



## Creamy Strawberry Vanilla Smoothies

By Erin Fletter

**Prep Time 5 / Cook Time / Serves 4 - 6**

### Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

**measure:** to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

**blend:** to stir together two or more ingredients until just combined; blending is a gentler process than mixing.

### Equipment

- Blender (or pitcher + immersion blender)
- Cutting board
- Kid-safe knife
- Dry measuring cups
- Measuring spoons

### Ingredients

#### Creamy Strawberry Vanilla Smoothies

- 1/2 C strawberries (or use remaining 1/2 C cooked strawberries if you made Strawberry French Toast Cupcakes)
- 1 C plain Greek yogurt **\*\* (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub 1 C dairy-free/nut-free plain Greek yogurt)\*\***
- 2 bananas
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract **\*\* (for CELIAC/GLUTEN ALLERGY use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor—check label)\*\***
- 2 C ice

# Food Allergen Substitutions

## Creamy Strawberry Vanilla Smoothies

**Dairy:** For 1 C plain Greek yogurt, substitute 1 C dairy-free/nut-free plain Greek yogurt.

**Celiac/Gluten/Wheat:** Use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor.

## Instructions

### Creamy Strawberry Vanilla Smoothies

chop + add + blend

Have your kids chop **1/2 cup of strawberries** into smaller pieces (or you can use **1/2 cup cooked strawberries** remaining from the Strawberry French Toast Cupcakes recipe if you made it). Into a blender (or pitcher for use with an immersion blender), add the **strawberries, 1 cup Greek yogurt, 2 bananas, 1 tablespoon vanilla extract**, and **2 cups ice**. Blend until thick and creamy. Yum!

## Featured Ingredient: Strawberry!

Hi! I'm Strawberry!

"Hello! I want to introduce myself. I'm Strawberry—and I have my very own month—May! I'm great in desserts, breakfast foods, snacks, salads, and fragrances. I like to be a part of picnics and holiday celebrations. So combine me with blueberries and bananas (or whipped cream, vanilla pudding, or white cake) for a red, white, and blue dessert for Independence Day in the United States or Bastille Day in France."

### History

The garden strawberry as we know it was first bred and cultivated in France in the 1750s. It was a cross between a Virginian strawberry and a Chilean strawberry.

The ancient Romans believed strawberries had medicinal powers. So they used them to treat everything from depression to fainting to fever, kidney stones, bad breath, and sore throats.

Native Americans made cornbread with crushed strawberries and cornmeal; this is how strawberries were introduced to Colonists and served as an inspiration for the invention of strawberry shortcake.

In some parts of Europe, people once believed elves could control how much milk cows produced and that the elves loved strawberries. So farmers tied baskets of strawberries to their cows' horns as an offering to the elves.

California produces about 80 percent of the strawberries in the United States. Strawberries have been grown in California since the early 1900s.

Americans eat an average of three and one-half pounds of fresh strawberries per year. In one study, more

than half of seven to nine-year-olds picked strawberries as their favorite fruit. They're nature's candy!

## Anatomy

The strawberry isn't a true berry but is called an accessory fruit. Strawberries are the only fruit with seeds outside their skin, about 200 on each berry. And, to be super technical, each seed on a strawberry is considered by botanists to be its own separate fruit!

The strawberry plant is a perennial and can last for a few years, producing fruit each year.

## How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Some varieties of strawberries are easier to harvest than others. To pick a strawberry from its plant, grasp the stem just above the berry between your pointer finger and thumbnail and pull with a slight twisting motion.

To store fresh strawberries, place them whole and unwashed in one layer in a plastic or glass storage container and put them in the refrigerator. Wait to clean them until you are ready to eat them, as rinsing them quickens their spoiling.

Strawberries can be pickled! Especially when you pick them green or unripe. If your berries are overripe, make jam!

Strawberries can be puréed into smoothies or milkshakes and baked into tarts, pies, cakes, and tortes. Or, roast them and serve over ice cream and berries. You can also dehydrate and mix them into granola or purée raw strawberries and freeze them into yogurt pops. Dip them in chocolate or drizzle them with cream. Strawberries are incredibly versatile—the fruit we wait all year to enjoy once summer weather hits!

## Nutrition

Strawberries are a HUGE source of vitamin C, especially when eaten raw! One cup of strawberries contains 113 percent of our daily recommended value. Vitamin C is excellent for the heart, bones, and teeth. When we cut ourselves or break a bone, vitamin C comes to the rescue to help repair our tissues.

Strawberries contain natural fruit sugar, called fructose. However, fructose is better than table sugar (white sugar) because it comes packaged with other vitamins, nutrients, and fiber from the rest of the fruit. Plus, the fiber in fruit helps slow down the effects of sugar in our blood.