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Oatmeal Cookies

Until Bob's Red Mill came up with a totally affordable gluten-free oat, you would never have seen these in the bakery. Thank all that is holy—once again—for Bob's! Today these cookies are a best-seller in both New York and Los Angeles. If you hate raisins (I do . . . sorry, raisins!), try subbing in chocolate chips or dried cherries instead. If you're some sort of oat maniac, you can dump in as much as another 1/3 cup of oats and be just fine.

Preheat an oven to 325°F. Line 2 rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.

In a bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, oats, flax meal, cinnamon, xanthan gum, baking soda and salt. Add the coconut oil, applesauce and vanilla and stir with a rubber spatula until a thick dough forms. Stir in the raisins until evenly distributed.

Drop the dough by the tablespoonful onto the prepared baking sheets, spacing them about 1 inch apart. Bake for 8 minutes, rotate the baking sheets and bake until the cookies are golden, about 7 minutes more. Let the cookies stand on the baking sheets for 15 minutes before serving. Makes 36 cookies.

Adapted from *BabyCakes Covers the Classics* by Erin McKenna (Clarkson Potter/Publishers, 2011).

German Chocolate Cake

I'm hoping this cake doesn't need much introduction. Even though a German chocolate cake is not as recognizable without its beloved pecans, you can easily omit them if you are allergic and still achieve the same delicious experience.

Preheat an oven to 325°F. Line two 9-inch round cake pans with parchment paper and brush with coconut oil.

In a bowl, whisk together the flour, potato starch, cocoa powder, arrowroot, baking powder, baking soda, xanthan gum and salt. Add the agave nectar, coconut oil, applesauce and vanilla and stir with a rubber spatula until fully incorporated. Add the hot water and mix until a loose batter forms.

Divide the batter evenly between the pans. Bake for 15 minutes, rotate the pans and continue baking until a toothpick inserted into the middle comes out clean, about 15 minutes more. Let the cakes cool in the pans on a wire rack for 45 minutes. Run a knife around the edge of each pan and invert onto a cake plate or the counter. Allow to cool for 1 hour.

While the cakes cool, in a bowl, stir together the vanilla frosting, coconut and pecans with a rubber spatula. Set aside.

Place one layer of the cake on a serving plate and pour half of the icing on top, allowing it to drizzle down the sides. Place the second cake layer on top. Pour the remaining icing on it, allowing it to drizzle down the sides. Sprinkle the top of the cake with the additional coconut and pecans. Serves 10.

Adapted from *BabyCakes Covers the Classics* by Erin McKenna (Clarkson Potter/Publishers, 2011).

Ingredients for Oatmeal Cookies

1¾ cups Bob's Red Mill All-Purpose Gluten-Free Baking Flour

1 cup vegan sugar

½ cup Bob's Red Mill Gluten-Free Oats

¼ cup ground flax meal

2 Tbs. ground cinnamon

1½ tsp. xanthan gum

1 tsp. baking soda

1 tsp. salt

1 cup melted refined coconut oil or canola oil

½ cup unsweetened applesauce

2 Tbs. vanilla extract

¾ cup raisins

Ingredients for German Chocolate Cake

For the basic chocolate cake:

2 cups white or brown rice flour

½ cup potato starch

¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder

¼ cup arrowroot

1½ Tbs. baking powder

½ tsp. baking soda

½ tsp. xanthan gum

1 tsp. salt

1½ cups agave nectar

1 cup melted refined coconut oil or canola oil, plus more for brushing

1 cup unsweetened applesauce

⅓ cup vanilla extract

½ cup hot water

For the German chocolate icing:

1 batch vanilla frosting (recipe on previous page), chilled in the refrigerator for 4 hours

1 cup unsweetened shredded coconut, plus more for sprinkling

¾ cup chopped pecans, plus more for sprinkling (optional)

What Is Gluten?

Gluten is the protein found in grains such as wheat, barley and rye. It provides the structure, elasticity and texture in breads. Unfortunately, it also provides millions of people with a variety of digestive and general health maladies.

What Is Spelt?

Spelt is an ancient and distant ancestor of wheat, and it contains some of the same properties, including gluten. However, many people with wheat sensitivities are able to digest spelt comfortably and appreciate that it is high in complex carbohydrates, lower in overall carbohydrates, and contains enzymes that assist in glucose and insulin secretion.

Adapted from *BabyCakes* by Erin McKenna (Clarkson Potter/Publishers, 2009).

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Technique Class: Gluten-Free Baking

A gluten-free diet needn't close the door on sweets. With the help of chef Erin McKenna and her popular gluten-free bakery in New York City, plus her cookbooks *BabyCakes* and *BabyCakes Covers the Classics*, we've provided delicious gluten-free baked goods that everyone will enjoy—and no one will miss the gluten!

Gluten-Free Baking Glossary

Agave Nectar: Agave nectar, a sweetener derived from the agave plant, is a syrup that's light amber in color like honey but much lower on the glycemic index. Many people with sensitivities to sugar prefer agave because they find it doesn't cause their blood sugar to shoot up the way table sugar, honey or maple syrup does. In baking, substitute two-thirds the amount of agave per 1 cup of sugar so you end up adding fewer calories to your baked goods.

Apple Cider Vinegar: Made from pulverized apples, this vinegar is used in combination with rice milk to create a substitution for buttermilk.

Arrowroot: As a thickening substitute for cornstarch, arrowroot creates a desirably chewy texture.

Coconut Milk: Substituting coconut milk for rice or soy milk produces a creamier result but leaves a hint of coconut flavor.

Coconut Oil: This is the favored fat at BabyCakes. Coconut oil is high in lauric acid, so it strengthens the immune system, stores in your body as energy instead of fat and supports the proper functioning of your thyroid, thus stimulating your metabolism. Use the refined, unscented variety and be sure to melt it for these recipes.

Flax Meal: This buzz ingredient in the health industry is actually great for adding texture to baked goods.

Garbanzo and Fava Bean Flour: One of the favorite gluten-free flours at BabyCakes, this is highly effective in giving baked goods rise and a light crumb. Because the taste can be strong, it is often mixed with rice flour for a more delicate result.

Potato Starch: A necessary thickener for gluten-free baking that adds moisture, potato starch (not to be confused with potato flour!) can be interchanged with cornstarch with similar results.

Rice Flour: You can use brown or white rice flour for all these recipes without worrying too much over the results. Brown rice flour retains more of its nutrients.

Rice Milk: This is the perfect alternative to milk in any recipe. Read the labels to find a gluten-free, vegan variety.

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Sorghum Flour: Incorporate sorghum flour into recipes when you need a neutral flour that will adapt to the flavors you’re baking with. Sorghum is high in antioxidants and contains a balance of protein and starch that digests slowly, which is wonderful news for diabetics. It is also a perfect complement to garbanzo and fava bean flour.

Vanilla Extract: Since many brands of vanilla filter it with grain-based alcohol, make sure to find a gluten-free brand that you’re in ideological agreement with.

Vegan Sugar: This may be on your grocer’s shelves by the names evaporated cane juice, Florida Crystals, Rapadura or Sucanat. It is a choice substitute for refined sugar. Although it is made from sugarcane, it isn’t processed to the same degree or in the same ways, and therefore it retains a lot of the nutrients found in cane sugar, unlike bleached white sugar.

Unsweetened Cocoa Powder: This is not to be confused with regular cocoa powder, which contains sugar. Make sure to get natural unsweetened cocoa powder and avoid Dutch-process or alkalized versions, as they do not react with baking soda.

Xanthan Gum: A binding and thickening agent, xanthan gum is necessary to hold gluten-free baked goods together.

Adapted from *BabyCakes Covers the Classics* by Erin McKenna (Clarkson Potter/Publishers, 2011).

Vanilla Cupcakes

This recipe started it all. After five thousand or so failed attempts to produce a vegan, gluten-free cupcake in my slanted, 6-foot-by-5-inch kitchen in Brooklyn—with an oven that flared to broil at whim and had long since lost its temperature dial—I had to tape a picture of a cupcake on the fridge to remember what a cupcake should look like. When I finally hit the right formula, though, I knew it immediately. The cake was delicate and golden, tasting subtly of vanilla with a faint hint of lemon. Now, when I see rows of these beauties on the speed rack at the bakery awaiting frosting, it’s hard not to slip into nostalgic reverie.

Preheat an oven to 325°F. Line 2 standard 12-cup muffin tins with paper liners.

In a bowl, whisk together the flour, potato starch, arrowroot, baking powder, baking soda, xanthan gum and salt. Add the oil, agave nectar, applesauce, vanilla and lemon zest to the dry ingredients and combine. Stir in the hot water and mix until the batter is smooth.

Pour ⅓ cup batter into each prepared cup, almost filling it. Bake the cupcakes on the center rack for 22 minutes, rotating the tins 180 degrees after 15 minutes. The finished cupcakes will be golden brown and will bounce back when pressure is applied gently to the center.

Let the cupcakes stand in the tins for 20 minutes, then transfer them to a wire rack and cool completely. Using a frosting knife, gently spread 1 Tbs. vanilla frosting over each cupcake. Store the cupcakes in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Makes 24 cupcakes.

Adapted from *BabyCakes* by Erin McKenna (Clarkson Potter/Publishers, 2009).

Vanilla Frosting/Vanilla Sauce

Let’s just dive in, shall we? Not only does this recipe produce a thick and creamy vanilla frosting, it also doubles as a whipped topping and left unrefrigerated, it becomes a vanilla sauce to serve with crumbs, shortcakes or volcanoes. And why stop there? I especially love the sauce on savory bites like corn bread, muffins and biscuits, where it acts like a decadent sweet butter. If you try to steer clear of soy, replace the liquid and powdered soy with a rice milk variety for both in equal measure—but be advised that the result will taste slightly sweeter. Please note: If it’s true frosting you want, be sure to factor in the full 6 hours for it to chill and set.

In a blender or a food processor, combine the soy milk, soy powder, coconut flour, agave nectar and vanilla. Blend the ingredients for 2 minutes. With the machine running, slowly add the oil and lemon juice, alternating between the two until both are fully incorporated. Pour the mixture into an airtight container and refrigerate for 6 hours or for up to 1 month. (If you plan to use it as a sauce, store the mixture at room temperature for up to 1 week.) Makes enough to frost 24 cupcakes.

Adapted from *BabyCakes* by Erin McKenna (Clarkson Potter/Publishers, 2009).

Chips Ahoy!

I’m a lady who unabashedly prefers her cookies thin, chewy and intoxicatingly buttery. If I want a hunk of cake, I go for the cake section. This isn’t to say, however, that the preeminent cookie of my youth was not the mighty and comparatively meaty Chips Ahoy! And not those late-issue, M&M-flecked monstrosities either. I’m talking the real-deal original flavor, in all their dry and crumbly wonder. This is my version of that wonderfully named cookie.

Preheat an oven to 325°F. Line 2 rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.

In a bowl, whisk together the flours, sugar, flax meal, arrowroot, xanthan gum, baking soda and salt. Add the coconut oil, applesauce and vanilla and stir with a rubber spatula until a thick dough forms. Stir in the chocolate chips until evenly distributed.

Drop the dough by the teaspoonful onto the prepared baking sheets, spacing them about 1½ inches apart. Bake for 7 minutes, rotate the baking sheets and bake until the cookies are golden brown and firm, about 7 minutes more. Let the cookies stand on the baking sheets for 15 minutes before eating. Makes 36 cookies.

Adapted from *BabyCakes Covers the Classics* by Erin McKenna (Clarkson Potter/Publishers, 2011).

Ingredients for Vanilla Frosting/Vanilla Sauce

1½ cups unsweetened soy milk

¾ cup dry soy milk powder

1 Tbs. coconut flour

¼ cup agave nectar

1 Tbs. vanilla extract

1½ cups coconut oil

2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice

Ingredients for Chips Ahoy!

1½ cups oat flour

1 cup Bob’s Red Mill All-Purpose Gluten-Free Baking Flour

1 cup vegan sugar

¼ cup ground flax meal

¼ cup arrowroot

1½ tsp. xanthan gum

1 tsp. baking soda

1 tsp. salt

¾ cup plus 2 Tbs. melted refined coconut oil or canola oil

6 Tbs. unsweetened applesauce

2 Tbs. vanilla extract

1 cup vegan gluten-free chocolate chips

Ingredients for Vanilla Cupcakes

2 cups garbanzo-fava bean flour

1 cup potato starch

½ cup arrowroot

1 Tbs. plus 1½ tsp. baking powder

½ tsp. baking soda

1 tsp. xanthan gum

2 tsp. salt

⅔ cup coconut oil

1⅓ cups agave nectar

¾ cup homemade applesauce or store-bought unsweetened applesauce

3 Tbs. vanilla extract

Grated zest of 1 lemon

1 cup hot water

1 batch vanilla frosting (recipe on next page)