



Healthful Advice from our Registered Dietitian/Nutritionist, Debra Heverling, MA, RD/LDN

# Dietitian's Dish

## Foods to Chase Away the Winter Blues

There are a variety of foods with beneficial nutrients linked to elevating mood.

**Berries** contain certain chemicals which mimic valproic acid (a mood-stabilizing medication).

**Leafy greens** have Folate, which has been known to regulate serotonin production.

**Fatty fish, nuts and seeds** contain Omega-3 fatty acids and alpha-linolenic acid (ALA) which reduce inflammation and support the brain's production of dopamine and serotonin.

**Dark chocolate** can also help to release serotonin and reduce cortisol (a stress hormone).

There are many ways to include mood-boosting, nutrient-rich foods to reduce the winter blues. Add simple recipes like these to your daily menu and see if they brighten your mood. They're a hit with kids too!

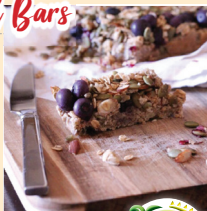
### Blueberry Oatmeal Superfood Bars

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cups old fashioned oats
- 1 cup slivered almonds
- 4 Tbsps. honey
- 1 Tbsp. coconut oil
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 1/2 tsps. cinnamon
- 3 bananas
- 1 1/2 tsps. vanilla

#### Topping:

- 1/2 cup old fashioned oats
- 1/4 cup slivered almonds
- 1/4 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1/4 cup of oat milk
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon



#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Line two bread pans with parchment paper.
2. Add all bar ingredients into the food processor until completely combined. This may take several minutes for the ingredients to fully incorporate.
3. Pour the bar mixture into prepared pans and smooth. Bake for 10 minutes.
4. Combine all the topping ingredients in a medium bowl and stir to combine.
5. Spread topping evenly over and lightly press down into original mixture.
6. Bake an additional 15 minutes.



### Mini Berry Tacos

#### Ingredients:

- 2 slices of whole grain bread
- 1/4 cup of chopped strawberries
- 1/4 cup of blueberries
- Peanut butter



#### Directions:

1. Stack both slices of bread on top of each other and use a circle cookie cutter or the wide mouth of a mason jar or glass, to cut a perfect circle into the slices of bread.
2. Separate the slices and spread desired amount of peanut butter on each.
3. Sprinkle berries on each slice and fold the bread in half to create a taco shape.

Recipes (adapted) and images courtesy of Wish Farms.