

Sneaky Mom is Out, Kitchen Helpers are In

Erika Waz, Kids Cuisine & Tummy Treasure - The internet is aflutter these days with talk of hiding vegetables. Sneaky parents everywhere are enamored with "the puree," the concept of hiding pureed fruits and vegetables in every nook and cranny possible on the plate. And while I completely confess to a little sneaky mom trickery every once in a while, it seems to me that hiding those vegetables long term is not the way to convert a picky eater. Children need to be shown the fruits and vegetables what they are eating so that they can develop their own informed decisions and develop their own little palates. Take, for example, these Spiced Pumpkin Waffles...

I could have taken the sneaky mom approach and mixed up the waffles while my children were busy playing. I bet they'd have eaten those waffles, and I could have scored some sneaky mom points. I chose a different approach, though. I called my two children into the kitchen to make the waffles themselves. They measured, mixed, and poured, and never once even questioned the addition of the pumpkin to the waffles. It went in like any other ingredient, and they were very excited to make waffles themselves. With a little help from Mom and the hot waffle iron, we had delicious pumpkin waffles in no time. My daughter scraped her plate clean, and declared these waffles a hit. My son, who normally is not a waffle fan, smothered his waffle with homemade pear butter and gobbled it up — going so far as to instruct me on how best to eat my waffle. As an added bonus, leftover waffles went in the freezer and came back out as a toaster waffle for breakfast.

Spiced Pumpkin Waffles [altered slightly to be dairy-free, should not hinder good results]

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 pinch salt
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 cup canned pumpkin puree
- 1 2/3 cups milk alternative (rice, soy, almond, or your choice)
- 4 tablespoons dairy-free margarine — melted and cooled

Mix together flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, and salt in large bowl.

In a second bowl, add eggs, sugar, pumpkin, milk alternative, and margarine; beat well.

Gently fold in the flour mixture.

Cook according to your waffle iron directions.

They come out a nice deep, golden brown, and will be a little soft. Hold waffles in a 200°F oven while making the rest of the waffles, and they crisp up nicely.

Erika also offers up a wonderful Dairy-Free Pumpkin Bread Recipe (when using vegetable oil as suggested) on her blog Tummy Treasure.