocado oil, and 1/4 tsp (1 mL) salt until smooth. Set aside at room temperature for 30 minutes to give flour time to absorb water.

Wash beet greens before separating leaves from beet stems. Roughly chop both stems and leaves, keeping them separate. Set aside.

Once beets are out of the oven, carefully arrange oven rack 6 inches (15 cm) below the broiler element and increase oven temperature to 450 F (230 C). Place a 10 inch (25 cm) cast iron skillet in oven to warm while oven comes to temperature.

To make beet yogurt, peel one red beet and roughly chop. Place in food processor and process until finely minced. Scrape down sides of processor, add yogurt, and purée until silky smooth and bright fuchsia.



Set large frying pan over medium heat and warm remaining 2 Tbsp (30 mL) grapeseed oil. Once hot, add stems and remaining 1/4 tsp (1 mL) salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until stems start to get tender, about 4 minutes. Add greens and cook, tossing constantly with tongs, until just wilted, about 1 minute. Remove frying pan from heat and set aside.

Carefully remove hot skillet from oven and turn oven to broil. Add about 1 tsp (5 mL) extra avocado oil to skillet, enough to coat bottom when skillet is swirled. Pour batter into centre of skillet (it should sizzle nicely) and tilt skillet so batter coats entire bottom. Broil socca until starting to blister and brown, about 5 to 8 minutes. Socca should be flexible in the middle but crispy on the edges. If the top is browning too quickly before batter is fully set, move skillet to a lower oven rack until done.

To serve, use spatula to work your way under socca and ease it from skillet onto cutting board. Cut remaining beets into wedges and rounds. You can layer socca like a pizza with a spread of beet yogurt, beets, greens, stems, and eggs or cut socca into pieces and serve as desired with other components.

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## HARISSA ROASTED VEGETABLE TRAYBAKE

6-8

SERVES

2 Tbsp (30 mL) avocado oil  
2 Tbsp (30 mL) harissa paste  
2 tsp (10 mL) smoked paprika  
1 tsp (5 mL) ground cumin  
2 cups (500 mL) Brussels sprouts, cut in half if large  
1 small head cauliflower  
2 red bell peppers, seeded and chopped  
2 leeks, trimmed and chopped into 1/2 inch (1 cm) rounds  
14 oz (398 mL) can chickpeas, drained, rinsed, and patted dry  
7 oz (200 g) halloumi cheese, cut into 3/4 inch (2 cm) cubes  
1 cup (250 mL) couscous  
1 1/2 cups (350 mL) boiling water  
1 lemon, finely zested and juiced  
1 Tbsp (15 mL) extra-virgin olive oil  
1/4 tsp (1 mL) fine sea salt  
1/2 cup (125 mL) finely chopped kale

Place oven racks in upper and lower third of oven and preheat to 425 F (220 C). Line 2 rimmed baking trays with parchment paper and set aside.

In small bowl, whisk together avocado oil, harissa paste, smoked paprika, and ground cumin until well combined. Set aside.

Scatter Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, and red peppers over one of the prepared baking trays in a single layer. Scatter leeks, chickpeas, and halloumi cheese on second baking tray. Evenly drizzle spice mixture over each baking tray and toss until evenly coated. Place tray with Brussels sprout mixture on lower rack of oven and tray with chickpea mixture on upper rack. Roast until vegetables are fork tender and halloumi is golden brown, about 30 to 45 minutes.

Meanwhile, make couscous side. In medium-sized, heat-proof bowl, place couscous. Pour boiling water over couscous and cover with plate to trap the steam. Set aside for 5 minutes.



In another medium bowl, whisk together lemon zest, lemon juice, olive oil, and salt. Add kale and, with clean hands, massage dressing into kale for a minute. Fluff couscous with a fork and add to kale mixture, tossing well to combine.

To serve, gently toss together roasted vegetables, chickpeas, and halloumi on one baking tray. Serve alongside couscous.

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