



## Sweet Potato Mini Latkes + Kid-Made Apple-Persimmon Sauce

By Erin Fletter

**Prep Time** 30 / **Cook Time** 26 / **Serves** 4 - 6

### Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

**chop:** to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

**grate:** to reduce food, like a carrot, to very small shreds or pieces of the same size by rubbing it on a tool with an outside surface that has holes with cutting edges (a grater).

**mash:** to reduce food, like potatoes or bananas, to a soft, pulpy state by beating or pressure.

**pan-fry:** to fry in a pan in a small amount of fat.

**peel:** to remove the skin or rind from something using your hands or a metal tool.

**squeeze:** to firmly press or twist a food with fingers, hands, or a device to remove its liquid, like shredded potatoes, frozen and thawed spinach, or tofu.

**knife skills:** Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

### Equipment

- Large sauté or frying pan
- Vegetable peeler
- Cutting board + kid-safe knife
- Grater
- Measuring spoons
- Wooden spoon
- Medium mixing bowl
- Potato masher (or immersion blender)

- Large mixing bowl
- Clean dish towel (or paper towels)
- Heat-resistant spatula or pancake turner
- Paper towels

## Ingredients

### Sweet Potato Mini Latkes + Kid-Made Apple-Persimmon Sauce

- Sauce:
- 2 persimmons (or plums or pears)
- 5 apples
- 1/2 tsp fresh grated ginger
- 3 tsp pumpkin pie spice (or 1 tsp cinnamon + 1 tsp nutmeg + 1 tsp allspice + 1/2 tsp cloves)
- 1 T pure vanilla extract **\*\***(for GLUTEN ALLERGY use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor—check label)**\*\***
- 1 pinch of salt
- 2 T of honey, agave, maple syrup or 1 big pinch of stevia
- Latkes:
- 1 lb sweet potatoes, peeled
- 2 green onions
- 2 T all-purpose flour **\*\***(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free flour)**\*\***
- 2 large eggs, beaten **\*\***(for EGG ALLERGY sub 1 extra tsp flour/gf flour + 1 tsp baking powder)**\*\***
- salt and ground black pepper, to taste
- vegetable oil **\*\*** for frying
- sour cream, for serving **\*\***(Omit for DAIRY ALLERGY or sub dairy-free/nut-free sour cream)**\*\***

## Food Allergen Substitutions

### Sweet Potato Mini Latkes + Kid-Made Apple-Persimmon Sauce

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

**Eggs:** For 2 large eggs, substitute 1 extra tsp flour/gf flour + 1 tsp baking powder.

**Soy:** Substitute canola oil or other nut-free high-smoking point oil for vegetable oil, which usually contains soy.

**Dairy:** Omit sour cream or substitute dairy-free/nut-free sour cream

## Instructions

### Sweet Potato Mini Latkes + Kid-Made Apple-Persimmon Sauce

#### intro

"Shalom," which can mean "Peace," "Hello," and "Goodbye" in Hebrew. Latkes (LOT-kehks) or potato pancakes are traditionally eaten during Hanukkah, a Jewish festival celebrated for eight days in December.

#### wash + chop + grate

Let's start with the Apple Persimmon Sauce! Have your children wash **5 fresh apples** and **2 fresh persimmons**. There's no need to peel the fruit (extra nutrition and fiber is in the skin of the fruit!). Have kids core and roughly chop or grate the fruit. Add to a medium mixing bowl. Grate the ginger and add **1/2 teaspoon ginger** to the fruit.

#### measure + add

Measure **3 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice** (or 1 teaspoon cinnamon, 1 teaspoon nutmeg, 1 teaspoon allspice, and 1/2 teaspoon cloves) and add to the fruit. Add **1 tablespoon vanilla extract**, **1 pinch of salt**, and **2 tablespoons honey**. Stir to combine.

#### simmer

Carefully pour the fruit mixture into a large sauté pan and simmer until the fruit is soft, just starting to break down and the spices are fragrant, about 10 to 20 minutes.

#### cool + mash

Cool slightly, place in a medium mixing bowl, and then have kids mash with a potato masher or use an immersion blender to blend the sauce. Set aside and wipe out your pan.

#### peel + grate + chop

Potato pancake time! Peel **1 pound of sweet potatoes**. Coarsely grate the sweet potatoes and chop **2 green onions**, including the green parts (the leaves).

#### squeeze

Place the potatoes and onions in a clean dish towel and squeeze out the excess moisture over a large mixing bowl. Discard the liquid and place the potatoes and onions in the bowl.

crack + add + mix

Crack **2 eggs** into the bowl, then add the **chopped green onions, 2 tablespoons flour**, and **big pinches of salt and black pepper**. Mix together. Add the **grated sweet potatoes** and stir well.

grease + fry

Heat your sauté pan and coat with a good amount of **vegetable oil**. Have kids take about 1 tablespoon of the potato mixture in the palm of their hands and flatten as best they can. Adults place the potato mixture in the pan, flatten with a large spatula, and fry for 2 to 3 minutes until golden. Flip the pancake over and brown the other side. Let it rest on paper towels to drain excess oil.

sprinkle + serve

Sprinkle the mini latkes with salt if you wish. Serve with **sour cream** and the **Apple Persimmon Sauce**. "Taim" (ta-EEM) or "Tasty" in Hebrew!

## Featured Ingredient: Sweet Potato!

Hi! I'm Sweet Potato!

"Sweet potatoes are root vegetables, like beets and carrots! We're very popular in the Fall, especially for holiday dinners, where you might find us baked whole or sliced and diced as part of a side dish. We also pair well with fruit and other vegetables in salads and casseroles."

### History

The sweet potato originated in Central or South America, and people began cultivating them in Central America at least 5,000 years ago.

Sweet potatoes have been grown in Peru for almost 3,000 years and remain one of the major crops for people in Peru.

When Columbus arrived in the New World, Native Americans were already growing and utilizing sweet potatoes. Columbus brought sweet potatoes back to Europe, and other explorers brought them from the New World to Asia.

Sweet potatoes were cultivated widely in Colonial America and were a significant form of sustenance for farmers and soldiers during the Revolutionary War.

As far as records show, orange sweet potatoes originally came from Puerto Rico and were named "yams" by Louisiana farmers to differentiate them from the white-fleshed variety grown in other parts of the country. Indeed, the sweet potato is officially the state vegetable of Louisiana! It's also North Carolina's official state vegetable.

George Washington grew sweet potatoes on his estate at Mount Vernon, Virginia.

North American supermarkets import much of their sweet potatoes from the Caribbean.

February is National Sweet Potato month!

## Anatomy & Etymology

Sweet potatoes are edible roots, not tubers like potatoes. Actually, sweet potatoes aren't related to potatoes but are part of the Morning Glory family. Plants from this family produce beautiful flowers whose seeds were revered for their laxative properties by the Chinese.

The flesh of sweet potatoes can be white, yellow, orange, or even purple!

Enslaved African-Americans called the sweet potato "nyami" because it reminded them of the starchy, edible tuber from their homeland. "Nyami" is a Senegalese word that was eventually shortened to "yam." Sweet potatoes are often confused with yams, and this is why!

## How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Sweet potatoes are eaten by people worldwide as they are a hearty crop that packs a lot of nutrition. It's best to store sweet potatoes in cool, dark, and dry places. They won't last as long in the fridge. Small, firm sweet potatoes tend to be sweeter and creamier. Large sweet potatoes contain more starch, as they've had more time to grow and develop the starches. Look for smooth, firm, even skin. Sweet potatoes should be cooked, not eaten raw. You can use them in many savory and sweet recipes. Sweet potatoes make an excellent side dish—you can bake, mash, or boil them—and their nutritional benefits are increased when combined with healthy fats, like avocado, butter, or olive oil! If they had their say, sweet potatoes might like to be known as everyday veggies rather than just for special occasions. For example, we in the United States eat more sweet potatoes around Thanksgiving than at any other time. But sweet potatoes are available year-round and should be enjoyed more often because of their benefits!

## Nutrition

Sweet potatoes are very nutritious! Their color can tell us which nutrients they contain (like many vegetables and fruits!).

If a sweet potato is orange, it contains beta-carotene (other orange foods that contain this nutrient include carrots, shrimp, and oranges). Can you hear the name of a familiar vegetable in the word "beta-carotene?" Carrot! We know that beta-carotene is good for our eyes and skin. Have you ever been asked to eat your carrots because they are good for your eyes? Beta-carotene is why!

Sweet potatoes also have vitamin K, which helps our blood clot. When we get a cut, our blood clots to stop the bleeding, and vitamin K helps with this!

We often talk about fiber when we reveal our Surprise Ingredients because vegetables and fruits contain a lot of fiber. Sweet potatoes are no exception. So what does fiber help with? Digestion! And which body parts are responsible for digestion? Many, but namely our stomach and intestines.

