



RASPBERRY LEMONADE
YOGURT POPS

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Sweet Swaps

Indulge your sweet tooth with something new—desserts made with a variety of alternative natural sweeteners.

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CHOCOLATE CHIP OATMEAL
RAISIN TREATS

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Chocolate Chip Oatmeal Raisin Treats

MAKES TK servings
PREP 15 minutes **LET STAND** 10 minutes
REFRIGERATE 30 minutes

- 1 cup pitted Medjool dates, tightly packed (see Note)
- 1¾ cups old-fashioned rolled oats
- ¾ cup raisins
- ½ cup bittersweet chocolate chips (60% to 70% cacao)
- 1 generous tbsp natural peanut, almond or sunflower seed butter
- 1 tsp chia seeds
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¾ tsp pure vanilla extract
- ½ tsp fine sea salt

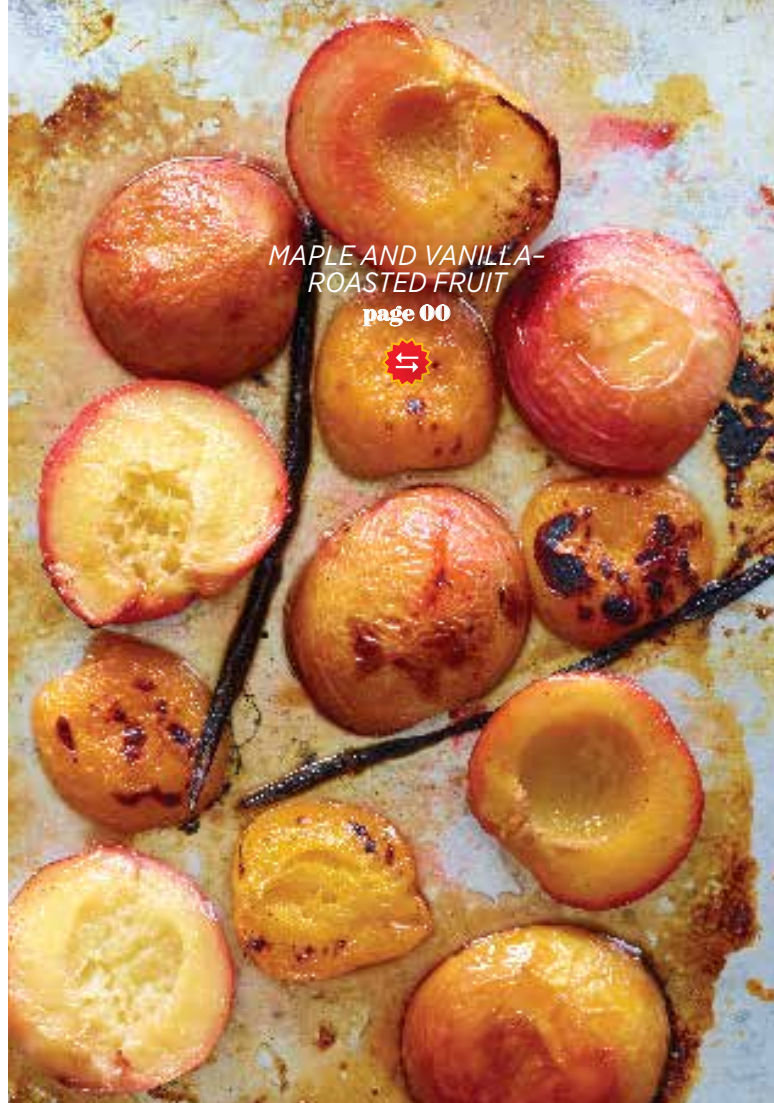
■ Place dates in a medium bowl. Fill bowl with hot water to cover dates by about an inch. Let stand 10 minutes. Drain.

■ Combine all ingredients in the bowl of a food processor. Process continuously until mixture comes together,

forming a dough of sorts. You want the oats to be pretty much completely broken down, with a few bits of raisins and little chips of chocolate still visible.

■ Using a teaspoon-size scoop, portion out small pieces of dough, using your hands to roll them into balls about 1 inch in diameter. Place balls on a cookie sheet. Refrigerate until firm, about 30 minutes. Once chilled, transfer to an airtight container to store in the fridge for up to 10 days.

Note: This recipe uses a slightly different kind of date paste. We want our dates to be nice and tacky here, more like a delicious edible “glue” than a soft fruit puree, so we’re not soaking them quite as long as we would for baked goods. I like Medjool dates specifically for this recipe because they’re extra sticky, but Deglet Noor dates work too—they just require about 10 minutes more soaking time.



MAPLE AND VANILLA-
ROASTED FRUIT

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Maple and Vanilla-Roasted Fruit

MAKES 3 to 4 cups, depending on the type of fruit **PREP** 10 minutes
ROAST at 375° for 50 minutes

- ½ cup maple sugar
- 1 vanilla bean
- 1 tsp finely grated lemon zest
- 2 lbs seasonal fruit, peeled, halved, cored and/or pitted
- 1 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 tbsp unsalted butter, cut into small bits
- Ice cream, yogurt or crème fraîche, for serving (optional)

■ Position a rack in center of oven and heat oven to 375°.

■ Place sugar in a small bowl. With a sharp knife, split vanilla bean in half lengthwise and scrape seeds into sugar (reserve the vanilla pod). Work sugar, vanilla seeds and lemon zest together with your

fingertips until sugar is fragrant and moist-looking.

■ Arrange fruit in a 9 x 13-inch metal baking dish, cut side up. Drizzle with lemon juice and sprinkle with sugar. Dot butter bits all over fruit. Add vanilla pod and 2 tbsp water to dish.

■ Roast at 375° for 30 minutes, occasionally spooning pan juices over fruit. Turn fruit and continue to roast, basting once or twice, until tender, 15 to 20 minutes more.

■ Serve with ice cream, yogurt or crème fraîche, if using.

All-Purpose Cupcakes

MAKES 1 dozen cupcakes
PREP 15 minutes **BAKE** at 350° for 20 minutes

You have many mix-and-match options when it comes to the sweeteners and nondairy milks here. My favorite pairing is full-fat coconut milk, for richness, plus honey—or agave if I need to make a truly vegan cake. But any combination of the sweeteners, milks and oils listed below works just fine. This is a great basic cake that can be flavored with a variety of zests, spices and extracts.

2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled

1 tsp baking powder

½ tsp baking soda

½ tsp fine sea salt

1 cup full-fat coconut, soy or almond milk

¾ cup honey, pure maple syrup or agave nectar

½ cup grapeseed, vegetable or coconut oil

1 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice

1 tsp pure vanilla extract

■ Position a rack in center of oven and heat oven to 350°. Line a 12-cup muffin tin with paper liners.

■ In a large bowl, whisk flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt.

■ In a medium bowl, whisk milk, honey, oil, lemon juice and vanilla. Pour wet ingredients into dry. Beat with a handheld electric mixer on medium-high speed until smooth and slightly aerated, about 2 minutes.

■ Divide batter among wells of muffin tin, filling them about three-quarters full. Bake at 350° until lightly golden, a toothpick inserted into center of cupcakes comes out clean, and tops spring back when lightly touched, 18 to 20 minutes. Rotate pan 180 degrees halfway through baking time. Let cakes cool in pan on a wire rack 3 minutes before removing from pan to cool completely.

Soft, Fluffy Meringue

MAKES about 5 cups
PREP 25 minutes **COOK** TK minutes

3 large egg whites, at room temperature

2 tsp cornstarch

⅔ cup honey or pure maple syrup

¼ tsp fine sea salt

2 tsp pure vanilla extract

■ Into the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, add egg whites. Whip on medium-high speed until soft peaks form. Add cornstarch and continue whipping until firm peaks form, about 1 minute more. Stop mixer.

■ In a medium saucepan, combine honey, **2 tbsp water** and salt. Set saucepan over high heat. Stir mixture gently to combine as it heats to a boil. When syrup has begun to bubble, clip a candy thermometer onto side of saucepan. Cook syrup until temperature reaches 248°. Remove saucepan from heat, and with a mitt hand,

carefully carry it over to mixer. Restart mixer on medium speed. Slowly drizzle syrup into whipping egg whites—just a tablespoon or two at a time at first to avoid scrambling egg whites. When all the syrup has been added, increase mixer speed to high and whip meringue until it is stiff and glossy and bowl is cool to the touch, about 5 minutes. Beat in vanilla during the last minute.

■ Use immediately as a frosting or filling.

Raspberry Lemonade Yogurt Pops

MAKES about ten 2½ oz pops
PREP 15 minutes
FREEZE at least 6 hours

12 oz fresh or thawed frozen raspberries

⅔ cup light agave nectar or honey

1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise

1 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice

1 tsp finely grated lemon zest

½ tsp fine sea salt

1 cup 2% Greek yogurt

■ In a medium saucepan, combine raspberries, agave nectar, **½ cup water**, vanilla bean, lemon juice, lemon zest and salt. Set saucepan over medium-high heat and stir gently until mixture comes to a full boil. Remove saucepan from heat and let cool completely. Pull vanilla pod from saucepan. Using the back of a knife, scrape any remaining vanilla seeds into saucepan and discard pod.

■ Pour raspberry mixture into a blender or the bowl of a food processor fitted with the steel blade. Puree until smooth. Add yogurt and **3 tbsp water** and process until well blended. Transfer mixture to a large spouted measuring cup for easy pouring, and pour into Popsicle molds. Insert wooden sticks. Freeze until firm.



Baking with healthy alternatives to sugar. In bookstores and Amazon.com, \$27.50.

