

Zucchini & Blackberry Muffins

- These muffins have deep flavor, a tender texture, and aren't too sweet.
- Blackberries can be large, so to encourage better distribution, cut them in half.
- I know people don't love squeezing the liquid out of zucchini, but here it produces a muffin with better structure and that doesn't threaten to get soggy. Plus, it also allows flexibility with the amount of grated zucchini you can use, since it won't waterlog the muffins.
- Nutmeg is my warm spice of choice, which really pops with the molasses.
- Here, and with all baking recipes where the measurements are offered, I encourage using a scale.
- To eliminate an extra bowl for combining dry ingredients, this uses a trick I learned from Jessie Sheehan's book [Snackable Bakes](#), of whisking the baking powder, soda, etc, separately, before folding in the flour.
- Best not to skimp on the sprinkling sugar!
- If using frozen blackberries, increase the volume to 8 ounces (2 cups) and make a quick compote: heat them in a small saucepan with a big pinch of sugar, and once soft and juicy, coarsely mash them with a fork. Then divide spoonfuls of the berries and their juices when layering them into the muffins.

Yield 12 muffins | **Prep time** 20 minutes | **Cook time** 17-20 minutes

2 medium zucchini, coarsely grated (12-16 oz / 340-450 g)

¾ teaspoon kosher salt, divided

6 ounces (170g) fresh blackberries

3 tablespoons coarse sugar, divided

½ cup (95g) light-flavored olive oil, neutral oil, or melted butter

½ cup (100g) dark or light brown sugar

2 eggs

¼ cup (65g) plain yogurt

2 teaspoons blackstrap molasses

1½ teaspoons vanilla

1 teaspoon baking powder

½ teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg

1¾ cups (225g) whole-wheat or all-purpose flour, spooned then leveled — not packed

1. Preheat the oven to 425° F, with racks in the middle and top areas of the oven. Grease 12 muffin cups or fit with paper liners.
2. Coarsely grate the zucchini then toss in a bowl with ¼ teaspoon salt. Let stand for about 10 minutes (which is what it takes me to get everything else going for the recipe). Grab by the fist full and squeeze over the sink or a bowl to extract the liquid.
3. Cut the blackberries widthwise in half or, if extra large, into thirds. Toss them with 1 tablespoon of the coarse sugar in a small bowl.
4. Whisk together the oil, brown sugar, eggs, yogurt, molasses, and vanilla until smooth, then stir in the squeezed zucchini. Whisk in the baking powder, remaining ½ teaspoon salt, baking soda, and nutmeg until well incorporated, and then add the flour, folding just until combined.
5. Divide 2 tablespoons of batter into each of the muffin cups (a 2-tablespoon spring-loaded cookie scoop works great for this). Tap the pan a few times to even out the batter. Sprinkle half of blackberries into the cups — about 3 pieces each — then top the muffins with the remaining batter, again about 2 tablespoons, followed by the remaining blackberries. Sprinkle the tops with the coarse sugar, a heaping ½ teaspoon per muffin.
6. Bake for 12 minutes in the middle of the oven, then rotate the pan and move to the top rack to bake for 5 to 7 minutes more, until browned, domed, and set in the centers. Allow to cool in the pan for about 10 minutes, then gently transfer to a cooling rack, using a mini offset spatula or thin knife, to cool a bit further before eating.

Storage: These are best eaten within a day or two of being made, and stored loosely covered rather than in an airtight container. You can also freeze them, once cooled, in an airtight container or bag, and allow to thaw at room temperature. They're excellent lightly toasted or griddled.