STRAWBERRY RHUBARB crisp

![A picture containing food, plate, red, grass

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***Strawberry Rhubarb Crisp*** *is the perfect summer dessert, and one of our family favorites! Tart rhubarb is paired with fresh ripe strawberries, and topped with a buttery sweet oat topping that will remind you of a warm and chewy oatmeal cookie. Serve warm over a scoop of fresh vanilla ice cream for an extra sweet surprise!*

**INGREDIENTS:**

***STRAWBERRY RHUBARB FILLING***:   
2 cups chopped rhubarb  
2 cups fresh strawberries, sliced

1/2 cup granulated sugar  
1 tablespoon orange zest  
1 tablespoon fresh orange juice  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste  
2 tablespoons cornstarch

***TOPPING:***  
1 cup old-fashioned oats

1/2 cup packed brown sugar

1/3 cup all-purpose flour  
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
½ cup unsalted butter (cold)  
Ice cream or whipped cream for serving, optional

**HOW I MAKE THIS:**

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spray the inside of a 9x9 baking pan with non-stick cooking spray (ALTERNATIVE: for individual servings, spray the insides of six (6 oz.) oven-safe ramekins with non-stick cooking spray and place on a large baking sheet); set aside.
2. **PREPARE FILLING**: In a large bowl, combine rhubarb and sliced strawberries.
3. In a small bowl, combine sugar and orange zest. Rub together with the back of a spoon or your fingers until fragrant. Sprinkle the sugar mixture over the rhubarb and strawberries; sprinkle with cornstarch and stir fruit gently until evenly coated.
4. Add the orange juice and vanilla; stir gently to combine. Set aside.
5. **PREPARE TOPPING**: In a medium bowl, combine oats, flour, brown sugar, ground cinnamon and salt; whisk together until mixture is well-blended, smashing any large brown sugar clumps with the back of your spoon.
6. Cut cold butter into small pieces and add to bowl. Using a fork or pastry blender, cut butter into oat mixture until it is crumbly and evenly-mixed; set aside.
7. Stir rhubarb and strawberry mixture, spoon into prepared pan (or divide evenly and spoon into prepared ramekins, each about 3/4 full). Crumble oat topping evenly over the fruit mixture.
8. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until topping is golden and strawberry rhubarb mixture is bubbling.
9. Serve warm over a scoop of vanilla ice cream or topped with sweetened whipped cream.

**YIELD**: 6 servings

**RECIPE NOTES**:

* To prevent the topping from melting too soon and losing texture, use very cold butter. Like we do with homemade pie crust, take the butter right from the refrigerator and cut it into cubes. Use a pastry cutter or fork to mix it into the flour, brown sugar, salt, and cinnamon. You don’t need to over-complicate this step, because the topping mixture should be messy, crumbly, and coarse.
* You can make this Strawberry Rhubarb Crisp in a 9-inch baking dish, oven skillet or deep dish pie plate instead of individual oven-safe ramekins. Baking time and yield depends on size - bake until the topping is lightly browned and fruit filling bubbles up on the sides.
* You can easily double this recipe and bake in a 9x13-inch baking dish. Increase baking time to 45-50 minutes or until topping is golden and fruit mixture is bubbling.
* To make this recipe gluten-free, substitute gluten-free oats and gluten-free flour.
* You can substitute frozen fruit for the fresh fruit – but DO NOT THAW before using!
* Make Ahead & Freezing Instructions: Baked crisp freezes well for up to 2 months. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator, then warm in a pre-heated 350 degree oven for 30 minutes or until heated through. I don’t recommend preparing the crisp and storing it, unbaked, in the refrigerator, because the topping will get soggy.

**RECIPE VARIATIONS**:

* **Raspberry Rhubarb Pecan Crisp:** Add ½ cup chopped pecans to the topping.
* **Rhubarb Raspberry Crisp**: Substitute fresh strawberries (sliced or chunked) for the raspberries.
* **Blueberry Rhubarb Crisp**: Substitute fresh blueberries for the raspberries.
* **Blackberry Rhubarb Crisp:** Substitute fresh blackberries for the raspberries.
* **Peach Rhubarb Crisp:** Substitute fresh peaches (peeled and then sliced or chunked) for the raspberries.
* **Rhubarb Berry Crisp:** You can create your favorite “berry” mix using a mixture of raspberries, strawberries, blackberries.
* **Northwoods Berry Crisp**: For something incredibly delicious and different in the fall, create a Northwoods Berry Crisp by using 1 cup chopped rhubarb, 1 cup chopped apples (peeled), 1 cup raspberries, 1 cup fresh blueberries, and 1 cup fresh cranberries. Double the topping recipe. Bake in a 9x13-inch baking pan for 50 to 55 minutes or until top is golden and fruit mixture is bubbling.

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