

## Cream Cheese Spreads

When I teach my bagel classes, I usually add a demonstration on cream cheese spreads. There are a total of five different spreads that I have made in the past and I will explain them in these recipes. Two of them I personally enjoy with two different bagels and the other three I would consider a great match for most other bagels.

The two specific spreads are Cream Cheese & Chives and Pumpkin Cream Cheese. The pumpkin spread I always make for my pumpkin bagels and the cream cheese & chives, I always use with my pumpernickel bagels. I know that cream cheese and chives goes with many different bagels, but some combinations I consider sacred and pumpernickel bagels with cream cheese & chives is one of them. The other three spreads are Crunchy Vegetable Cream Cheese, Berry Berry Cream Cheese, and Honey Almond Cream Cheese.

The vegetable cream cheese recipe can be found at this link: <http://www.macheesmo.com/crunchy-veggie-cream-cheese/>. When I make this spread I always cut all of the ingredients in half. I use 8 ounces of cream cheese and half of the vegetables. I also only add about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the shredded vegetables at first to see if the 8 ounces of cream cheese will be able to incorporate all of the water contained in the vegetables. Feel free to play around with the ingredients and the amount of cream cheese, but remember, it is always easier to add more of something than it is to remove it. Mix a little and then taste it before adding more ingredients.

Here are the recipes for the other spreads I use.

The Berry Berry spread is made by using 1/2 cup each of dried cranberries, dried blueberries, and dried tart cherries. I put boiling water on them for about five minutes, then I drain them, and finally slice them into small pieces. I add that to 8 ounces of room temperature cream cheese. If you want the spread to be a little sweeter, just mix in some honey and taste it before adding more honey if necessary.

The next one is the Honey Almond Cream Cheese. You can make it by using 40 roasted almonds (You can also use flavored almonds such as chocolate roasted or cinnamon flavored) and then put them into a food processor. If you are going to use a small food processor you most likely will have to chop the almonds first into smaller pieces. Pulse the food processor until the almonds are ground up very fine. Always pulse the food processor when chopping nuts because you do not want to heat the oils in the nuts. Then add the ground up almonds to 8 ounces of room temperature cream cheese. Using a rubber spatula, mix them together and then add about 2 tablespoons of honey. Again, if you want the spread sweeter, then just add more honey.

Here is the recipe for the Pumpkin Cream Cheese Spread that I always make when I make pumpkin bagels.

## Pumpkin Cream Cheese

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1 cup	(227 grams)	Cream Cheese – room temperature
½ cup	(128 grams)	Pumpkin Puree
¼ cup	(57 grams)	Granulated Sugar
¾ teaspoon	(1 gram)	Pumpkin Pie Spice
½ teaspoon	(1 gram)	Vanilla Extract
½ teaspoon	(1 gram)	Nutmeg

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- 1 Add all of the above ingredients to the bowl of your mixer
- 2 Mix well until all ingredients are incorporated (you should not see streaks of color in the bowl)

Place the cream cheese spread in a bowl and cover. Refrigerate the spread for at least one hour before using