

Devin Alexander

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Photo: Lisa Cohen

Arby's: Curly Fries (small)

From *"Fast Food Fix"*

Save: 105 calories, 16 g fat, 2.5 g sat. fat

When I was a kid, I would have eaten any food that was curly—curly fries, chocolate curls, curled carrots, even green onion curls and fusilli (spiral pasta). Maybe the appeal had something to do with the fact that I would have done anything for naturally curly hair. Perhaps I had curl envy and acted it out with food?

By junior high, I'd found Arby's Curly Fries to satisfy my curl craving. But based on my weight gain, I probably should have gotten a perm instead.

Anyhow, now that I can make them with only a few more calories and fat than I'd get from a baked potato, I indulge in them all the time. My guess is that once you try them, you'll be hooked, too.

- 1-3/4 teaspoons salt, divided
- 4 russet potatoes (8 ounces each; 2 pounds total), peeled
- Olive oil spray
- 2-1/2 tablespoons egg substitute
- 1-1/2 tablespoons unbleached or all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne
- 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/8 teaspoon onion powder

Bring a large pot of water to a boil over high heat. Add 1 teaspoon salt. Meanwhile, with a twin curl cutter, cut 7 ounces of potato curls, about 2 cups. (Cover with water and refrigerate the scraps for another recipe.) Preheat the oven to 450°F. Lightly mist a small nonstick baking sheet with oil spray. Set aside.

Transfer the potato curls to the boiling water. Cook for exactly 3 minutes but no longer or they will break. Drain in a colander. Set aside for about 5 minutes to cool.

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Meanwhile, in a large mixing bowl, combine the egg substitute, flour, paprika, cayenne, garlic powder, onion powder, and the remaining 3/4 teaspoon salt. With a fork, mix until well blended. Add the potatoes. Toss them with your fingers until they are coated with the seasoning mixture. Transfer, allowing any excess seasoning mixture to drip off, to the reserved baking sheet. Arrange the potatoes, not touching, in a single layer. Lightly mist with oil spray. Bake for 18 to 24 minutes, turning them about halfway through, until crisp and cooked through.

Makes 1 serving

235 calories, 9 g protein, 47 g carbohydrates, 2 g fat, trace sat. fat, 4 g fiber
Original Arby's Small Curly Fries: 340 calories, 4g protein, 39 g carbohydrates, 18 g fat, 2.5 g sat. fat, 4 g fiber

Before You Start: If you don't own a twin curl cutter for creating curly strips of potatoes, sample the recipe using the seasonings on the same amount of straight-cut fries. It'll work fine. But if you love fun cooking projects, especially with kids, pick up an inexpensive (less than \$5) twin curl cutter in a cookware shop or on a Web site that sells kitchen equipment. The twin curl cutter, which looks a bit like a knitting needle with a turn key attachment, is often packaged as part of a garnishing kit. Once you get the hang of making these whimsical spuds, you'll never go straight again!

Drive-Thru: Don't have the time (or patience) to curl the fries? Simply cut 7 ounces (about 2 cups) of 1/4"-thick potato sticks using a regular chef's knife. Prepare according to recipe directions.

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