



*Holiday
Desserts!*

26 SWEET TREATS WITHOUT
SUGAR, GLUTEN, EGGS OR DAIRY!

Ricki Heller, Phd, RHN



Table of Contents

<u>Welcome</u>	3
<u>Ingredient Notes</u>	4
<u>Ingredients and Supplies</u>	5
<u>What People Are Saying</u>	7
Recipes	
<u>Chocolate Cookie Bark</u>	8
<u>Cinnamon Pumpkinseed Brittle</u>	10
<u>Holiday Fudge</u>	13
<u>Matcha White Chocolate Truffles</u>	15
<u>Homemade Turtles</u>	18
<u>Chocolate-Peppermint Bark with a Protein Boost</u>	21
<u>Raw Gingersnap Cookie Bon Bons</u>	24
<u>White Chocolate Cups</u>	27
<u>Sugar-Free Sugar Cookies</u>	29
<u>Tender Shortbread Cookies</u>	32
<u>Coconut Macaroons</u>	34
<u>As-You-Like Holiday Grain-Free Cookies</u>	37
<u>Chocolate Caramel Slice</u>	40
<u>Soft and Chewy Gingerbread Cookies</u>	43
<u>Frosted Pumpkin Cinnamon Blondies</u>	46
<u>Grain-Free Ginger Blondies</u>	48
<u>Citrus Shortbread</u>	50
<u>Individual Chocolate-Hazelnut Brownies</u>	53
<u>Chocolate Berry Swirl Cheesecake</u>	55
<u>Upside-Down Caramel Apple Pudding</u>	59
<u>Almond Mousse</u>	62
<u>Frozen Mocha Cheesecake Torte</u>	64
<u>Cashew Ice Cream</u>	67
<u>Ricki’s All-Purpose Gluten-Free Flour Mix</u>	69
<u>Pumpkin Caramel Sauce</u>	70
<u>Caramel Frosting</u>	72
<u>About Ricki</u>	74

Welcome, fellow dessert lover!



If you're anything like me, desserts are simply a regular part of life. While I've definitely cut down on dessert since starting the anti-candida diet (ACD), I couldn't imagine a life without delicious sweet treats! After all, we have "sweet" taste buds for a reason, right?

And holidays are a time of year when desserts are particularly on display. If you've been worried that you'll have to forgo all your favorites because you can no longer eat sugar, gluten, eggs or dairy (or any combination of those ingredients), worry no longer! I've got you covered with just about every traditional holiday confection you can imagine—all candida diet-friendly.

Following is a collection of some of the top holiday recipes from my private members' club (The Sweet Life), my blog, my published cookbooks and my personal recipe journals (where I create new recipes just about daily).

These recipes have been tested by recipe testers, my family, friends and hundreds of readers and fans. They are holiday treats you will be proud to share with other people (and remember, there's no need to tell those people that these are candida diet-friendly desserts!)

Here's to a healthy, happy and very sweet holiday season—

Hugs,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Ricki Heller".

Ingredient notes. . .

- **Depending whose diet you follow, certain ingredients in this book may or may not be permitted.** For instance, some diets allow cashews or sweet potatoes; others do not.
- **So, if you see these variable ingredients here,** be sure to check with your practitioner before using any of the recipes. I've included suitable substitutes where appropriate. (If you don't see a substitute mentioned, it's likely because the recipe wouldn't work if you substitute).
- **Some candida diets don't allow cocoa or chocolate right away.** When I work with individual clients, we always test whether they can tolerate it. If not, we wait until later stages of the diet. **I have found that, in general, people tend to react better to raw cacao powder (a raw form of cocoa),** since it is minimally processed and non-alkalized. It's a healthier option.
- **For dry sweeteners,** I tend to favor xylitol, since it tastes like sugar and has been shown to inhibit candida growth. However, if you prefer erythritol, Lakanto, or another candida-approved granular sweetener, you can use that one instead.
- **New candida-friendly products are being released practically every day.** If you're not sure about something, be sure to read the ingredients very carefully. **Generally, I suggest unprocessed, real food for stage one of the diet, with very few exceptions;** as you progress, you'll be able to move to more involved or processed foods, as long as every ingredient in the prepared food is, on its own, also candida-friendly.
- **Why do I use a combination of dry sweetener + stevia in most recipes?** Don't worry! Even if you don't like the taste of stevia, you won't taste it in the proportions I use. In order to lower the overall glycemic index of each recipe, I combine a dry sweetener such as coconut sugar or Lakanto with stevia. That way, the sweetening power of the dry sweetener is increased, and the overall glycemic index (GI, or how quickly it raises your blood sugar levels) is lowered.
- **If you truly can't tolerate stevia, you can try increasing the other sweetener in the recipe** (20 drops of stevia is equivalent to about one tablespoon or 30 ml of sweetener). However, that could change the final texture of the baked good or dessert.

Ingredients and Supplies

It's always better to have everything you need on hand before starting to prepare your recipes! **Here's a list of some of the more common--and uncommon!--ingredients and tools I use, and any subs you can make.**

These ingredients can be found at a health-food store, Whole Foods, or even online at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

Chia Seeds. These round grey or white seeds are a wonderful source of Omega fatty acids, but they also make a great binder for baked goods when ground to a powder in a coffee grinder, spice grinder, or blender. (Side note: you can also make a mock tapioca pudding by mixing chia seeds with milk--see this recipe).

Coconut butter. I decided to put this amazingly delicious spread into its own category, since it's often confused with coconut oil. **Coconut oil** is just the oil from coconuts, extracted, the way olive oil is extracted from olives. Coconut butter, on the other hand, is the entire coconut meat blended up into a spread, the way whole almonds are blended up into a smooth almond butter. The difference, however, is that coconut butter is perfectly solid (like, really solid!) at room temperature. It's lovely on pancakes or bread, but it always needs to be warmed up (so that it liquefies) first before using.

Coconut chips. This is just another name for flaked coconut, those thin, but wide pieces (rather than the more common shredded coconut). As with all the coconut products, they should be unsweetened.

Coconut flour. When coconut oil is made by extracting oil from the coconut flesh, what's left is then dried and ground to make coconut flour. This flour is a bit grainy compared to typical grain-based flours, and it absorbs a great deal of moisture. It's often used for gluten-free and grain-free baking.

Coconut oil. Despite what we may have learned in the 1990s, pure, organic, virgin coconut oil is actually a really healthy food if used in moderation. I use it instead of butter, since it's also firm at room temperature; it makes for the most delectable cakes, frostings, fudges, and more.

Dry sweeteners. My preferred dry sweetener is **xylitol**, since it also inhibits candida, but in these recipes, any dry, granular sweetener can be used instead of xylitol. Best ACD-friendly sweeteners include **Lakanto** and **erythritol**. In general, I don't use stevia baking blends, since they tend to have loads of filler. **Coconut sugar** is great for later stages of the diet, in moderation, but I found it too high in sugars for early stages.

Garfava flour. This is a mixture of garbanzo (chickpea) and fava bean flours, used by many gluten-free bakeries because it's grain-free but doesn't have the usual beany flavor of plain chickpea flour. You can find it online on Amazon.

Goji berries. This superfood is a small, oval, dried berry with a deep orange-red color. It's sweet and tangy at the same time, and one of my favorite snacks. Goji berries are an amazing antioxidant food and also fairly low glycemic (and only one of two dried fruits I'll regularly eat--the other being Golden Berries).

Lucuma powder. This is the dehydrated, powdered flesh of the lucuma fruit, native to South America. Since it's quite low glycemic, it's often recommended to add sweetness to candida diet-friendly foods. I also love using it in caramel or butterscotch flavored desserts, since it reminds me of those flavors.

Nut butters and seed butters. **All natural smooth almond butter** is a great staple ingredient (be sure it's made of nothing but almonds). Other nut butters, and **sunflower seed butter** (for nut-free) are also great (again, always be sure the only ingredient is the nut or seed in question; and, preferably, organic).

Potato starch. Not to be confused with potato flour, potato starch resembles cornstarch and can be used in much the same way. Great if you have corn allergies (but feel free to sub **cornstarch** if that works for you).

Protein Powders. I like to use grain-free protein powders as a form of "flour" in grain-free baked goods, and to increase the protein content in treats (which lowers the overall glycemic index, or how quickly it raises your blood sugar). My two favorites are **SunWarrior Warrior Blend** and **Vega**.

Psyllium Husk. The husks of the psyllium plant are pale beige in color and have no flavor, but they work beautifully as a binder in egg-free baked goods. I generally combine psyllium with at least one other binder, since my baked goods are also gluten-free (one binder replaces the eggs; the other replaces the gluten. This seems to work overall to create just-like-conventional textures). If the name is familiar, that's because psyllium is the same substance used in the well-known laxative, Metamucil! You'll find pure psyllium husk at your health food store, and also online. I use the whole husk (which looks like a fine sawdust) rather than the powder (which looks like, well, a powder!).

Wet sweeteners. The best candida diet-friendly wet sweeteners are, first, **yacon syrup** (but there are different types--be sure to check the natural sugars on the nutrition label, as they should be low. Anything about 10g of sugar per tablespoon is way, way too high). I also like **food-grade vegetable glycerin**, which is technically not a sweetener, but is used in many anti-candida safe foods, even processed foods. **Coconut nectar** is good for later stages, but I found it too high in natural sugars for the early stages. I recently discovered **Beni-Sweet**, which I love, but it may not be available internationally.

Xanthan gum. Xanthan gum is a common binder used in gluten-free baking. It's a fine white powder that you mix into the dry ingredients, and it helps to bind the batter together. Xanthan is also sometimes used in creamy mixtures to emulsify them so that they don't separate. I sometimes will add a small amount to my ice cream recipes for this reason. Most xanthan is corn-based, so not good if you have allergies, but you can find other types as well (you might need to contact the manufacturer to be sure).

Following an Anti-Candida Diet can feel lonely... meet some of my clients who've successfully navigated the journey.

"They [[Individual Chocolate-Hazelnut Brownies](#)] were **by far the best brownies** I've ever made. I even tried them as frozen bites on coconut yogurt. **Just fabulous!**" – Martiny M.

"I've been meaning to share with everyone **how RIDICULOUSLY delicious** Ricki's Spice cake and the [Pumpkin Seed Brittle](#) are. I already have to make a 2nd batch of both because my non candida husband ate 99.9% of both of them. Ricki, you always **knock it out of the park, but these recipes are just beyond outstanding. THANK YOU for your continued genius recipes, inspiration and motivation!**" – Holly O

"**Every** recipe I've tried of yours has **knocked my socks off.**" - Liz W

"**I** just want to thank you from the bottom of my heart and stomach. **I have made many of your recipes and they are amazing.** I have had such a hard time sticking to eating right to keep my candida under control for years, but have never been able to stick to anything because I could never find food that tasted as good as the crap that was causing the issue. Now I do and **I see success in my future. Thank you so much.**" - Jan V.

"**You** can win your family over with Ricki's recipes! My kids are adults but when we get together, **it's only candida-friendly desserts and to be honest, no one knows the difference; I've even had people ask me for the recipe!**" - Brenda N.

"**I** have **to be honest, I would not have been happy eating this way without your recipes.** I'm a good cook, but I *need* clear recipes!! And I can't believe how TASTY they are. I have to say I am actually shocked every time I make something and it is so GOOD!!! . . . I can't thank you enough for writing these books and testing/developing these recipes! **THANK YOU, RICKI HELLER!!! I am shouting from the rooftops!!**" - Ashara S.



Chocolate Cookie Bark

This fabulous confection is not only delicious AND good for you, it's also incredibly adaptable. Feel free to use any leftover cookies you have on hand, or combine cookies with toasted nuts, seeds, or dried fruit. The possibilities really are endless.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup (6 oz or 170g) sugar-free chocolate chips

Pinch fine sea salt

2 tsp (10 ml) virgin coconut oil, preferably organic

1 cup (240 ml) broken cookies of your choice (shortbread, sugar cookies, macaroons, or any other cookie of your choice.)

INSTRUCTIONS

Line a square plastic container (about 6×6 inches or 15 x 15 cm) with plastic wrap or parchment paper and set aside.

In a small pot over lowest possible heat, combine the chocolate chips and coconut oil, and melt, stirring constantly, just until the chips are melted. Turn off heat and stir to ensure there are no lumps.

Add the cookie pieces and gently fold them into the chocolate until completely coated.

Pour the mixture into the container, spreading out the cookies evenly. Make sure all the cookies are coated with chocolate. Refrigerate until firm, at least 30 minutes. Once firm, remove the chocolate from the container and break into irregular pieces. Store refrigerated until ready to eat. Makes 6 servings.



Cinnamon Spiced Pumpkinseed Brittle

Seasonal and perfect for a holiday table, this brittle is also rather addictive—so you might want to double the batch!

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup (120 ml) xylitol [Lakanto doesn't work in this recipe]
- 2 tsp (10 ml) water
- 1/8 tsp (.5 ml) fine sea salt
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) unrefined coconut oil, preferably organic
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) almond, cashew or other smooth nut butter, or tahini
- 2 tsp (10 ml) cinnamon, or less, to taste
- 1 tsp (5 ml) pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup (140 g) lightly toasted pumpkin seeds

INSTRUCTIONS

Line an 8 inch (20 cm) square pan with parchment.

In a small pot, combine the xylitol, water and salt. Stir until all the xylitol is moistened; it will have a slushy texture. Heat over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until the xylitol is liquefied, the mixture is clear, and it begins to bubble at the edges. Add the coconut oil and almond butter and stir well until smooth.

Continue stirring as the mixture bubbles, until it becomes opaque and foamy. Lower heat and add the cinnamon and vanilla and stir well. Add the pumpkin seeds and stir to coat them all.

Quickly turn the mixture into the pan and spread evenly. It will begin to firm up quickly, so work fast!

Allow the brittle to cool to room temperature, then place in the refrigerator, uncovered, overnight. As it chills, the brittle will solidify and become crystallized (but it does need to be refrigerated overnight for this transformation to occur—before this, it will maintain a toffee-like texture).

Once hardened, break into irregular pieces. At this point, you can store the brittle at room temperature (it will remain firm) in a covered container.

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT'D)

VARIATION

Melt 1/2 cup (120 ml) sugar-free chocolate chips with 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) coconut oil in a small pot over lowest possible heat, stirring constantly. Drizzle over the brittle and allow to firm up in the refrigerator.



Holiday Fudge

This fudge is smooth, creamy, chocolatey and perfect for entertaining.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup (60 ml) smooth natural cashew butter
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) coconut oil
- 1 cup (240 ml) sugar-free chocolate chips
- 3 Tbsp (45 ml) raw cacao powder or cocoa powder
- 4 tsp (20 ml) pure vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) food-grade vegetable glycerin (first choice) or yacon syrup (see note)
- Pinch fine sea salt, or to taste
- 1/3 cup (80 ml) chopped lightly toasted walnuts, optional

INSTRUCTIONS

Line a small (6 inch or 15 cm) loaf pan with parchment paper or a double layer of plastic wrap.

In a small, heavy-bottomed pot over lowest heat, melt the cashew butter, coconut oil and chips, stirring

constantly until smooth. Remove from heat and stir in the cacao until no lumps remain.

Add the vanilla, glycerin and salt and stir vigorously until blended. The fudge will begin to appear glossy. Stir in the nuts, if using, until coated.

Pour the fudge into the pan and smooth the top. Refrigerate, uncovered, until firm, at least 3 hours. Once firm, cut into squares and store in the fridge in a covered container. Makes about 12 servings. May be frozen; defrost, covered in the fridge, overnight.

NOTE: I find the texture with glycerin to be remarkably like "real" fudge. You can use yacon as well, but the fudge may be a bit grittier. It will still taste great, though!

Matcha White Chocolate Truffles



Matcha White Chocolate Truffles

What could be more elegant than the combination of white chocolate and matcha? If you're a matcha lover, you will adore these rich truffles with a distinct white chocolate base.

INGREDIENTS

For the filling:

2.2 ounces (60 grams) cacao butter, chopped fine or grated
1/2 cup (120 ml) coconut butter (not oil), gently melted
1/2 cup (120 ml) raw cashews, dry (for nut-free, use 7 Tbsp [1/2 cup minus 1 Tbsp, or 105 ml] raw sunflower seeds)
Pinch fine sea salt
1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) pure vanilla extract
3 Tbsp (45 ml) to 1/4 cup (60 ml) xylitol, to taste
3 Tbsp (45 ml) vegetable glycerin (food grade)
3/4-1 tsp (3.5-5 ml) matcha green tea powder, to taste

For the coating:

1 cup (240 ml) coconut butter (not oil)
2 Tbsp (30 ml) virgin organic coconut oil
1 Tbsp (15 ml) xylitol or other granular sugar-free sweetener of choice
20-30 drops plain or vanilla pure stevia extract
1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) pure vanilla extract (omit if using vanilla stevia)

INSTRUCTIONS

Make the filling: In a small pot over lowest possible heat, melt the cocoa butter and coconut oil. Add to the jug of a high-speed blender with remaining ingredients, and blend until very smooth and liquefied. Pour into a small bowl and place in the refrigerator until just firm, about 30 minutes.

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT'D)

Using a small ice cream scoop or teaspoon, form the filling into balls and place on a plate lined with plastic wrap. Freeze until very firm, about an hour.

Make the coating: In a small pot over lowest possible heat, all ingredients until melted and smooth.

To coat the truffles, place each into the coating and roll to coat fully. Remove with a fork, and tap the fork on the side of the pot so that excess coating drips off. Carefully place on a plastic-lined plate and allow to harden. If you are coating all the truffles at once, allow coated truffles to wait in the refrigerator while you finish the uncoated ones. Once everything is coated and firm, store in a covered container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

To serve, remove from the fridge and allow to sit at room temperature up to 30 minutes before consuming. If desired, sprinkle additional matcha on top as decoration, or drizzle with melted chocolate. Makes 16-20 truffles. May be frozen.



Homemade "Turtles"

These confections are incredibly close to the real thing in appearance and taste! They're great for a special occasion, holiday meal, or party.

INGREDIENTS

For the Caramel:

1/4 cup (60 ml) xylitol or Lakanto
1 Tbsp (15 ml) pure vanilla extract
10-15 drops English Toffee stevia, or to taste
1 tsp (5 ml) unsweetened almond milk or alternative milk of choice
1 Tbsp (15 ml) coconut oil
Pinch fine sea salt
1/3 cup (80 ml) natural smooth almond butter

For the coating:

1/3 cup (80 ml) sugar-free chocolate chips (I use Lilys)
1-2 tsp (5-10 ml) coconut oil (start with 1 tsp/5ml and add more only if chocolate is very thick)
24-27 lightly toasted pecan halves

INSTRUCTIONS

Line a large plate with 2 layers of plastic wrap (the double layer ensures that they don't stick to the plate).

Make the filling: In a small, heavy-bottomed pot over low heat, everything except the almond butter and stir constantly until the xylitol has dissolved and the mixture begins to bubble on the edges. Add the almond butter and stir until combined; continue to stir until the mixture darkens somewhat and bubbles on the edges, about 30 seconds more. Set aside to cool a bit.

Make the coating: Meanwhile, in another small pot, melt the chocolate chips and coconut oil, stirring until very smooth.

Assemble the turtles: Place 8-9 small circles of chocolate (about 1/2 tsp or 2.5 ml) on the plate, spaced evenly apart. Using 3 pecan halves for each circle, place them so that the tips meet in the center of the chocolate (in a "Y" shape). Place in the freezer for 5 minutes so the chocolate can begin to set.

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT'D)

Once you remove the plate from the freezer, scoop some of the caramel filling (it should have firmed up a bit by now; if it isn't firm enough to hold a shape, place it in the freezer for 5-10 minutes, too, before using). Using a heaping teaspoon of filling per turtle, place the filling over the pecan halves so there is a dome of filling over the center of each turtle. Return to the freezer for 10-15 minutes, until the filling is hard.

To coat each turtle, remove them one at a time (it's best if you remove no more than 3 turtles from the freezer at a time so they don't start to melt) and place on a fork. Spoon the chocolate over the filling, allowing any excess to drip off the fork back into the pot. Tap the fork on the side of the pot so any remaining chocolate drips off; then place the turtle back on the plate and return it to the freezer until the coating is firm. Repeat until all the turtles are coated.

Once the turtles are firm, they can be moved to the refrigerator and stored in a covered container for up to 2 weeks. Makes 8-9 turtles.

A photograph of several pieces of chocolate-peppermint bark on a decorative white plate with a green floral border. The bark is dark chocolate with white peppermint chips and red goji berries. The plate is set on a red tablecloth with gold star patterns. In the background, there are two champagne flutes, one with a chocolate swirl, and a pink candle. The text "Chocolate-Peppermint Bark (with a Protein Boost)" is written in a cursive font in the upper right corner.

*Chocolate-Peppermint
Bark (with a Protein
Boost)*

dietdessertndogs.com

Chocolate-Peppermint Bark with a Protein Boost

A lovely, festive chocolate snack that delivers more than mere calories. Feel free to play with the flavors in this creamy confection.

INGREDIENTS

2 cups (160 g) raw unsweetened finely shredded coconut (not the large shreds) OR
1 cup (240 ml) raw coconut butter, melted
3/4 cup (120 g) raw hemp seeds
1/3 cup (80 ml) coconut sugar or xylitol
2 ounces (60 g) good quality unsweetened chocolate, chopped
1/2-1 tsp (2.5 to 5 ml) peppermint or vanilla pure stevia liquid, to your taste
Pinch fine sea salt
1 tsp (5 ml) pure vanilla extract
1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) pure peppermint extract
1 scoop raw protein powder (I used Growing Naturals chocolate rice)
1/4 cup (60 ml) goji berries, **dried cranberries**, blueberries or cherries, or
chopped nuts, if desired
1-2 Tbsp (15-30 ml) more hemp seeds, if desired

INSTRUCTIONS

Line a loaf pan or mold with plastic wrap and set aside.

Place the coconut or coconut butter, hemp seeds and coconut sugar in a high-powered blender and, using the tamper to keep the mixture moving, blend until liquefied. This should take only a minute or two. (If you have a powerful food processor, you can use it instead, but it will take longer for the coconut to turn to butter, and the texture will be slightly more grainy.) Add the chocolate, stevia, salt and vanilla, and continue to blend, stirring with the tamper, until the chocolate is completely melted and the mixture is smooth. Finally, add the protein powder and blend again until incorporated.

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT'D)

Pour into the pan and smooth the top. Sprinkle with goji berries and additional hemp seeds if desired. Place in refrigerator until firm, at least 2 hours.

Once firm, invert onto a cutting board and remove the plastic. Cut into odd shapes and store, covered, in the refrigerator. Serve cold. Makes 12-16 pieces. Will keep, refrigerated, up to 2 weeks. *Protein per piece (12 pieces): 7.5 g.*



Raw Gingersnap Cookie Bon Bons

The variations are endless for these yummy bites—either press into a loaf pan and cut in squares, or roll into balls and coat in “white chocolate” coating for a mind-blowingly good treat (and an impressive gift). The balls are great without the coating, too, for a healthy snack, or frost the bars with icing before cutting—either way, they won’t last long.

INGREDIENTS

Cookie “dough”:

- 2/3 cup (110 g) raw natural almonds
- 2/3 cup (110 g) raw or lightly toasted cashews
- 2/3 cup (65 g) old-fashioned rolled oats (not instant or quick cook)
- 2 tsp (10 ml) cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) ground cloves
- 2 tsp (10 ml) whole chia seeds, measured and then ground into a powder in a coffee grinder
- Pinch fine sea salt
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) finely grated fresh ginger pulp
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) yacon syrup
- 50-70 drops plain or vanilla stevia liquid, to your taste (about 1/2 tsp/2.5 ml)
- Up to 2 Tbsp (30 ml) almond or soy milk, as needed

Optional “White Chocolate” Coating:

- 1 cup (160 g) coconut butter (not oil)
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) coconut oil, preferably organic
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) xylitol or Lakanto
- 15-25 drops plain or vanilla liquid stevia, to your taste
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) pure vanilla extract
- Extra cinnamon, if desired, for sprinkling

INSTRUCTIONS

Make the dough: Place the almonds, cashews, oats, cinnamon, cloves, chia and salt in the bowl of a food processor and process until the mixture resembles a very fine meal (like a coarse cornmeal). Add the remaining ingredients and process until it begins to come together in a ball. It should look fairly dry but stick together when pinched between your thumb and fingers. Add milk *only* if absolutely necessary to make the dough stick together; it should *not* be wet.

Using a small scoop or a teaspoon, scoop the dough and form into balls. Place on a plate in the freezer to firm up and become very cold, 10-20 minutes. (Alternately, press the “dough” in the bottom of a loaf pan and refrigerate).

Prepare the coating: Place all ingredients in the container of a high-powered blender and blend until perfectly smooth and liquid, about 5 minutes, scraping down sides as necessary. Pour the mixture into a small, deep bowl. (If you don't have a high-powered blender, you can first process the mixture in a food processor until it comes together and looks like coconut butter, up to 10 minutes. It should be loose. Transfer the coating to a regular blender and blend, in batches if necessary, until perfectly smooth and liquid. Transfer to a bowl).

Coat the bon bons: Line a large, flat plate with plastic wrap and set aside. Dip each ball in the coconut coating until it is completely covered. Scoop out carefully with a fork, and tap the fork handle on the edge of the bowl so that excess coating drips back into the bowl. Place on the plate and return to the freezer until coating is solid (about 5 minutes); then repeat the coating process once more. Sprinkle gently with cinnamon, if desired. Once the coating is hard, the bon bons may be kept in the refrigerator. Makes about 20 bon bons. Store, covered, in the refrigerator up to one week.



“White Chocolate” Cups (with Pink Option)

I love anything to do with chocolate—and white chocolate was one of my favorite things before I stopped eating dairy products. This is as good a simulation as I’ve found. The optional gojis provide a lovely pinkish color that makes these treats perfect for Valentine’s Day, too.

INGREDIENTS

6 Tbsp (90 ml) coconut butter (not oil), gently melted
(35 g) cacao butter, chopped fine
15-20 drops vanilla pure stevia liquid, or to taste
Pinch fine sea salt
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
1 tsp (5 ml) sunflower lecithin (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

Set aside 8-10 chocolate molds, silicone mini-muffin cups, or a small loaf pan that has been lined with parchment.

In a small, heavy-bottomed pot, melt the coconut butter over lowest possible heat. Add the cacao butter and stir constantly until melted. Remove from heat and stir in remaining ingredients. Pour into molds and allow to firm up in the refrigerator, at least 2 hours. Once firm, chocolate should be stored in the refrigerator until ready to eat.

White-and-pink striped variation: While the coconut butter melts, grind a heaping Tbsp (20 ml) dried goji berries in a coffee grinder or blender, until powdered. Remove about 1/4 cup (60 ml) of the chocolate from the pot and place in a small bowl with the goji powder; mix well.

Pour a layer of the white chocolate into the molds and allow to set in the freezer for about five minutes. Top with a layer of the goji chocolate and freeze for another five minutes; finally, top with more white chocolate and freeze until firm. Once firm, chocolates can be stored in the refrigerator. Makes 8-10 mini chocolate cups.



Sugar-Free Sugar Cookies

These simple, not-too-sweet cookies are the perfect base for cutouts or decorations. The dough remains soft and workable even when rolled and recut several times, but these will work well as drop cookies, too. They are great to make with kids — and don't worry if they snack on the raw dough, as it doesn't contain eggs!

INGREDIENTS

6 Tbsp (90 ml) light agave nectar or low glycemic fiber-based sweetener
1 Tbsp (15 ml) finely ground chia seeds (from about 1-1/2 tsp or 7.5 ml whole seeds)
2 Tbsp (30 ml) plain or vanilla soy or almond milk
1 tsp (5 ml) pure vanilla extract
1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) pure lemon extract
2 cups (265 g) **Ricki's All-Purpose Gluten-Free Flour Mix**
1 tsp (5 ml) xanthan gum
1-1/2 tsp (7.5 ml) baking powder
1/4 tsp (1 ml) fine sea salt
1/2 cup (120 ml) coconut oil, at room temperature, preferably organic

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper, or spray with nonstick spray. In a glass measuring cup or small bowl, whisk together the agave nectar, chia, milk, vanilla, and lemon extract. Set aside while you prepare the other ingredients, or at least 2 minutes.

In the bowl of a food processor, briefly process the flour, xanthan gum, baking powder, and salt. Drop the coconut oil in chunks over the flour mixture, then process again until incorporated. The mixture should appear crumbly, but hold together when squeezed in your hand. Pour the wet mixture in a ring over the dry and process until it comes together in a soft, sticky dough.

To make drop cookies, use the dough immediately. Drop from a small ice-cream scoop or tablespoon (15 ml) onto the prepared cookie sheets about 2 inches (5 cm) apart. Flatten slightly with your palm (or use a silicone spatula).

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT'D)

For rolled cookies, gather the dough together and form it into a disk. Wrap the disk in plastic wrap and refrigerate until firm, about one hour. Once firm, remove the dough and roll out on a piece of waxed paper to about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6 mm) thick. If it's very firm, it may begin to crack as you roll it, but if you persist, the dough will begin to warm and will roll beautifully. Cut into desired shapes and place 2 inches (5 cm) apart on the cookie sheets. Gather any remaining scraps of dough together and roll again; repeat until all the dough is used.

Bake for 10 to 13 minutes, rotating the sheets about halfway through baking, until the edges are golden. Cool completely before removing from the cookie sheets and decorating as desired. May be frozen.



Tender Shortbread Cookies

These delicious cookies are a bit softer and less sandy in texture than traditional shortbread, but they offer a rich, buttery mouthfeel and taste nonetheless. And you can't beat this recipe for ease!

INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup (60 ml) coconut sugar or xylitol, ground to a powder in a coffee grinder

2 Tbsp (30 ml) vanilla flavored rice-based protein powder or garfava flour (I personally preferred the protein powder version)

1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) xanthan gum

Pinch fine sea salt

1/2 cup (120 ml) coconut butter, melted (not coconut oil)

2 tsp (10 ml) unsweetened alternative milk of choice

1/4 tsp (1 ml) plain or vanilla pure stevia liquid, or to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 325F (170C). Line a cookie sheet with parchment.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the powdered xylitol, protein powder, xanthan gum and salt. Add remaining ingredients and mix well. Knead with clean hands for 10 or 15 seconds to create a soft and pliable dough.

Using a teaspoon, scoop dough into mounds and gently roll into balls (the dough might be a bit fragile, so roll carefully or the balls may fall apart). You should have 12 balls.

Flatten each ball to about 1/2 inch (1 cm) thickness. Bake for 18-22 minutes, until the cookies are deep golden brown. Allow to cool completely before removing from the cookie sheet (they will fall apart if you try to remove them while warm).

Store in a closed container at room temperature for up to 3 days. Makes one dozen.



Coconut Macaroons

A chewy, coconutty treat with just a hint of chocolate in every bite. High fiber and low glycemic, these might just be the ideal cookie.

INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup (45 g) raw natural almonds
2 Tbsp (30 ml) coconut flour
2 Tbsp (30 ml) finely ground flax seeds
1/8 tsp (.5 ml) fine sea salt
1 cup (80 g) unsweetened shredded dried coconut
1 Tbsp (15 ml) virgin coconut oil, preferably organic
2 Tbsp (30 ml) smooth natural cashew butter or tahini (sesame paste)
1/4 cup (60 ml) yacon syrup or agave nectar (see note)
1 tsp (5 ml) pure vanilla extract
1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) pure coconut extract, optional
1-2 Tbsp (15-30 ml) cacao nibs or sugar-free chocolate chips

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350F. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper, or spray with nonstick spray. In the bowl of a food processor, process the almonds, coconut flour, flax seeds and salt until the mixture attains the texture of coarse cornmeal (there should be no pieces of almond larger than sesame seeds). Add the coconut and pulse once or twice to combine.

In a small, heavy bottomed pot over low heat, melt together the coconut oil and cashew butter just until smooth. Whisk in the yacon syrup until well combined, then add the vanilla and coconut extract. Pour the mixture over the dry ingredients in the processor and sprinkle with the cacao nibs, if using. Process until the mixture comes together in a sticky "dough" and the nibs have broken up a bit.

Using a small ice cream scoop or teaspoon, scoop out about 2 tsp (10 ml) of dough per cookie and place on cookie sheet. Wet your palm (or use a silicon spatula) and flatten the cookies until they are about 3/8" (1 cm) thick.

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT'D)

Bake in preheated oven 10-13 minutes, rotating the sheet about halfway through, until cookies are deep golden and beginning to brown on the edges. They should still feel soft when pressed on top with your finger (but will be hot!). Allow to cool before removing from the sheet. Makes 12 smallish cookies. May be frozen.

*Note: While I tend to avoid agave nectar in most cases, for this recipe, I do prefer it. Yacon syrup will yield darker macaroons with a more robust flavor. They'll still be tasty, but not so much like traditional macaroons.



As-You-Like Holiday Nut-Free, Grain-Free Cookies

If you follow a low-oxalate diet, you will love these cookies. If you don't follow a low-oxalate diet, you will love these cookies! Quick, easy, and made with few ingredients--what's not to love?

INGREDIENTS

- 3 heaping Tbsp (50 ml) unsweetened sunflower seed butter
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) virgin coconut oil
- 2-1/2 Tbsp (37.5 ml) xylitol, measured and then ground to a powder in a coffee grinder, spice grinder or blender
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) edible vegetable glycerin
- 1 tsp (5 ml) pure vanilla extract
- 2 tsp (10 ml) unsweetened alternative milk of choice (I used oat milk)
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) grain-free, pea-based protein powder (you could also try chickpea flour)
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) green banana flour or 2 tsp (10 ml) coconut flour
- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) baking powder
- 1/8 tsp (.5 ml) fine sea salt (only if the sunflower butter isn't salted)

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350F (180C). Line a cookie sheet with parchment.

In a medium bowl, blend together the sunflower seed butter and coconut oil until smooth (if the coconut oil is really hard, melt it first). Add the xylitol, glycerin, vanilla and milk and mix until smooth.

Stir in the remaining ingredients and mix well. You should have a soft dough, but one that will just hold its shape.

Using a small ice cream scoop or tablespoon, scoop the dough into 6 or 7 mounds, and flatten slightly. Bake for 7-8 minutes, just until the cookies begin to brown on the edges (they'll be quite soft in the middle). Allow to cool completely, as cookies will firm up as they cool. May be frozen. Recipe may be doubled.

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT'D)

Variations:

Chocolate Chip Cookies: add 2 Tbsp (30 ml) sugar-free chocolate chips to the batter after everything else is mixed (note: they will no longer be low oxalate with chocolate--unless you use white chocolate).

Coconut Cookies: Add 2 Tbsp (30 ml) shredded coconut to the batter after everything else is mixed.

Cranberry Cookies: Add 2 Tbsp (30 ml) sugar-free dried cranberries to the batter after everything else is mixed.

Lemon: Add 2 tsp (10 ml) lemon zest to the batter along with the other wet ingredients.

Chocolate Caramel Slice



Chocolate Caramel Slice

I love a good no-bake bar, and this one is exemplary. Crunchy, crispy, uber-chocolately base is topped with gooey, rich caramel. Slice, and eat. Seriously, what could be better?

INGREDIENTS

For the base:

- 2-1/2 cups (100 g) natural crispy rice cereal
- 1/2 cup (45 g) unsweetened dried coconut (either fine or medium shred works)
- 2 tsp (10 ml) virgin coconut oil, preferably organic
- 2/3 cup (100 g) coconut sugar or Lakanto, ground to a powder in a coffee grinder or blender
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) unsweetened coconut beverage (in a carton)
- 20-30 drops plain or vanilla pure stevia liquid, or to taste
- Pinch fine sea salt
- 7-3/4 ounces (220 g) good quality unsweetened chocolate, chopped

For the Caramel Topping:

- 6 Tbsp (60 g) coconut sugar or Lakanto, ground to a powder in a coffee grinder or blender
- 20-30 drops plain or vanilla pure stevia liquid, or to taste
- 1-1/2 Tbsp (22.5 ml) pure vanilla extract
- 3 Tbsp (45 ml) unsweetened coconut beverage (the kind in a carton) or light coconut milk
- Pinch fine sea salt
- 1 cup (240 ml) smooth natural almond butter
- About 1/4 cup (60 ml) more coconut or chopped chocolate, for garnish (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

Make the base: Line an 8×8 inch (20 cm) square pan with parchment and set aside. In a large bowl, toss together the cereal and coconut.

In a small, heavy-bottomed pot, combine the coconut oil, coconut sugar, coconut beverage, stevia and salt. Cook and stir over medium-low heat until the mixture begins to bubble around the edges and the sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat and stir in the chocolate. Allow to sit for 30 seconds, then stir again, until all the chocolate is melted.

Pour the melted chocolate mixture over the cereal mixture and stir until all the cereal and coconut are well coated. Using the back of a spoon or a clean hand, pack the mixture evenly into the pan. Place in the refrigerator while you prepare the caramel.

Make the topping: In a small, heavy bottomed pot, combine the coconut sugar, stevia, vanilla, coconut beverage and salt. Cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until the mixture begins to bubble around the sides.

Continue cooking until the bubbles start to foam up and move across the entire surface of the pot, then immediately remove from heat and stir in the almond butter. It will appear separated at first, but as you continue to stir vigorously, it will come together to form a thick caramel.

Spread the caramel evenly over the chocolate base and sprinkle the top with extra coconut or chopped chocolate, if desired. Return to the refrigerator until firm, 2-4 hours. Cut into squares. May be served cold or at room temperature. Store, covered, in the refrigerator up to one week.

Note: for an easy variation, make round treats in individual muffin cups (makes about 10 cups).



Soft and Chewy Gingerbread Cookies

These cookies will remind you of traditional holidays of yore. . . in other words, they taste just like your Grandma's cookies! My hubby loved these and has requested them for our Christmas this year.

INGREDIENTS

2 Tbsp (30 ml) potato starch
2 Tbsp (30 ml) carob powder
3 Tbsp (45 ml) xylitol, Lakanto, or other dry monkfruit-based sweetener
1/4 cup (60 ml) natural smooth cashew butter
1 Tbsp (15 ml) yacon syrup
1 Tbsp (15 ml) whole psyllium husks
1 Tbsp (15 ml) coconut oil, soft at room temperature (if it's hard, you can melt it first)
1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) ground ginger
1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) ground cinnamon
1/8 tsp (.5 ml) ground cloves
1/8 tsp (.5 ml) fine sea salt, or more, to taste
1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) baking powder
1 Tbsp (15 ml) water, ONLY if batter is too thick
Extra xylitol, for dipping

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350F (180C). Line a large cookie sheet with parchment.

Place the xylitol, potato starch and carob powder in a small spice or coffee grinder and grind until powdered.

Add the powder and all the remaining ingredients except for the extra xylitol to the bowl of a small food processor and process until you have a soft, sticky dough that is soft but firm enough to hold a shape.

Using a small ice cream scoop or tablespoon, scoop the dough onto the sheet in mounds about 2 inches (5 cm) apart.

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT'D)

If desired, sprinkle some extra xylitol on a small plate. Using the bottom of a glass, press the glass onto one cookie to flatten it slightly, then onto the xylitol so it sticks to the glass; then back onto the cookie to coat it with the xylitol. Keep pressing the glass onto the xylitol and then onto the cookies until all cookies have a thin coating of extra xylitol on top.

Bake for 8-10 minutes, until slightly puffed and still a bit soft. Allow to cool completely before consuming. These will firm up as they cool, then firm up even more overnight.

Store in a covered container at room temperature up to 2 days, or in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. Makes 6 large or 8 medium-sized cookies. May be frozen.



Frosted Pumpkin Cinnamon Blondies

If you love pumpkin and you love rich, dense, and chewy bars, this autumn treat is for you! Like a brown with a pumpkin-cinnamon base, all topped with smooth pumpkin frosting. A perfect dessert or snack!

INGREDIENTS

1 Tbsp (15 ml) whole chia seeds
1/3 cup (80 ml) xylitol or Lakanto
2/3 cup (160 ml) unsweetened pumpkin purée
1 Tbsp (15 ml) pure vanilla extract
1 tsp (5 ml) apple cider vinegar
2 cups (480 ml) raw walnut halves (or pieces and halves)
2 Tbsp (30 ml) unrefined coconut oil, preferably organic
1/4 cup (60 ml) plain rice or grain-free protein powder
1 Tbsp (15 ml) whole psyllium husk powder
1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) baking powder
1/4 tsp (1 ml) baking soda
1/8 tsp (.5 ml) fine sea salt, or to taste
Tbsp (15 ml) cinnamon

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 325F (170C). Line an 8 or 9-inch (20 or 22.5 cm) loaf pan with parchment, or grease with coconut oil.

In a coffee grinder or spice grinder, whirl the chia seeds and xylitol to a powder. Add to a small bowl with the pumpkin, vanilla and apple cider vinegar. Stir to begin dissolving the xylitol.

Meanwhile, in a bowl of a food processor, process the walnuts until they resemble fine crumbs. Add the coconut oil and process until liquefied (you are making walnut butter!).

Add the pumpkin mixture and all other ingredients to the processor and blend until combined. Spread in the pan and smooth the top. Bake for 30-40 minutes, rotating the pan about halfway through, until dry on top and a tester inserted in the middle of the pan comes out clean but moist. Allow to cool completely before frosting with **Caramel Frosting**.



Grain-Free Ginger Blondies

I created these blondies as part of a campaign for NuNaturals syrups, and chose the Ginger Syrup because I love how the flavor works well with the blondie base and chocolate chips. If you're not a fan of ginger, however, the recipe works beautifully with the Vanilla Syrup as well, so enjoy your blondies either way!

INGREDIENTS

6 Tbsp (90 ml) natural smooth cashew butter
3 Tbsp (45 ml) raw or toasted coconut butter, melted (not coconut oil)
3 Tbsp (45 ml) chickpea flour, sifted
1/8-1/4 tsp (.5-1 ml) fine sea salt (to taste)
2 Tbsp (30ml) whole psyllium husks
3 Tbsp (45 ml) NuNaturals Ginger Syrup
1/4 tsp (1 ml) NuNaturals vanilla stevia liquid (optional)
4 tsp (1 Tbsp plus 1 tsp) pure vanilla extract
3 Tbsp (45 ml) unsweetened almond, cashew or other alternative milk of choice
1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) baking powder
1/4 cup (60 ml) sugar-free chocolate chips (I used Lilys brand)

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 325F (170C). Line an 8- or 9-inch loaf pan with parchment, or spray with nonstick spray.

In a medium bowl, combine the cashew butter and coconut butter until smooth. Stir in the chickpea flour, salt and psyllium husks and blend well.

Add the Ginger Syrup, optional vanilla stevia, vanilla extract, milk and baking powder and stir to form a soft dough. Finally, stir in the chocolate chips. Spread the dough evenly in the pan and bake for 18-23 minutes, until beginning to brown on the edges and just firm on top. Allow to cool completely before serving (the blondies will firm up as they cool). Makes 6-8 large blondies.

Variation: For individual blondies, divide the dough evenly among muffin tins or mini muffin tins; bake only 15-18 minutes.

Citrus Shortbread

(gluten-free, vegan, sugar-free)



Citrus Shortbreads

Who doesn't love shortbread at the holidays? These tender, rich-tasting cookies can be made traditional if served on their own, or gussied up with the tangy glaze.

INGREDIENTS

For the Shortbread:

1/2 cup (120 ml) xylitol or coconut sugar
2 Tbsp (30 ml) coconut nectar
Finely grated zest of one orange, lemon or lime
2 Tbsp (30 ml) fresh orange, lemon or lime juice
2 tsp (10 ml) pure vanilla extract
20 drops (about 1/8 tsp or .5 ml) pure orange stevia liquid (use lemon flavor for the lemon or lime cookies)
1 cup (120 g) raw walnut halves or pieces and halves
6 Tbsp (60 g) brown rice flour
1/2 cup (75 g) coconut flour
1/2 cup (60 g) glutinous rice flour (also called sweet rice flour)
1 tsp (5 ml) xanthan gum
1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) baking powder
1/4 tsp (1 ml) fine sea salt

For the Optional Glaze and Garnish:

3 Tbsp (45 ml) xylitol or coconut sugar
1 tsp (5 ml) fresh orange, lemon or lime juice
About 2 Tbsp (30 ml) fresh orange, lemon or lime zest

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 325F (170C). Line a 9-inch (22.5 cm) square pan with parchment paper.

In a small bowl, mix the xylitol, coconut nectar, zest of one orange (or lemon or lime), fresh juice, vanilla and stevia. Stir until the xylitol is dissolved (you may need to set it aside for 5 minutes or so, then stir again before it dissolves).

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT'D)

In the bowl of a food processor, whir the walnuts, brown rice flour, coconut flour, glutinous rice flour, xanthan gum, baking powder and salt to a fine powder. Pour the wet mixture in a ring over the dry ingredients and process again just until the mixture comes together in a moist dough.

Pat the dough evenly into the pan. Using a sharp knife, score the top of the dough to create 25 squares, then poke holes across the top of each square with a fork.

Bake for 28-35 minutes, rotating the pan about halfway through, until the edges are golden. Cool completely in the pan.

Meanwhile, make the glaze: In a small bowl, combine all ingredients and whisk until the xylitol is fully dissolved (you may need to leave it for 5 minutes or so, then stir again to dissolve it entirely).

Once cool, invert onto a cutting board, then flip again so that the scored side faces up. Carefully cut through the scored lines to separate the cookies. Brush with glaze and sprinkle with additional orange zest, if desired. Makes 25 cookies. May be frozen.



Individual Chocolate-Hazelnut Brownies

I had to make these individual brownies, because you're definitely not going to want to share! Crackled on top, moist and gooey inside, these brownies are decadent and delicious. And the bonus? They taste like Nutella! Top each with some ice cream, whipped cream or fruit compote and you've got a very special-occasion dessert.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup (240 ml) **“Notella”**

6 Tbsp (90 ml) grain-free plain, vanilla or chocolate protein powder (I prefer chocolate)

1/4 tsp (1 ml) xanthan gum (you can sub 3 Tbsp/45 ml psyllium husk, but the texture will be slightly grainy)

1 tsp (5 ml) pure vanilla extract

1/4 cup (60 ml) yacon syrup, sugar free maple syrup or prebiotic fiber syrup (such as Beni-Sweet)

1/4 tsp (1 ml) baking powder

1/3 cup (80 ml) sugar free chocolate chips

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350F (180C). Grease 6 small ramekins (about 3-3.5 inches or 7.5-9 cm diameter).

In a medium bowl, combine the “Notella,” protein powder, psyllium husks, vanilla, syrup and baking powder to create a thick, sticky batter. Stir in the chocolate chips.

Divide the batter evenly among the ramekins and smooth the tops. Bake in preheated oven for 20-25 minutes, until the tops are puffed and dry; the inside can still be moist. Remove from heat and allow to cool completely (the tops may sink a little; this is fine).

Once cool, serve with ice cream, whipped cream, chocolate glaze, fruit compote, or as-is. May be frozen. Makes 6 individual servings.

Chocolate Berry Swirl Cheesecake



rickiheller.com

Chocolate Berry Swirl Cheesecake

This special-occasion cheesecake makes a perfect end to a romantic (or non-romantic) meal. Yes, I use tofu for this cake, so if you're not so inclined, this recipe isn't for you. I do love raw cheesecakes for an authentic texture, but when it comes to baked vegan cheesecake, I've found that silken tofu is really the best base. If you give this one a try, I'm sure you'll agree.

INGREDIENTS

For the crust:

- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) xylitol (see note)
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) coconut flour
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) [Ricki's All-Purpose Gluten-Free Flour Mix](#)
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) whole psyllium husks
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) ground chia seeds (from about 1 Tbsp/15 ml whole chia)
- 3/4 cup (85 g) raw pecan halves or pieces
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) baking powder
- 1/8 tsp (.5 ml) fine sea salt
- 1 tsp (5 ml) cinnamon
- 2 tsp (10 ml) pure vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) coconut oil, at room temperature
- 3 Tbsp (45 ml) alternative milk of choice (I use unsweetened almond milk)

For the filling:

- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) coconut oil
- 4 ounces (115 g) sugar-free chocolate chips or chocolate, chopped
- 1 package extra-firm Mori Nu silken tofu
- 1/2 cup (75 g) raw cashews or 1/4 cup (60 ml) cashew butter
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) xylitol (see note)
- 2 tsp (10 ml) fresh lemon juice
- 1/4-1/2 tsp (1-2.5 ml) pure plain or vanilla stevia liquid, or to taste
- 1 tsp (5 ml) pure almond extract

INGREDIENTS (CONT'D)

2 tsp (10 ml) pure vanilla extract
pinch fine sea salt

For the berry swirl:

1/2 cup (120 ml) sugar-free fruit spread or sugar-free cranberry sauce
1 Tbsp (15 ml) coconut nectar (or stevia, to taste)

INSTRUCTIONS

Make the crust: Preheat oven to 350F (180C). Line an 8.5 or 9 inch (21.5 or 23 cm) springform pan or pie plate with parchment. Grease the sides with coconut oil or nonstick spray.

In a coffee grinder or spice grinder, grind the xylitol, coconut flour and all purpose gluten-free flour until powdered. Place in the bowl of a food processor along with the psyllium, ground chia, pecans, baking powder, salt and cinnamon and whirl until it attains the texture of cornmeal and no pieces of pecan are visible. Add the remaining ingredients and blend until combined. It should appear slightly moist and stick together if pinched between your fingers.

Press the crust into the bottom of the pan and prick several times with a fork. Bake for 12-15 minutes, until it's dry on top and just starting to puff a bit. Remove from the oven until you have the filling ready.

Meanwhile, make the filling: In a small pot over lowest possible heat, melt the coconut oil and chocolate, stirring constantly until smooth. Remove from heat.

In a high-powered blender, blend remaining ingredients until perfectly smooth (note: if you use whole cashews instead of cashew butter, you must use a high-powered blender; otherwise, if you use cashew butter, a food processor or regular blender should be fine). Add the oil-chocolate mixture and blend until incorporated.

Pour about 2/3 of the batter into the pan and smooth the top. Dollop spoonfuls of the berry filling randomly over the top, leaving some spots uncovered. Then, dollop the remainder of the chocolate batter here and there to fill in any empty spots. (Don't worry if it's not perfect; you're about to marble it anyway).

INSTRUCTIONS (CONT'D)

Using a butter knife, carefully swirl the berry mixture into the batter to create a marbelized effect. You can either gently fold the chocolate over the berry mixture here and there, or else take the tip of the knife and draw it through the batter in "S" shapes to create this effect. Either way, the cake will still taste great; the idea is to spread the berry mixture around a bit without completely stirring it into the chocolate.

To even the top, grab the pan firmly on either side. Keeping the bottom of the pan on the counter, quickly and firmly rotate it once to the left, then to the right, so that the batter spreads out and smooths out on top. Do this several times to create a relatively flat surface on top of the cake.

Bake the cheesecake for 30-35 minutes, rotating the pan about halfway through, until the edges are dark and dry and the center is still slightly jiggly. Allow to cool before refrigerating at least 4 hours or overnight.

Note: if you're not a fan of xylitol or don't follow a candida diet, you could substitute coconut sugar for the xylitol. You will likely need about 25% more coconut sugar to achieve the same level of sweetness.



Upside Down Caramel Apple Pudding

This is one of those desserts that looks homey and rustic, but will knock the socks off of your guests or family when you serve it to them. Add a dollop of whipped cream and you've got the perfect ending to any holiday meal.

INGREDIENTS

Sauce:

1 batch of Pumpkin Caramel Sauce

Apples:

2 small green or other tart apples, diced small (peel if not organic)

2 Tbsp (30) golden Lakanto or xylitol

2.5 tsp (12.5 ml) cinnamon

Batter:

6 Tbsp (90 ml) coconut flour

3 Tbsp (45 ml) potato starch (can sub arrowroot or tapioca)

1 Tbsp (15 ml) whole psyllium husk

3/4 tsp (3.5 ml) baking powder

1/4 tsp (1 ml) baking soda)

1/8 tsp (.5 ml) fine sea salt

6 Tbsp (90 ml) unsweetened almond, cashew, or other nondairy milk of choice

3 Tbsp (45 ml) golden Lakanto or xylitol

1.5 Tbsp (22.5 ml) natural smooth almond butter, at room temperature (it should be runny)

1.5 tsp (7.5 ml) apple cider vinegar

1 Tbsp (15 ml) pure vanilla extract

1.5 Tbsp (22.5 ml) extra virgin olive oil

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350F (180C). Grease a 6-cup (1.5 L) casserole or soufflé pan with coconut oil or nonstick spray and set aside.

Prepare the caramel sauce and carefully pour it into the casserole. Set aside.

Prepare the apples: in a medium bowl, toss the diced apples with the Lakanto and cinnamon until evenly coated. Gently scatter them evenly over the caramel sauce in the casserole dish. It's okay if some of them are submerged under the sauce.

Prepare the batter: In a medium bowl, sift together the coconut flour, potato starch, psyllium husk, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Whisk to combine.

In a small bowl, stir together the milk, Lakanto, almond butter, vinegar, vanilla and olive oil until perfectly smooth. Pour over the flour mixture and stir just to blend. It will start to thicken up fast, so work quickly!

Pour the batter over the apples in the casserole (if it starts to thicken, gently spread it evenly over the apples).

Bake for 30-40 minutes, until the batter is puffed and browned at the edges, and the caramel is bubbling at the sides of the dish. Allow to cool 15-20 minutes before serving.

To serve, either scoop directly from the casserole onto plates, or, for a fancier service, first run a sharp knife all around the edge of the casserole to loosen the pudding. Then, top the casserole with a large platter, flip over (be sure to use oven mitts as the casserole will still be hot!) and serve with the apple/caramel mixture on top. If any of the apples or caramel sticks to the casserole dish, just scoop them out at add to the top of the pudding)

Serve with coconut whipped cream, if desired. Makes 6 servings.



Almond Mousse

This is a very rich, decadent-tasting mousse, which means a small serving will satisfy!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup (240 ml) full-fat coconut milk, from a can
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) smooth natural almond butter
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) xylitol or Lakanto
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) pure plain or vanilla liquid stevia, or to taste
- 1 tsp (5 ml) pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) pure almond extract
- 1/4 tsp xanthan gum

INSTRUCTIONS

Place everything EXCEPT xanthan gum in a high-powered blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Be sure it is very well blended. Sprinkle with xanthan gum and blend again just until incorporated. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 4 hours, or overnight (the mousse firms up as it chills). Makes 8 servings. Really nice served with coconut whipped cream and/or sugar-free chocolate sauce.

NOTE: The blender will produce a lighter, more fluffy mousse (almost like marshmallow fluff); the processor will produce a slightly denser, thicker mousse.



Frozen Mocha Cheesecake Torte

This is a fabulous make-ahead dessert that will be a showstopper at your next get together. The key to "mocha" flavor without the coffee is Dandy Blend, a gluten-free powdered coffee substitute. If you are able to drink coffee, go ahead and use instant coffee powder instead, of course. Either way, you—and your guests—will oooh and aaaah over this torte!

INGREDIENTS

For the crust:

- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) xylitol
- 2 tsp (10 ml) whole chia seeds
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) Dandy Blend or any other instant coffee substitute
- 2/3 cup (80 g) raw walnut pieces or halves
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) shredded unsweetened coconut
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) apple cider vinegar
- 2 tsp (10 ml) unsweetened alternative milk of choice
- 2 Tbsp (30 ml) smooth natural walnut or almond butter

For the filling:

- 2-1/2 cups (400 g) raw cashews, dry (do not soak first)
- 2/3 cup (160 ml) unsweetened alternative milk of choice
- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) pure plain or vanilla liquid stevia, or to your taste
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) unrefined coconut oil, preferably organic
- 1 tsp (5 ml) Braggs aminos or gluten-free soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) apple cider vinegar
- 2-1/2 Tbsp (37.5 ml) Dandy Blend or any other instant coffee substitute
- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) carob powder, optional
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) xylitol
- Pinch fine sea salt

INGREDIENTS (CONT'D)

For the glaze:

2 ounces (60 g) sugar-free chocolate chips

1 tsp (15 ml) unrefined coconut oil, preferably organic, melted

INSTRUCTIONS

Make the crust: Line a 6-inch (15 cm) round pan (one with removable sides is best) with parchment paper.

Spray sides with nonstick spray.

In a coffee grinder or blender, combine the 1 Tbsp (15 ml) xylitol, 2 tsp (10 ml) chia seeds and 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) Dandy Blend, and blend until powdered.

In the bowl of a food processor, process the nuts and coconut until the mixture resembles fine crumbs. Add remaining ingredients including the powdered mix from the coffee grinder and blend until it forms a soft, sticky dough. Pat the dough evenly into the bottom of the pan. Set aside.

Make the filling: In the jug of a high-speed blender, combine the cashews, milk, stevia, coconut oil, Braggs, vanilla and apple cider vinegar. Blend, pressing down with the tamper or scraping sides with a spatula several times, until smooth. Add remaining ingredients and blend again until smooth and the xylitol is dissolved. Taste and adjust sweetness.

Pour the filling over the crust in the pan. Freeze until firm, at least 4 hours.

Make the glaze: Fill a small pot with about 1 inch (2.5 cm) of water and bring to a boil; lower to simmer.

Place a larger glass or metal bowl over the pot so that the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water.

Place the chocolate, cacao and oil in the bowl and stir constantly until melted and smooth. Add the stevia, taste and adjust sweetness if necessary.

Remove the torte from the freezer and gently remove it from the pan. Place on a tray or serving dish. Drizzle the glaze over the top in a decorative fashion (it should harden almost immediately). Slice the torte and serve. Makes 6-8 servings. Keep frozen until ready to serve.

Note: If you can have sweetened chocolate or can find sugar-free chocolate chips, feel free to use 2 ounces (60 g) of that chocolate instead for the glaze. Simply melt your 2 ounces/60 g of chopped chocolate or chips with 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) coconut oil and use that mixture as your glaze instead.



Cashew Ice Cream

There's a great brand of dairy-free ice cream that offers a cashew-based treat (instead of a coconut milk base). I loved it but decided I had to try to reproduce it at home. This delectable dessert is my own version—just as good as the original!

INGREDIENTS

1 cup (240 ml) raw cashews, dry
3 Tbsp (45 ml) xylitol, or more, to taste
1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla powder or 1 Tbsp (15 ml) pure vanilla extract
1 tsp (5 ml) pure vanilla extract
1 Tbsp (15 ml) extra virgin olive oil, preferably organic
Pinch fine sea salt
1-1/4 cups (300 ml) filtered water
1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) xanthan gum

INSTRUCTIONS

Set out 6 large silicone muffin cups (I put them into a metal muffin tin for support).

In a high-powered blender, blend the cashews with everything except the xanthan gum until smooth. Add xanthan gum and blend again. The mixture should thicken up considerably.

Divide the mixture evenly among the cups and freeze until firm, at least 4 hours. Pop out of the silicone cups and store the "muffins" in a Ziploc bag in the freezer until ready to use.

To make ice cream, remove one to two disks per person (I find that 3 disks serve two people perfectly) and cut in to 4 pieces each. Blend in a food processor until the mixture looks like breadcrumbs; press down with a spatula and then blend again until smooth. Serve immediately. Makes 4-6 servings.

Ricki's All-Purpose Gluten-Free Flour Mix

This is a great basic all-purpose gluten-free flour mix that you can use anywhere you'd use all-purpose wheat flour, in the same proportion. I use It in many baked goods in this book. If you prefer to use a commercial all-purpose gluten-free flour mix instead where appropriate, that should work, too.

Since this flour doesn't include a binder like xanthan gum or guar gum, I will provide amounts for any binders within the recipes themselves. When adapting other recipes, generally 1/2 - 3/4 tsp (2.5-3.5 ml) xanthan per cup when baking with this flour.

INGREDIENTS

2 cups (270 g) millet flour (can be found online on Amazon)

2/3 cup (100 g) garfava flour (you can use chickpea instead)

2/3 cup (120 g) potato starch

2/3 cup (90 g) arrowroot starch or powder (or substitute tapioca or cornstarch)

INSTRUCTIONS

Place all ingredients in a large bowl and stir with a whisk until the flour is evenly blended. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator if you won't be using it within a week or 10 days (will keep up to 6 weeks in the fridge). Measure as you would wheat-based all-purpose flour. Makes 4 cups.



Pumpkin Caramel Sauce

You can never have too many caramel sauce recipes, in my opinion! This one is great for the autumn holiday season—and perfect over ice cream in the summer.

INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 cup (180 ml) golden Lakanto or xylitol
- 2/3 cup (160 ml) unsweetened almond, cashew or other nondairy milk of choice
- 1.5 Tbsp (22.5 ml) unrefined coconut oil, preferably organic
- 3 Tbsp (45 ml) natural smooth almond butter, at room temperature (it should be runny)
- 6 Tbsp (90 ml) unsweetened pumpkin puree (not pie filling)
- 2 tsp (10 ml) pure vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) fine sea salt

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine all ingredients in a small pot over medium-low heat. Cook, stirring constantly, just until the mixture bubbles and begins to darken a bit. It will still seem too thin; this is as it should be. Allow to cool before using, stirring a couple of times to prevent crystallization of the Lakanto. Use as desired in desserts or over pancakes. Makes about one cup (240 ml). Store, covered, in the refrigerator, but reheat gently before using.



Caramel Frosting

This is a great frosting for cupcakes, cakes or brownies. If you can't find the caramel syrup, you can use a plain vanilla sugar-free syrup, such as NuNaturals.

INGREDIENTS

6 Tbsp (90 ml) coconut butter (not oil)
2 Tbsp (30 ml) natural smooth sunflower seed butter or almond butter
1/4 cup (60 ml) unsweetened nondairy milk of choice
2 Tbsp (30 ml) Lakanto Caramel Syrup (or use NuNaturals vanilla sugar-free syrup)
3 Tbsp (45 ml) xylitol or Lakanto (no need to grind)
Pinch fine sea salt

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine all ingredients in a small pot over lowest possible heat and stir until it just begins to bubble around the edges and the xylitol is completely melted. Transfer to a small bowl and refrigerate just until the edges begin to firm up, about 15 minutes. Then stir or whisk vigorously until it comes together in a frosting-like consistency. (Alternately, transfer the melted mixture to a mini food processor or blender and refrigerate in the container until it begins to firm up. Then whir until it attains a frosting-like consistency.). If the frosting remains runny or too soft, it's not cold enough; return to the fridge for another 10 minutes or so and try again.

About Ricki

Ever since being diagnosed with candida in 1999, Ricki has made it her mission to help people continue to love their food and continue to live their best lives, *even on an anti-candida diet protocol.*

Ricki studied Holistic Nutrition at the Canadian School of Natural Nutrition and later taught nutrition and alternative medicine at the college level for 12 years. These days, she works full time as a blogger, health educator, recipe developer and food transition coach with clients from around the world.

Ricki lives north of Toronto with her husband and two furry Girls. Learn more about Ricki on her site, rickiheller.com, or how you can work with her, [here](#).

