

Recipe

Creamy Southern Sweet Potato Grits with Red Beans and Spinach/Kale (2 servings)

Ingredients

Sweet Potato Grits

Quick grits	1 1/4 cup
Almond milk or favorite plant-based milk	2 cups
Water or vegetable stock	2 cups
Sweet potato	1 whole
Sugar	2 teaspoons
Salt	1 teaspoon
Garlic powder	1 teaspoon
Cajun or soul seasoning	1 teaspoon
Smoked paprika	1/2 teaspoon
Dried parsley	1/2 cup
Vegan butter	1/2 cup
Dairy free cheese (real cheese if you eat it)	1-2 cups

Red Beans

Red beans	1 cup
Water or vegetable stock	2 cups
Baking soda	1 teaspoon

Spinach/Kale

Spinach/kale	1 bunch or 2 cups
Onion (julienned into long, thin strips)	1/2 or 1 small onion

Instructions

Prepare Sweet Potato Puree in advance

Peel the sweet potatoes and cut them into roughly even chunks, about 1 to 2 inches. Place the cut sweet potatoes in a large pot, cover with water, and add a pinch of salt. Bring the water to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat and simmer for about 10-15 minutes, or until the sweet potatoes are fork-tender. Drain the sweet potatoes and return them to the pot.

You can either mash or puree the potatoes. To mash, use a potato masher to mash them to your desired consistency. To puree, transfer the sweet potatoes to a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Add a bit of water, milk, or a dairy-free alternative to help with the consistency if needed.

Grits

Bring the water, milk, and salt to a low boil in a medium-sized pot or deep skillet. Once boiling, whisk in the grits/polenta and cook 15-20 minutes, stirring frequently until thickened and there isn't any liquid left. Add in the sweet potato puree, continuing to whisk until combined. Continuously whisk in the vegan butter, garlic powder, parsley, smoked paprika, sugar (if using), and cheese shreds, until melted and the grits become ultra creamy.



Sauté the Kale

Thoroughly wash the kale and tear it into pieces (it's a personal preference if you remove the stalks or not). In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add the torn kale, julienne slices of small or 1/2 onion, onion powder, cumin, Cajun seasoning, and salt. Stir, and cover with a lid for about 3 minutes, or until the kale is reduced by half in size. Uncover, add ¼ cup water, and saute for about 5 minutes, or until the water has evaporated and the kale is soft and tender.

Prepare the beans in advance

Rinse & soak

Start by sorting through your dried red beans to remove any small stones or debris. Then, rinse them well under cold water.

Soaking is optional but recommended.

- **Overnight Soak:** Place the beans in a large bowl and cover them with several inches of water. Let them soak overnight (about 8 hours).
- **Quick Soak:** If you don't have time for an overnight soak, you can use the quick soak method. Bring the beans and water to a boil in a pot, then remove from heat and cover. Let the beans sit for 1 hour. Drain and rinse before cooking.

Cook

Place the soaked and rinsed beans in a large pot. Add enough fresh water to cover the beans by about 2 inches. To season, you can add aromatics like chopped onions, garlic, and bay leaves for flavor. Add a pinch of salt (*but wait until the beans are tender before adding more salt*).

Add a pinch of baking soda to the pot with your uncooked beans. The baking soda helps speed up the cooking process by softening the beans more quickly. Bring the water to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and cover. Let the beans simmer gently for 45 minutes to 1 hour, checking occasionally. Stir and add more water if necessary to keep the beans submerged. Taste a bean to check if it's tender. If not, continue cooking for 15–30 more minutes, checking frequently.

Once the beans are cooked, this is the time to season your beans. This is the time you add your razzle! Taste and add more soul seasoning if you would like.

Assemble and Enjoy!

To assemble, start by adding the sweet potato grits to a bowl or plate. Next, layer the beans on top, followed by the spinach and kale mix.

