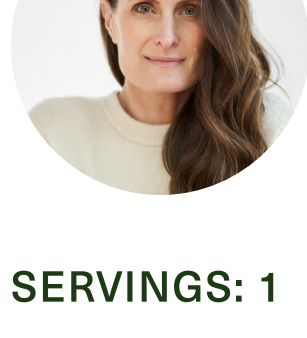




Ara's Microbiome-Nurturing Smoothie



Formulated with evidence-based ingredients, focused on a diverse range of plants that are high in fiber and other beneficial compounds like polyphenols.

SERVINGS: 1

INGREDIENTS



½ cup frozen wild blueberries¹



¼ cup blackberries²



½ avocado³



1 cup spinach⁴



1 unripe banana
(the greener, the better)⁵



½ cup frozen cauliflower⁶



1 handful broccoli sprouts⁷



2 tablespoons flaxseeds⁸



2 tablespoons hemp hearts⁹



2 tablespoons cacao nibs¹⁰



Filtered water or almond milk (based on
desired thickness and dietary preferences)¹¹

Pro tip: Store produce that tends to go bad quickly, such as berries and broccoli sprouts, in a glass container with a paper towel at the bottom to soak up any excess moisture.

ARA'S NOTES

¹ Wild blueberries contain more fiber and polyphenols than cultivated blueberries.

² The most abundant polyphenol in blackberries is cyanidin-3-O-glucoside, which is a type of anthocyanin—the compound responsible for the deep blue/purple color of these berries. Anthocyanins are known for their anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and antidiabetic effects.

³ Half an avocado has 4.5g of fiber. 70% of this fiber content is insoluble fiber, which can be fermented by your gut microbes to produce beneficial metabolites for the body.

⁴ Spinach is rich in folate (vitamin B9)—a single serving of spinach (2 cups) contains 49% of the recommended daily intake. Folate is important for many metabolic processes in the body, including synthesis of DNA. For any birthing parents out there, folate is also critical during pregnancy for development of the neural tube.

⁵ Unripe bananas have high resistant starch content (a type of carbohydrate that doesn't get digested in the small intestine and functions like a fiber) and are lower in sugar than ripe bananas.

⁶ Cauliflower is loaded with several essential nutrients—vitamin A, several B vitamins, vitamin C, calcium, iron, and phosphorus.

⁷ Broccoli sprouts contain sulforaphane, a natural plant compound derived from cruciferous vegetables that has potent antioxidant properties. They can have up to 100x more sulforaphane than mature broccoli.

⁸ Flaxseed is an incredibly nutritious functional food—it's a great source of alpha-linolenic acid, high quality protein, soluble fiber, phenolic compounds, and lignans. Gut bacteria can convert lignans into secondary metabolites with therapeutic potential, including modulation of the gut-brain axis.

⁹ Hemp hearts are rich in essential fatty acids (omega-6 and omega-3) and they're a great source of protein, containing each of the nine essential amino acids your body can't produce on its own.

¹⁰ Cacao is high in certain polyphenols, such as flavanols, which undergo extensive metabolism by bacteria in your colon after ingestion and are thought to benefit heart and metabolic health.

¹¹ I typically put this to the kiddo test: would you like your smoothie with a spoon or straw today? If you're using almond milk, look for one without emulsifiers or sweeteners.

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