

G - F R E E

F O O D I E ' S

*holiday best*

r e c i p e s

# DUTCH HOT CHOCOLATE



Let's start with the basics: you can't make Dutch Hot Chocolate without Dutch-processed cocoa powder, that's rather key. The Dutch are serious about their chocolate. For those of you who maybe haven't been quite so serious about cocoa powder to this point (I'm assuming you will be in the future), here's the scoop:

- Cocoa powder is made from fermented, dried, and roasted cacao beans. The beans are cracked into cocoa nibs, which contain the cocoa solids and cocoa butter. The nibs are ground into paste and the processor removes the cocoa butter, leaving the raw cocoa behind. The raw cocoa is refined into powder, which holds the concentrated flavor of the bean. That's natural cocoa powder, which has a pH level of roughly 5-6, giving the cocoa a slightly acidic taste with some bitter flavor notes.

- Dutch-processed cocoa, which is also called Dutched-chocolate, is made by treating the natural cocoa powder with an alkalizing agent to bring the pH to 7, which is neutral. This gives the cocoa a smoother flavor and darker color, ideal for drinking.

## INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tablespoons Dutch-processed cocoa (I use Droste)
- 1/4 cup (50 g) sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla bean paste or extract
- 1 2/3 cups (400 mL) Milk
- Whipped cream or marshmallows for serving

*Make it Dairy Free:* use a non-dairy milk, coconut milk works well

Mix the cocoa, sugar, vanilla and a splash of the milk into a smooth paste in a bowl. Pour the remaining milk into a saucepan and place over low heat until it just begins to boil. Whisk the hot milk into the chocolate mixture. Ladle the cocoa into serving cups. Top with dollops of whipped cream or marshmallows and serve immediately.



## FRESH GREEN BEANS WITH MUSHROOMS AND CRISPY SHALLOTS



Here's a fresh and delicious take on the standard baked green bean casserole. If you love the French Fried Onions from a can, you can leave out the crispy shallots and use those. I won't even judge you.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1-3/4 pounds green beans, trimmed
- 2 Tbsp olive oil, divided
- 2 large shallots, thinly sliced (about 1/2 cup)
- 1/2 cup Gluten-Free chicken or vegetable stock
- 2 tsp tapioca starch (or cornstarch)
- 8 ounces cremini mushrooms, sliced about 1/8 inch thick
- 1/3 cup Greek yogurt (2% or whole)
- 1/2 tsp Kosher salt
- freshly ground pepper

For the crispy shallots:

- 2 tbsp olive or vegetable oil
- 2 large shallots, thinly sliced (about 1/2 cup)
- Kosher salt and pepper

*Make it Dairy Free & Paleo:* substitute ¼ cup unsweetened coconut yogurt for the Greek yogurt, and use olive oil for the crispy shallots

First, make the crispy shallots:

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-low heat. Add shallots and cook, stirring often and being careful not to let them scorch, until medium-golden brown, 10-12 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon to a paper towel-lined plate and season with salt and pepper. The shallots will crisp up once they cool. Discard oil, skillet may be used for the rest of the recipe.

Prepare the Green beans:

Bring water to boil in a large saucepan, blanch fresh beans until just tender (about 5-6 minutes), drain. Heat 1 tbsp olive oil over medium heat in a large nonstick skillet. Sauté shallots, stirring occasionally, until tender and beginning to brown, about 2-3 minutes. Add the additional olive oil to the skillet and add mushrooms and sauté, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, about 6 minutes.

Whisk the tapioca starch into the stock, and then add the mixture to the skillet and reduce the heat to medium. Cook until thick, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in yogurt, salt, and pepper.



## SWEET POTATOES WITH GINGERSNAP CRANBERRY CRUMBLE



I managed the production of the largest sweet potato casserole on record during the California Sweet Potato Festival for the Food Network. It weighed in at a half ton, and I had to have a 10-foot long vessel custom made to hold it. Food Network wanted to add something a little more exciting than marshmallows, so we created two additional recipes for the project. This one was everyone's favorite – I've reduced it to a more manageable size, but I'll be happy to share the version that serves 2000 people if you need it.

### INGREDIENTS:

For the Sweet Potatoes:

- 3 sweet potatoes (about 2 ½ lbs) peeled and cut into ½ inch cubes
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp salt
- 3 tbsp honey
- ½ tsp chili powder
- ¼ tsp fresh rosemary, minced
- ½ cup pecans, chopped

For the topping:

- 7-8 ounces crispy Gluten Free ginger snap cookies, smashed into crumbs
- ½ cup pecans, chopped
- ¼ tsp fresh rosemary, minced
- ¼ tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup dried cranberries, chopped
- ½ butter, melted OR 6 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp honey

*Make it Dairy Free:* use Dairy-Free cookies and olive oil in the topping

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Prepare a 2 or 3 quart casserole dish with pan spray. In a large bowl, toss the cubed sweet potatoes with the olive oil, salt, honey and chili powder, and place them evenly in the casserole dish. Place the potatoes in the oven and roast for 30 minutes.

While the potatoes are roasting, prepare the topping. Place the gingersnap crumbs in a bowl and add the pecans, rosemary, chili powder, salt and cranberries, and stir to combine. Then pour in the honey and butter, and stir until everything is evenly mixed (you can do this by hand or with a food processor.)

When the potatoes are done, remove them carefully from the oven and stir in the rosemary and pecans. Crumble the topping mixture evenly over the potatoes and return to the oven for 45 minutes. Enjoy!





These Lamb Chops with Spicy Apricot Sauce are impressive, delicious, and easier than you think! Just marinate the meat with a rub for a few hours, roast in the oven, and done! The spicy apricot sauce is addictive and super-simple too.

Racks of lamb make for a beautiful dinner presentation when displayed whole, or slice them and lay the chops over pilaf or soft polenta for impressive plates. The single chops are also perfect appetizers when served on a platter, guests can pick them up right by the bone. I call them “lamb lollipops” and they move fast.

#### INGREDIENTS:

For the lamb:

- 3-4 cloves fresh garlic
- 1/4 cup turbinado sugar
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 tablespoons fresh rosemary, chopped
- 1 teaspoon each salt and pepper
- Olive oil
- 1 rack of lamb, bones frenched

For the sauce:

- 1/2 cup chunky apricot jam
- 1 tsp crushed red pepper flakes (or more to taste)
- 1/4 cup chicken or vegetable stock
- 1/4 cup white wine

Place the first 5 ingredients together in a blender or food processor and pulse with 2-3 tbsp olive oil until a paste forms. On a rimmed sheet pan, coat the lamb with the paste, cover with plastic wrap and allow to marinate in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours (24 is best).

Preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Place the lamb rack on a parchment-lined sheet pan, and bake for 12-15 minutes for medium-rare. Remove from the oven and allow to rest for 10 minutes before carving.

While the meat is cooking, add all of the sauce ingredients to a saucepan over medium heat, and stir to combine. Simmer to reduce by half, about 8-12 minutes. Taste the sauce and add more pepper flakes or salt as needed.

Serve lamb chops with sauce drizzled over the top and enjoy.



# COWBOY COOKIES



If there's a cookie more truly American than the Cowboy Cookie, I'm not aware of it. These big cookies are packed full of goodies and have a soft, chewy texture, perfect for riding the range or enjoying with a glass of milk.

Cowboy cookies are certainly versatile, I've included a dairy-free option, and you can really add any mix-ins you choose. The thing that makes them "cowboy-style" is the size and the chewy texture that achieved from adding oats to the dough along with heavy-handed vanilla and a dash of cinnamon. I haven't tried these without coconut, but we've definitely swapped in dried fruit or other nuts for the pecans and been quite happy.

While these cookies are a certainly a holiday hit, this recipe is a year-round winner. Camping trips, sleepovers, lunchboxes and beach days are all enhanced by cowboy cookies, so saddle up and make some soon!

## INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups (270 g) gluten-free all-purpose flour blend
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 cup | 2 sticks (454 g) butter, room temperature
- 3/4 cup (150 g) granulated sugar
- 3/4 cup (165 g) packed light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups (130 g) gluten-free rolled oats
- 1/2 cup (90 g) semisweet chocolate chunks
- 1/2 cup (45 g) shredded unsweetened coconut
- 1 cup (90 g) pecans, chopped
- Flake sea salt, for topping

*Make it Dairy-Free: swap coconut oil for the butter and use dairy-free chocolate chips*

Heat oven to 350 degrees F.

Sift together flour, baking soda, salt, baking powder and cinnamon, set aside.

Using an electric mixer with paddle attachment on medium-high speed, cream butter and both sugars until fluffy. Reduce speed to medium and beat in eggs thoroughly, then beat in vanilla.

Reduce speed to low, and add in flour mixture, beating until just incorporated. Beat in oats, then chocolate, coconut and pecans until just combined.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat. For each cookie, drop 1/4 cup dough onto ungreased baking sheets, spacing 3 inches (7.5 cm) apart. Salt the top of each cookie with a sprinkle of flake sea salt. Bake, rotating sheets halfway through, 16-18 minutes. Cool the cookies on the baking sheet for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Enjoy.

NOTES: Dough can be chilled for up to 2 days in a sealed container. Once baked, the cookies will keep for three days in an airtight container.

## TORTA GIANDUIA (CHOCOLATE HAZELNUT CAKE)



A Torta Gianduja is a traditional Italian Chocolate Hazelnut Cake, It hails from the the Piemonte region, which is in the northern tip of Italy. The name of the cake refers to the marriage of chocolate and hazelnuts, which is always a winner. In fact, I'm not opposed to making my own gianduja – that's the chocolate-hazelnut spread that our friend Nutella is based on. In fact, I often make BraveTart's White Chocolate Pistachio version too – but that's a whole other post.

This flourless Italian chocolate-hazelnut cake is full of deeply satisfying dark chocolate. You can use any brand of chocolate-hazelnut spread you choose, but I feel the results are best with an all-natural product. The ideal pairing for this cake is espresso or cognac, and I serve it with a healthy dollop of freshly whipped cream.

I love this cake, and I love even more that's it's naturally gluten-free. No GF conversions here, folks. This one tastes JUST the way your Italian grandma would want it to, if you had one.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup / 1 stick (227g) unsalted butter, plus more for the baking pan
- 4 ounces (113 g) bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- 2/3 cup (90 g) hazelnut meal
- 6 large eggs, separated
- 2 tablespoons sugar, plus more for the baking pan
- One 13 ounce (370 g) jar chocolate hazelnut spread
- 1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste or extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon orange juice or cognac

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Fit the bottom of a 9-inch (23 cm) springform pan with a round of parchment paper, then butter the pan and dust with sugar and set aside. Melt the chocolate in a double boiler or gently in the microwave, 15 seconds at a time.

Fit an electric mixer with the whisk attachment, and beat the egg whites until they are foamy. Add the sugar, and beat until the whites form stiff peaks, about 2-3 minutes. In another bowl, use the mixer with the paddle attachment to beat the butter and chocolate-hazelnut spread together. Add the egg yolks, salt, and orange juice or cognac, and mix until fully incorporated. Then add in the melted chocolate, vanilla, and hazelnut meal, and mix until smooth.

Gently fold a quarter of the egg whites into the chocolate mixture to lighten it, and then add the rest of the egg whites and fold them in gently, being careful not to overmix. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the top. Bake until a tester comes out clean, about 40 to 45 minutes. Let the cake cool for about 10 minutes, then open the spring and remove the side ring, and slide the cake and parchment out of the pan and onto a serving plate. Allow the cake to fully cool before serving. Delicious topped with fresh whipped cream and orange zest.

