

Chocolate Recipe Guilt Free

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SWEET VINTEN





CHOCOLATE RECIPE GUILT FREE



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Pamela Vinten has 40 years experience in the field of nutrition. After qualifying as a Home Economics teacher in the early 70's she taught for many years in Melbourne, Australia. With five children to bring up, and wanting more flexibility, Pamela resigned from teaching and with a girlfriend began a successful catering business. This left plenty of free time for the demands of a large family. In 1990 Pamela opted for a "sea change" so relocated her family to the Gold Coast, Queensland. Good nutrition has always been high on her list of priorities and over the years instilled healthy eating habits into the children. After an idyllic life living with-in walking distance from some of the world's best beaches the children drifted off leaving Pamela more time to indulge in her passion of nutrition. In 2007 Pamela decided her path was as a "raw foodist" which ultimately led to this book "Chocolate Recipe Guilt Free"



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WARNING

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Ode To Chocolate

*A chocolate treat my will to defeat,
The sumptuous taste to make me replete.
I crave the sweetness a rich creamy dream.
Am I denied this? So it would seem.
A guilty feeling when desires are met.
My fondness for chocolate I cannot forget.
Help me here I beg of thee.
A healthy chocolate how can this be?
You have shown me the truth where I can now go
With chocolate so healthy it gives me a glow.
So no more guilt, no shame and torture,
This divine chocolate is now my future.*

*Pamela Vinten
A Rescued Chocolate Lover*





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Chapter 1

The Secret

What's this we hear? Snippets of information about the benefits of chocolate? They are telling us how good chocolate is and we are just about to dash off for a guilt free splurge when the news flash comes through - ***milk chocolate has been excluded from the 'good' list.***

It seems now only dark chocolate is good for us! But even that rather bitter (?) treat comes under a cloud of suspicion.

Confused and let down we are now back to square one. "To chocolate", or not "to chocolate?" – that is the question.

However, despite the health warnings, chocolate is still too good to resist. We indulge anyway, only to emerge with a feeling ranging from satisfied (occasionally) or over indulged and slightly sick (usually) to, worse of all, pigged out and nauseous (too often).

To round off this scenario, even though we try to convince ourselves otherwise, we know that chocolate is not a healthy food choice. What follows – ***a huge dose of GUILT!***

Round and round we go – resist, indulge, feel guilty. The chocolate alone is bad enough for us but adding the negativity of guilt and we are doubly tormented.

This is a crazy way to live when there is *an easy solution*.

The solution is simplicity itself – ***eat raw chocolate***.

"No way!" I hear you say!

But keep reading – you are about to be surprised, then hooked.

Guilt free chocolate which tastes amazing!

Hi, I'm Pamela, I want you to enjoy my delectable chocolate without feeling guilty. It gives me such a buzz when people are delighted by my raw chocolate creations. These are some of my experiences:

Yoga Class

It has become a bit of a tradition to have a tea ceremony after class often with nibbles. One day I took along a box of my ***Choc Top Energy Slice*** to share. No one could believe that something that tasted so



delicious could also be good for you. We had a lively discussion on the benefits of raw food especially raw chocolate and I think I converted quite a few people that day. I left yoga with the promise to bring the recipe and more treats the next week!

Seminar

While I was writing this book I attended a 3 day seminar. Wanting testimonials for the book I took along some *Chocolate Bliss Balls* and *Choc Top Energy Slice* (I had to make a new batch of these because my yoga friends scoffed the last batch!) I asked everyone who tasted my treats if they would give me a testimonial for the book. It wasn't too hard to get volunteers! On the first day people were happy to oblige. On the second day they were lining up for more and by the third day I was swamped! This is my favorite testimonial:

Choc Top Energy Slice

"I am a chocoholic! I love chocolate but I am also very picky and fussy when it comes to what chocolate I eat. I was really pleasantly surprised at just how good your Guilt Free chocolate tastes and feels in my mouth. I eat lots of chocolate so I was very skeptical that you could create a healthy chocolate that tasted great – but you did it! Eating the slice was a yummy pleasure. No way that's good for you – it tastes too good! The only bad thing was, we needed more samples!"

Andrew G, Gold Coast, Australia

Barbecue Party

It is a tradition in Australia to take a "plate" when invited to a BBQ or party. This means a plate of food not an empty plate! I usually take along a plate of raw food treats, especially chocolate ones, because I know the reaction they attract. The raw food becomes a real discussion point because, at first everyone cannot believe it is raw and so healthy. What usually follows is a lively discussion and many questions about raw chocolate. Of course I am happy to oblige! Raw nutrition is my passion so I can talk for hours and often do as I am asked more and more questions. I sometimes think I must drive my partner, Andre, crazy but he is a darling and says no, he is just as fascinated.



Chocolate Mousse Pie

The chocolate mousse pie is one of my favorites. I love the look of disbelief on friend's faces when I tell them it is made with avocado. I have seen people who admit they are not keen on avocado gag mid mouthful when I tell them! They then laugh at themselves and admit they love the pie. My daughter Bec's partner hates avocado with a vengeance but innocently wolfed down two large slices announcing to all how delicious it was. Bec whispered to me not to tell him or she will never be able to make it again. If he reads this book our cover is blown!

Matt's Story Re *Chocolate Bliss Balls*

My son was brought up on a healthy diet, so when he left home to go to University (College) he tried his best to continue this way of eating. He was visiting one day and as often happens the talk came around to diet. He told me he was taking a large salad for lunch so I was very impressed. He *is* a student after all, and diet is usually the first casualty when leaving the nest. He did admit to needing something yummy to look forward to – a salad alone just didn't cut it! He confessed to buying a tray of jam tarts and allowed himself one a day to finish off his lunch. I had just made a batch of ***Chocolate Bliss Balls*** so gave him a taste. He was amazed and said that they would be perfect for his after lunch treat – they really hit the spot. After that he came home regularly to pick up his care package of a box of ***Chocolate Bliss Balls***. Another convert to raw chocolate!

I am excited to be able to share this secret with you and know you will be as amazed as I was when I first discovered raw chocolate and began playing around with recipes.

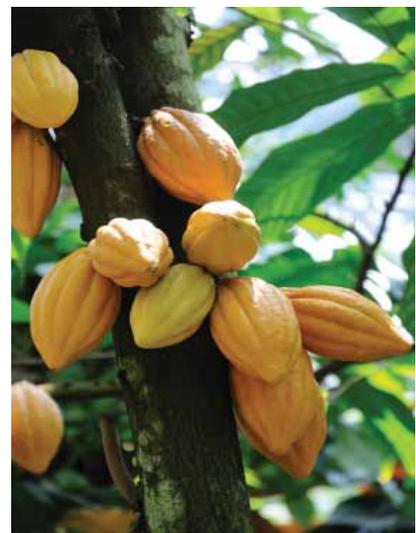
Chapter 2

What Is Raw Chocolate?

An explanation of how processed chocolate is made compared to how raw chocolate is made.

To gain a better understanding of the differences between store bought, processed chocolate and raw chocolate it is necessary to have an understanding of how each type is made. To make differentiation between the two types of chocolate easier I will call processed, store bought chocolate “processed” chocolate, and our chocolate I will refer to as “raw” chocolate. So now we have “processed” chocolate and “raw” chocolate.

As there is more involved with the production of processed chocolate we will start here. All chocolate begins with raw cacao (pronounced “ka-kow, as in cow) beans. The cacao tree is believed to have originated in the Amazon Jungle where it has happily grown under the sheltering rainforest canopy since prehistoric times. Most cacao trees today are grown in tropical regions all over the world where temperatures and humidity are high. The scientific name for the cacao tree is *Theobroma cacao* which translates to “food of the gods” because of its amazing taste and health benefits. Today the tree grows between 3 to 10 meters (10 to 30 feet) high with leaves a bit like an avocado tree. The flowers and subsequently the fruit grow directly out of the tree trunk. The fruit, or pod, grows to about 20 centimeters (8 inches) long and turns from green to a variety of colours as it ripens. Inside the ripe pods are up to 50 beans the size and shape of an almond. Cacao trees, like coconuts, bear fruit all year long.



Cacao Tree with Pods

To make processed chocolate the harvested cacao beans are roasted at about 120deg (about 250deg), cooled, and then cracked open by large rollers. The hard skins are then blown off with hot air which also decreases the water content of the bean. More heat is applied to help grind the beans and extract the oil. When cooled this leaves a cacao cake with a reduced fat content and cacao butter (sometimes called oil but being solid at room temperature most recipes refer to it as butter).



Cacao Pods



Open Cacao Pod



Cacao Beans



To make cocoa powder the cacao cake is then finely ground. Chemicals are then added to the powder to help it mix with water and we have what we know as cocoa powder. Actually cocoa is a British slang term for cacao which has gained modern acceptance.

To make processed chocolate the ground cacao cake and some of the cacao butter are combined. Different types of chocolate require different amounts of cacao butter. The mixture is then continuously turned and ground in a large open vat usually with chemical additives. The speed and temperature at this stage is vital in determining the quality of the finished product. To make the chocolate confectionary we love the chocolate is sweetened with sugar and usually mixed with preservatives, soy lecithin, artificial colors and flavors, fillers and an assortment of chemical enhancers. Milk powder is added to make our favorite milk chocolate. By now chocolate bears no resemblance to the raw, healthy cacao beans found in nature.

Making raw chocolate is a much simpler process. Cacao pods are cracked open to extract the wet beans. They are then sun dried and left to ferment for one to five days to develop the chocolaty flavor. Without the fermentation process the beans have a rather bland, woody flavor. During this process the temperature does not go over 40°C (104°F). While fermenting the beans are aerated and turned. The beans are then hand mashed and put into a special press to extract the cacao butter. The cacao cake, with only a small percentage of butter, is then ground to form cacao powder. Both the cacao butter and powder are used to make chocolate. In many recipes the cacao butter can successfully be replaced with coconut butter (oil).

Now that you have seen the difference in the making of processed chocolate compared to raw chocolate it is evident why our chocolate is called raw. But why is raw better for us? The next chapter answers that question. Be prepared to be amazed and shocked by what is outlined next. The scary part is that it is all true. The good news is that our chocolate and scrumptious recipes can be your first step towards a new eating experience!



Chapter 3

Why Raw?

Today, more than ever, people are looking inward for solutions to their problems but because we are in the grip of large corporations we come up wanting.

We are a sad nation of overworked, overstressed, overweight, unhealthy people wishing for happiness, health and generally a better life.

However wishing is not enough and so we place ourselves at the mercy of every fad going around. We blindly grasp at every new concept until we give up when the expected results just don't happen. Frustrating isn't it!

All the fads around are fuelled by one thing – greed. Someone is out to make money – your hard earned money – so they tell you what you want to hear. This is backed up by slick advertising campaigns that prey on your unhappiness. Why is this so?

The real truth is very simple. It won't make money for the large corporations so remains hidden until we blunder on to the truth – like you reading this book now.

Our bodies are human machines that we need to look after for optimal health. What do we do instead – we fill it with dead, cooked, processed food and deny ourselves the gift nature bestowed on us.

Your body is craving nature's bounty. In a nutshell (sorry for the pun!) we need **raw** food full of vital, alive nutrients.

Raw foods are living, may be dehydrated, frozen or fermented but not heated above 44°C (111°F).

After all, our ancestors lived this way for hundreds of thousands of years and it's only since we became “civilized” that our eating habits changed.

The trouble is that a few thousand years is not long enough for evolutionary changes to occur for us to assimilate the new, inorganic compounds formed when we cook or process food. Our bodies are still made to accept raw food and are left wondering what to do with all this foreign matter we ingest in the false belief that we are nourishing ourselves.

The fault is not our bodies – we are the way we are – perfectly engineered marvels capable of amazing health and vitality. The fault lies in what we feed this body.

If we fed the body **raw** food like nature intended (and look at the amazing bounty she has provided us) we would all achieve this seemingly impossible dream.

So just what is so wrong with our typical “civilized” diet?

There are four main reasons why our diet of cooked and processed foods is doing us more harm than good. We will look at each, followed by some interesting facts, but let me first warn you that you are going to be amazed and a little scared at what is going on inside the digestive tract.

The good news is that it is not a life sentence.

With eating the right foods problems can easily be reversed and it is never too late to start.



It is simple and for once something that seems too good to be true actually is!

Raw food is brimming with enzymes which are quickly destroyed by heating. Above 44°C (111°F) enzymes start to die.

In the last chapter we saw that processed chocolate is heated at least twice during its manufacture.

The body produces enzymes - the catalyst for every bodily function. They are used in digestion, thinking, moving, working, growing, immunity, dreaming, sexual activity, reproduction and everything else we do. We are born with a huge enzyme bank, but it is not infinite.

When we eat **raw** food the food itself contains all the enzymes needed to digest it. We do not need to draw on our enzyme bank.

However when we cook our food we destroy its enzymes so the body has to use its own reserves to digest the food. In other words we draw on the enzyme bank.

When we run out of enzymes we grow tired and die!

As we grow older we become enzyme impoverished, causing our metabolism to slow down. In our ignorance we accept this as an inevitable part of aging. All the symptoms of aging - digestive impairment, loss of skin elasticity and muscle tone, weight gain – can all be attributed to decreased enzyme activity.

On our typical cooked diet it seems that by age 50 we have only about 30% of our enzymes left! If our enzyme bank account was healthy we would be brimming with energy well into old age.



Eating a diet of *raw*, enzyme rich foods can restore our energy and vitality while by decreasing the amount of cooked foods we eat the drain on the energy bank slows down.

The next point is a bit scarier!

Our vital organs only function in a slightly *alkaline* environment which is tightly regulated by the body. If they become acidic you die. It is that simple.

The problem lies in the fact that a “civilized” cooked diet has a highly acidic reaction when digested. The culprits are our consumption of **meat, dairy, most grains, refined sugars and other processed foods including baked goods (bread, cakes, pastries etc).**

Processed chocolate has an acidic reaction when digested.

Eating a diet high in these foods leads to a state of acidosis in the body. Since the body must at all costs operate at a stable alkaline environment the acid has to be either neutralized or kept away from vital organs. Calcium is an alkalizing mineral and a strong buffer and will help neutralize the acid. This is then released in the urine. Calcium is leached from the bones to achieve this, causing bone degrading – a lesser of two evils for the body.

Milk powder added to processed milk chocolate is highly acidifying.

Another way our clever body can protect itself from this acid overload is to store the acid in fat (should that be a four letter word!) The acid is then kept safely away from the vital organs.

The more acidic our body is the more fat it will want to accumulate to store the acid. Remember the alternative is to die!

So no matter what we do, our cooked diet causes us to gain weight. If we do manage to lose a few pounds the body pulls out all the stops to build up its protection again.

Raw foods (especially fruits and vegetables) have an alkalizing reaction when digested and so are powerful acid neutralizers.



Better still, cut down on the acid producing processed foods (one of which is processed chocolate) while increasing the alkaline foods (**raw** – especially fruit and vegetables and our chocolate) to give the body the required alkaline environment for optimum functioning and good health.

From the first time we ate cooked food as babies our body responded by increasing the white blood cell production causing a pathogenic leukocytosis. This is what



happens when the body responds to infection. In simpler terms the body is recognizing the “food” as an invader that must be neutralized. That’s a lot of work for the immune system!

Our body has adjusted to cooked food by creating mucus to use as a filter. All the surfaces of the digestive tract from the tongue to the intestines are covered with this mucus to protect the blood from invaders. The body does not recognize dead, inorganic nutrients (as found in cooked foods) as food.

The more cooked food we eat the more mucus is produced so the layer becomes thicker and denser, eventually resembling a garden hose snaking through the digestive tract. This “hose” works well in preventing us from absorbing toxins, but at the expense of healthful nutrients that also find it hard to penetrate.

After many years of eating cooked food we become hungry and malnourished.

Raw food is organic, and the body recognizes it as food so it has no need to build its mucus protection.

If we replace our predominantly cooked diet with a mainly *raw food diet* this mucus lining can be broken down to allow our digestive tract to work in the efficient manner it was designed for.

The more cooked food we eat the more waste and toxins accumulate in the body. This is a big attraction for bacteria whose job it is to break down these wastes and toxins. This includes harmful bacteria as well, so people who eat mostly cooked food are very prone to infections. These bacteria are not interested in live healthy flesh (the same as in a forest – bacteria don’t touch healthy trees but as soon as one dies they move in to return it back to the soil).

A person who eats mainly raw food with a clean healthy body is more resilient to infection. Also in healthy bodies there is nothing for parasites to feed on so they leave! Mosquitoes won’t even bite!

As hinted previously *milk* is possibly the worst drink for a healthy body.

The protein molecule in milk is too big for the human body to break down leading to waste residue stored in the body. It is also highly acidifying, leading to the loss of calcium and other related problems as discussed earlier. Replacing milk with soy milk is not a healthy solution either. Soy is the most mucus forming plant food on the planet.

Sad to think that the processed chocolate preferred by most of us is *milk chocolate*!

Cooking produces free radicals in food (unpaired, charged molecules that cause cellular destruction) which are thought to be the primary environmental cause of aging. The higher the temperature the



more free radicals released.

Fats are damaged by cooking, changing them into trans fatty acids (which the body cannot recognize) which impede cellular respiration and can be a factor in heart disease and cancer. Excessive use of cooked oils also causes cravings for stimulants like alcohol and caffeine.

Processed chocolate contains cacao butter (a fat) which is “cooked” during the processing.

Cooking depletes the nutrients in food. It turns beautiful organic nourishment into dead inorganic non-food. It is said that cooking food can cause a nutrient destruction as high as 80%. Goodbye to our precious vitamins and minerals!

It is difficult to feel satisfied and nourished on a cooked diet and this can lead to overeating and obesity. The body on a cooked food diet becomes so under nourished it wants more and more food in the vain hope it will get all the nutrients it requires.

No wonder we are a nation of overweight, unhappy people.

In the light of the above it is a marvel and a credit to the body’s will to survive that we are still alive. Considering the highly acidic and toxic state of our insides it is no wonder we suffer many illnesses, from the mildly annoying right through to life threatening. What a crime it is to be given such a perfect vehicle for our journey through earth life and to slowly but surely destroy it. Even more of a crime when the solution is so simple – **eat more raw foods** – the way nature intended.

*How lucky we are to have such an amazing food as raw chocolate.
With a minimal amount of effort and no processing we have a truly
luscious but super healthy food!*

*“If you don’t look after your body where
else are you going to live?”*

Chapter 4

A Comparison Of The Nutrients In Processed Chocolate And Raw Chocolate

So far we have seen how processed chocolate is made compared to how raw chocolate is produced. This shows that the important difference between the two is that one is cooked and one is raw.



Processed chocolate is just that – processed. It is heated over and over and mixed with harmful chemicals and questionable additives. Of course it tastes delicious but at what cost?

On the other hand raw chocolate has not been heated above 44°C (111°F), has had minimal processing and little or no chemicals. It can have no chemicals at all if you buy raw organic products to make your chocolate treats.

Because raw chocolate wins hands down in the nutrition stakes we will discuss the many health benefits of raw first.

Health Benefits of Raw Chocolate

Of all foods Cacao seems to have the greatest number of chemical constituents, making it one of the most complex substances on earth. Have you ever wondered why the taste and texture of chocolate has not been chemically synthesized. This is why. It is just too complex.

When you taste the recipes in this book you will wonder why anyone would bother when something so natural is so good!

Raw chocolate will increase your energy, reduce weight, increase your magnesium and other mineral intake and give you more antioxidants than any other food. All this plus many other benefits can be attributed to raw chocolate.



Nutrients Found In Raw Chocolate

Magnesium, Chromium & Iron

In developed countries, the top three mineral deficiencies are magnesium, chromium and iron. Raw chocolate contains all three. In fact it has the highest magnesium count of any food found in nature.

Magnesium supports heart health, improves flexibility, increases brain power and builds strong bones. High levels of magnesium with its muscle relaxing and stress relieving properties is probably why women crave chocolate when they are menstruating.

Antioxidants



Raw chocolate is extremely high in flavanols, the antioxidants which occur naturally in raw cacao. They are known to protect cells from free radical damage inhibiting the spread of cancer. Recent research by the Harley St Clinic, London,¹ has shown that they also increase the skin's resistance to the damaging effects of UV rays.

Flavanols have been linked to heart health and improving elasticity in blood vessels. This means less wrinkles and signs of ageing caused by sun exposure! Raw chocolate contains many times more antioxidants than even green tea or red wine.

Appetite Inhibitors

Chocolate actually contains a chemical that inhibits the appetite. Have you ever wondered why many diet foods are chocolate flavored? It is because it works! This, however, would probably not be a good thing if one was to fill up on unhealthy processed chocolate to the exclusion of more healthy foods.

However as raw chocolate is probably the most nutritious food on the planet – Go for it!

Anti Depressant



Raw chocolate contains a chemical dubbed “the bliss chemical” which is a natural anti depressant. When we are feeling joyful this chemical is produced naturally in the brain. By copying this reaction chocolate can relax us and produce a natural high. It is also said that this can help with alertness and focus. Could this make us younger and live longer? All the more time to enjoy chocolate!

¹ Research carried out by European Dermatology, London. A private Harley Street Skin Clinic and published in “Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology”



Raw chocolate is one of the best natural sources of the amino acid arginine (a natural aphrodisiac) which acts in a similar way to Viagra to amplify sexual pleasure.

Sulphur

Sulphur, the beauty mineral, is accredited with giving us healthy and glowing skin. It promotes strong nails and hair and is found in abundance in raw chocolate. Sulphur also helps in detoxifying the liver.

Caffeine

Raw chocolate contains subtle amounts of natural caffeine. Studies have shown that caffeine as a stimulant is very different when consumed raw.

Phenylethylamine

This is the chemical found in raw chocolate that makes us feel we're in love. This is probably why love and chocolate go hand in hand! Some sources say 50% of women prefer chocolate to sex!



Essential Fatty Acids

Cacao butter is an important source of “good” saturated fats, omega 6 and 9, necessary for good overall health and required by the body for healthy skin and hair, hormonal regulation and fertility. Because raw cacao butter has not been heated it has no dangerous trans-fatty acids.

Raw chocolate also contains significant amounts of protein, carbohydrate, fibre, calcium and vitamins B, C, and E and many other nutrients.

Nutrients Found In Processed Chocolate

Because most chocolate is roasted, processed, sweetened with sugar and has added chemicals the nutrient value falls alarmingly short. During roasting, the first stage of processing chocolate, the high heat kills the enzymes present in the raw cacao bean and denatures many nutrients. Sadly it also decreases the effectiveness of many of chocolates amazing benefits.

Antioxidants and Milk

Adding milk products to chocolate effectively cancels out the antioxidants found naturally in the cacao bean. Milk chocolate proudly boasts the addition of milk to make probably the world's favorite chocolate. It tastes great but useless in preventing major ailments. Allergies to chocolate are more likely to be allergies to the milk and dairy added to the chocolate during processing.



Sugar

Refined sugar is so bad for the body that it is often referred to as “white death”. Sugar has a very high GI rating (Glycemic Index) which means it quickly and dangerously raises our blood sugar levels when eaten.

Foods with a low GI have a relatively low impact on blood sugar levels. Most processed chocolate, unless stated otherwise, is sweetened with sugar. Sugar is harmful to the body as it destroys the immune system, draws minerals out of the body and causes dehydration. It negatively affects blood sugar contributing to disorders such as Syndrome X and type 2 diabetes. Sugar has also been linked to premature ageing, weight gain and high blood pressure. Refined sugar is highly addictive.

Caffeine

Chocolate contains small amounts of caffeine. In its raw state this promotes alertness but in its processed state caffeine can cause irritability, insomnia and anxiety.

Some properties of the cacao are still present after processing but in a much diminished state. These include flavor, antioxidants (dark chocolate only) mood elevators and some others. Processing chocolate can increase the incidence of intense cravings.

Weight Gain

There is no evidence to link chocolate to weight gain. In fact chocolate is an appetite suppressant found in many weight loss products. It is used because it is effective. The real reason chocolate can lead to weight gain is more likely to be the high levels of added fats, sugar and chemicals found in processed chocolate.

Raw chocolate has none of these additives that cause weight gain, so “not guilty!” *In view of this amazing analysis comparing the nutrient value of processed and raw chocolate it is no wonder that raw chocolate has been given the title “the most nutritious food on the planet”.*

I think it is very sad that man has been given a natural super-food, the raw cacao bean, and transformed it into an empty shell that can actually harm the body... It seems the only good thing left to say about processed chocolate is its undisputed taste sensation. In view of what you have just read it is no wonder that so much **guilt** surrounds the eating of chocolate.

We have the perfect solution. A raw chocolate that is still a taste sensation with its sweet, smooth creaminess with all the health benefits and none of the bad properties. Now that will truly be guilt free!



Chapter 5

Historical Facts And Interesting Snippets

- It is believed that the history of chocolate began around 200BC
- Over 2000 years ago the Mayans worshipped cacao as an idol. The beans were so highly prized that the Mayan, Aztec and Toltec civilizations used them for currency. They were far too valuable to eat and were considered a “gift from heaven”!
- An Aztec myth said chocolate would bring humans power and wisdom!
- The Aztec people made a chocolate drink from cacao beans called “xocoalt”. It is said the Aztec emperor Montezuma drank 50 goblets a day of this rather bitter drink!
- In the early 1500’s Hernando Cortez tasted a “chocolate” drink enjoyed by the Aztecs and so brought the drink back to Spain. The sweetened chocolate drink was kept a secret only to be enjoyed by the wealthiest of nobility
- By the mid 1600’s the drink had spread to France and by the mid 1700’s chocolate houses were as popular as coffee houses in England
- In 1765 the first chocolate factory was opened in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Sixty years later a Dutch chemist, Conrad Van Houten, mixed cocoa butter with finely ground sugar to make “chocolate candy”
- In 1753 Carl von Linnæus named the cacao tree *Theobroma cacao* which translates to “food of the gods”
- In 1879 the first milk chocolate bar was produced. Daniel Peter, a Swiss chocolate manufacturer, mixed milk powder with the dark chocolate of the day
- French King Louis XIV so revered chocolate that he established a court position titled “Royal Chocolate Maker to the King”
- The French leader Napoleon insisted chocolate be available during military campaigns
- The first chocolate Easter eggs were found in Europe in the early 1800’s.
- In 1842 Cadbury’s of England created their first chocolate bar

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- During the Second World War the US Government commissioned Milton Hershey to make a chocolate bar suitable for the soldier's rations and so the famous Hershey Milk Chocolate Bar was born!
 - Every American and Russian space exploration has included chocolate bars
 - Approximately 600,000 tons of chocolate is consumed in the world each year
 - 33 million Hershey Kisses are produced in one day in Hershey, Pennsylvania, USA
 - During the 1920,s in America there were around 40,000 different confectionary bars
 - More than 36 million heart – shaped boxes of chocolate are sold every year for Valentine's Day
 - Chocolate melts in your mouth because the melting point of cacao butter is just below body temperature giving chocolate its velvety texture





Chapter 6

Ingredients Explained

The ingredients in our delicious chocolate recipes are unique. Listed below is an explanation of their properties, appearance, how and why they are used in my recipes. While most will not be found in supermarkets they are freely available in Health Food stores or online over the internet.

Raw Cacao Powder



The dried, fermented cacao bean is cold pressed to produce cacao butter and a “cake” which is then fine milled to produce cacao powder. This results in a nutrient preserved cacao powder with over three times more antioxidants than regular processed cocoa powder. The powder looks as you would imagine – powdered chocolate!

Raw Cacao Butter

This is the edible natural fat of the chocolate bean, cold pressed to retain the nutritional properties and exquisite natural aroma and flavor. It takes about 1.4 kilos (3 pounds) of beans to make .45 kilos (1 pound) of cacao butter. It has many and varied uses apart from chocolate making including a rich, natural moisturizer, a sexy and decadent massage oil, soothing babies bottoms, organic based cosmetics and because it melts at body temperature as a base for suppositories.



Cacao butter is an important source of “good” saturated fats, necessary for good overall health and required by the body for healthy skin, hair, hormonal regulation and fertility.

Cacao butter has a melting point of 35° C (95° F) so chocolate stays solid in most climates but then melts in the mouth to create an explosion of smooth, creamy, sweet richness.

Cacao butter is one of the most stable fats known. It contains antioxidants that prevent rancidity so has a storage life of two to five years. It is purchased as a solid off- white block or as chunks. As it can be quite expensive, in many recipes I have successfully substituted cacao butter with coconut oil.



Cacao Nibs

Cacao nibs are simply shelled raw cacao beans that have been slightly crushed. They still contain the cacao butter. Although quite bitter they are often used in recipes calling for chocolate chips.

Agave Nectar

Although agave nectar seems to be a new addition to our kitchens it has actually been in use for centuries both as a sweetener and a dressing for wounds due to its anti microbial properties.



Agave nectar comes from the agave plant, a large, spiky succulent similar to the Aloe Vera plant. Agave is best known as the plant from which tequila is made.

Because of the low temperatures used in the extraction of agave nectar it is considered a raw food.

Agave nectar has a low GI (see Page 23 -sugar....) so has a low impact on blood sugar levels when eaten. It provides sweetness without a sugar rush and so is the preferred sweetener to compliment raw chocolate. It has a taste comparable to, but not as strong as, raw honey.

Coconut Oil – Cold Pressed

This oil is extracted from fresh or dried coconut meat using mechanical pressure and low temperatures. It keeps its natural antioxidant properties which gives it a shelf life of up to 10 years. Coconut oil is a pale yellow to colorless oil with a distinct scent. It has a melting point of 23° C (73.4° F) so is perfect to make chocolate sauces that set when poured over cold or frozen foods.

Even though coconut oil has a high saturated fat content it has been described as “the healthiest oil on earth” Without getting too technical coconut oil is made up of medium chain saturated fatty acids which are beneficial to us. They reduce cholesterol, help prevent against heart disease and protect against atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries).

Lauric acid, accounting for about 50% of the oil found in coconut oil, is necessary to build and maintain the body’s immune system. Mothers’ milk is the only other natural food where lauric acid is found in such high concentrations.

Coconut oil has antiviral, antibacterial, antimicrobial and antiprotozoal (all the nasties that make us sick!) properties and like all whole, raw foods contains copious nutrients for a healthy body.



Goji Berries

Goji berries are purchased as a little, dried red berry. They are packed full of antioxidants, protein building amino acids, essential fatty acids and potassium. They are also very high in vitamin B and C. It is nature's perfect energy fruit.

Chia Seeds



Chia seeds are often referred to as "Mother nature's multi vitamin" because they are so full of goodness. In fact they are nature's complete super-food. They are the highest plant based source of protein.

Chia seeds are high in dietary fibre, omega 3 and omega 6 fats. They are loaded with potassium, folate, zinc, phosphorus and Vitamins A, B12, and C. They are also high in antioxidants, calcium and magnesium. They look like small black or off white seeds. Chia seeds quickly form a gel when mixed with water so blend well in recipes and smoothies.

Linseeds (flax seed)



Linseed has a earthy and slightly nutty flavor. They are slightly larger than sesame seeds with a hard shell. There are two varieties of seeds – golden and brown – and there is also linseed oil. It is best to buy linseed whole (not ground) as ground linseed can go rancid in little over a week at room temperature.

The best way to grind the seeds is with a coffee grinder. Many recipes call for whole linseed which is much more stable.

Linseed is high in omega 3 fats and a good source of dietary fibre.

Now that you understand and recognize the ingredients, it's time to have some good, healthy, guilt free fun.



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Helpful Tips

1. To melt chocolate that has set place it in a basin over very warm water. Recipes that are made with coconut oil will melt faster than those with cacao butter. It is vital that no water gets into the chocolate as it will ruin the texture. When melting chocolate to coat or drizzle over treats make sure it is not too runny as you will not get a very thick coat on your treats. If you do make it too runny place in the fridge until it sets a bit. Keep an eye on it as it may set quickly.
2. Because chocolate is prone to melting it is best eaten straight from the fridge. When travelling with your creations store them in a insulated/cooler bag with a frozen ice brick. This is especially important in the warmer months.
3. To make preparation easier place the serving plate in the freezer or fridge to cool down so your chocolate creations will not melt too quickly. This is especially important when working with ice-cream
4. As many of these recipes are quite rich they can be easily be made in half quantity.
5. When purchasing dates you will find they can be quite hard. Buy pitted dates and soak them in water overnight to soften. Next morning drain thoroughly before use. This is important when they are to be blended to a smooth paste. Even though they are bought as pitted dates it is a good idea to check that no pips are present. Food processors don't like pips!
6. We all vary in our preferences for sweetness etc. It is a good idea to check your mixture as you are making the recipe to see if it suits your preferences. Some people have more of a sweet tooth others like a stronger chocolate flavor. It is your creation so don't be afraid to play around with the recipe. You can always add a bit extra but you can't take anything out.
7. When adding coconut oil or cacao butter to the food processor do not process for too long as the oil can "turn" and ruin the texture of the mixture. This takes quite a while to happen so don't be afraid. I discovered this the hard way one day when I was making a strawberry pie. I had forgotten to soak the dates and was in a rush to make the pie. When I added the dates to the processor they didn't blend in very well as they were still too hard. Trying to get a smooth filling I left the processor on for quite a long time. Big mistake! I ended up with a "curdled" looking pie which didn't taste very nice.

- 
8. Some of the recipes in the book have a pinch of salt. This may seem strange in sweet recipes but the more taste buds we stimulate the bigger the flavor sensation. Chili in the chocolate is amazing
 9. When processing nuts for pie bases and biscuit slices there is no hard and fast rule as to how fine or coarse they should be. It is personal preference.
 10. In a recipe where an ingredient is listed in **bold** it refers to a recipe found in the book

Chocolate Making Tips

When setting chocolate in moulds you will get a better finish if the chocolate is quite runny.

If your chocolate becomes too stiff while you are working with it just place the basin over very warm water to melt it down again.

Be very careful not to let any water get in your chocolate mixture as it will ruin the texture

Pour the melted chocolate into the mould and set in the fridge or freezer. It is easier to make chocolates with chocolate recipe no. 3 as they tend to set harder and be glossier. On the other hand cacao butter melts at a much higher temperature.



Chocolate Recipe Guilt Free

Chocolate Recipe No. 1

Ingredients

½ cup cacao butter
½ cup cacao powder
¼ cup agave

Method

Melt cacao butter in a basin over very warm water. Combine with cacao powder and agave and mix well. Taste and adjust the sweetness if necessary. Place in fridge to set.

Chocolate Recipe No. 2

Ingredients

¼ cup cacao butter
¼ cup coconut oil
½ cup cacao powder
¼ cup agave

Method

As in Chocolate Recipe no. 1





Chocolate Recipe No. 3

Ingredients

½ cup coconut oil
½ cup cacao powder
¼ cup agave

Method

As in Chocolate Recipe no. 1

Chocolate Sauce

Ingredients

½ cup olive oil
½ tsp vanilla extract
½ cup cacao powder
1 cup agave

Method

Combine all ingredients.

Store in fridge



White Chocolate

Ingredients

½ cup cacao butter
½ cup agave
½ cup ground cashews

Method

Combine all ingredients in a blender until smooth. This chocolate does not set as hard as the recipes previously listed so is **not suitable** to place in moulds to make small chocolates or to make as bases for pies.

Chili Chocolate



Ingredients

*1 quantity white chocolate or chocolate recipe no. 1, 2 or 3
½ tsp minced chili or ¼ tsp chili powder*

Method

Combine the chocolate and chili. Taste and adjust the amount of chili to your taste

Pour into a cling wrap lined container 10 cm x 10 cm (4 in x 4 in) and set in the fridge overnight

Tip out of container, gently peel away the cling wrap and cut into blocks

Store in an airtight container in the fridge

Chocolate Dipped Strawberries



Wash and dry strawberries. I like to leave the green tops on for effect. Dunk strawberries in melted **chocolate recipe no. 3**. Place on a greased paper lined tray and set in fridge.

For an added effect, when the chocolate has set, drizzle with a small amount of white chocolate and return to fridge.

These strawberries are delicious as an after dinner treat with coffee or used as a decoration on desserts

Truffles



Tools

Food Processor

Ingredients

1/2 cup almonds

1/2 cup shredded coconut

1/4 cup chia seeds

1/2 cup dried apricots

1/4 cup cacao powder

3/4 cup dates – soaked overnight

1/2 cup goji berries

1/4 cup agave

1/4 cup for cacao powder for coating

*1/4 cup **chocolate recipe no. 3** -optional*

Method

Process almonds, coconut, dried apricots and goji berries until quite fine.

Add chia seeds, cacao powder, dates and agave and process to a moist consistency

Refrigerate for a few hours if too sticky to handle

Roll tablespoonfuls of mixture into balls

Place extra cacao powder in a bowl and roll balls around to coat them. To get a smoother finish reroll balls in the palm of your hand

Store in an airtight container in the fridge

Variation – roll balls in melted **chocolate recipe no. 3** and place in refrigerator to set

Key Lime Pie With A Chocolate Twist



Tools

Food Processor

Base Ingredients

1 cup almonds

1 cup desiccated coconut

1 cup dates – soaked overnight

¾ cup chocolate sauce recipe

Method

Process the almonds and coconut to the desired crunchiness.

Add dates and continue processing until the mixture comes together

Press into the base of a 20cm (8 in) pie plate



If the chocolate sauce is solid melt gently in a basin over hot water. Gently spread over base and place in freezer to set while making filling

Filling Ingredients

3 large avocados

1/8 cup agave

3/4 cup coconut oil

1/3 cup lime juice

Method

Place all ingredients except oil in processor and process to a smooth creamy mousse. Test to see if the pie is sweet enough and also if it has enough lime for your liking

Melt oil if solid in a basin over very warm water and mix in. Process until just combined

Pour over base and place in fridge to set. Decorate and serve

Variation

Key lime pie is amazing served in individual chocolate cases. Line silicone cup cake moulds with melted **chocolate recipe no. 3**. (recipes no.1 and no. 2 are too soft and tend to break easily) 3 or 4 thin coats especially around the sides are better than trying to line the moulds in one go. Refrigerate until well set and gently peel away from the moulds. Store carefully in fridge till required

Sunset Glory Parfait



Tools

Food processor

Ingredients

2 cups cashews

2/3 cup coconut oil

1/4 cup agave

1 tsp vanilla

pinch salt

2 cups water

1/3 cup Cacao powder

Method

Place all ingredients except coconut oil and cacao powder in blender and process till smooth

Add oil and process until combined.



Remove $\frac{1}{3}$ of the mixture and set aside. This is your **vanilla cream**

To the remaining mixture in the blender add $\frac{1}{3}$ *cup cacao powder* and combine. This is your **chocolate cream**

Place both mixtures separately in the fridge until thick – preferably overnight

Crumble Ingredients

1 cup walnuts

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup desiccated coconut

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp cinnamon

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp nutmeg

1 tablespoon agave

Method

Process walnuts and coconut until they are coarsely ground

Add cinnamon, nutmeg and agave and pulse until just combined and crumbly.

Mango Puree

1 cup frozen or fresh mango

Method

Process frozen or fresh mango into a puree. Taste and add some agave to sweeten if necessary

Assembly

In a parfait glass alternate layers of mango puree, fresh half strawberries, **chocolate cream**, **vanilla cream** and crumble, finishing with **chocolate cream** and more crumble on top

Refrigerate

Cacao, Pecan, Goji and Cranberry Slice



Tools

Food Processor

Ingredients

½ cup cacao powder

½ cup desiccated coconut

½ cup goji berries

½ cup sunflower seeds

½ cup dried cranberries

¼ cup agave

1 cup coconut oil

½ cup pecans

Method

If the coconut oil is solid melt it in a basin over very warm water.

In the food processor pulse the coconut, goji berries, sunflower seeds, cranberries and pecans until they are coarsely ground.

Add the agave, cacao powder and melted oil and process until it all comes together

Pour into a cling wrap lined 20cm x 10cm (8in x 4in) container.

Refrigerate overnight. Tip out of container and peel off cling wrap.

Cut into small squares and enjoy!

Store in an airtight container in the fridge or as a treat on a hot day eat straight from the freezer.

Chocolate Swirl Cheesecake



Tools

Food processor

Base Ingredients

½ cup almonds

½ cup desiccated coconut (fine)

½ cup dates – soaked overnight

¼ cup cacao powder

Method

Process nuts until finely ground – less for a crunchier base

Add cacao and dates and process until the mixture comes together

Line the base of a 20cm (8in) flan dish with the mixture and place in fridge while making filling.

Filling Ingredients

2 cups cashews

¼ cup agave

1 tsp vanilla

⅛ cup lemon juice

¼ cup water

¼ cup chocolate recipe No. 2



Method

Place all ingredients except oil and **chocolate recipe no. 2** in processor and process until smooth. This may take some time depending on how powerful your processor is. Stop and scrape down the sides as necessary.

Add coconut oil and process until just combined

Pour into lined flan dish

Carefully drizzle chocolate recipe No 2 over filling. Swirl the chocolate using a skewer to achieve the look in the picture.

Place in fridge to set, preferably overnight

Cut into wedges and serve

Macadamia Caramel Triangles

These scrumptious triangles are one of my favorites!



Ingredients

1/4 cup coconut oil
1/3 cup raw tahini
1/2 cup pure maple syrup
Pinch salt
1/2 cup macadamias
1 cup desiccated coconut
1 cup almonds
1/8 cup agave
1/4 cup chocolate recipe No. 2 melted

Method

Process almonds until finely ground and place in a bowl
Process macadamias until coarsely ground and add to bowl
Add remaining ingredients, except chocolate, and mix well
Pour into a cling wrap lined 15cm x15cm (6in x 6in) container
Refrigerate overnight to firm up
Cut into triangles and drizzle with melted **chocolate Recipe no. 2**
Return to fridge to set.
Store in an airtight container in the fridge

Chili Chocolate Nut Bar

Chili is an unusual twist to an otherwise sweet treat. It stimulates the senses for a flavor explosion. I think it is an amazing sensation!



Tools

Food processor

Ingredients

½ cup hazelnuts

½ cup pecans

½ cup almonds

⅓ cup goji berries

1 teaspoon minced chili or ¼ teaspoon chili powder

¼ cup cacao nibs

⅓ cup coconut oil

½ cup cacao powder

⅓ cup agave

¼ cup cranberries

Method

Process almonds until finely ground and place in a bowl

Coarsely process pecans, dried cranberries and goji berries

Leave hazelnuts whole and add to bowl



Add minced chili or powder and add to the bowl

Add the rest of the ingredients and mix well by hand. Taste test to get the desired level of “chili bite”

Press into a cling wrap lined 15cm x 15cm (6in x 6in) container.

Refrigerate overnight

Cut into squares and enjoy

Store in fridge in an airtight container

White Chocolate Macaroons



Tools

Food processor

Ingredients

2 cups desiccated (fine) coconut

½ tsp vanilla extract

¼ cup cacao butter

¼ cup coconut oil

¼ cup maple syrup

¼ cup cranberries

1 cup brazil nuts

Pinch salt

Extra coconut to finish

Method

Process brazil nuts to a fine powder

Add coconut and cranberries and process a little more

Add butter, oil, vanilla, maple syrup and salt and process to bring together

Roll into small balls. If mixture is too sticky to roll easily place in fridge for a few hours

Roll balls in the extra coconut

Store in fridge in an airtight container

Caramel Chocolate Squares



Tools

Food Processor

Base Ingredients

1 cup finely ground almonds
1 cup finely ground hazelnuts (filberts)
½ cup agave
pinch salt

Method

Process all ingredients in a food processor adding enough water to come together. Add water gradually as you do not want the mixture too wet.

Line a 20cm x 20cm (8in x 8in) pan with cling wrap and press mixture into the base. Place in freezer while you make the filling

Caramel Filling Ingredients

1 cup raw tahini
1 cup maple syrup
⅓ cup coconut oil



Method

Combine all ingredients and pour over base

Place in fridge overnight to set

Make up 1 quantity of **chocolate recipe no. 3** and carefully pour over filling

Return to fridge to set.

Cut into small squares (this decadent slice is quite rich!)

Store in fridge in an airtight container

Walnut Fudge



Tools

Food Processor

Ingredients

1 cup cashews – soaked overnight

1 cup walnuts

1 cup pitted dates – soaked overnight

1 cup water

1 cup flax seeds – ground

½ cup coconut oil

¾ cup agave

Extra chopped walnuts to sprinkle on top of fudge

Method

Process cashews and walnuts to a fine powder

Add remaining ingredients except the extra walnuts and process to a smooth consistency

Line a pan 15 cm x 15 cm (6 in x 6 in) with cling wrap and spoon in mixture

Sprinkle with the extra chopped walnuts and pat them down

Set in fridge or freezer

Store in the fridge or freezer in an airtight container

Tip: I enjoy eating these yummy treats straight from the freezer!

Ginger Chocolate Mousse Pie



Tools

Food processor

Base Ingredients

½ cup almonds

½ cup desiccated (fine) coconut

2 Tbsp cacao powder

½ cup pitted soaked dates

Method

Process the almonds to a fine powder

Add the remaining ingredients and process until it comes together

Press mixture into base only of either 4 individual round spring pans (with removable base) or one 15cm (6in) round spring pan. Press halved strawberries around the sides of the pan. Place in freezer while preparing filling

Ginger Mousse Ingredients

1 cup soaked cashews

1 ½ tsp minced ginger

⅓ cup soaked dates



pinch salt

¾ cup water

⅓ cup coconut oil

2 tsp lemon juice

2 tsp sweet soy sauce

⅓ cup cacao powder

⅛ cup agave

Method

Process cashews to a fine powder

Add rest of ingredients except oil and process to a smooth, creamy mousse. Taste and adjust flavorings.

Pour over base making sure the strawberries will be visible when the sides of the tins are removed.

Set overnight in the fridge to infuse flavors

Decorate and serve

Chocolate Mint Slice

This is a delicious raw version of what used to be one of my favorite slices



Tools

Food Processor

Blender

Base Ingredients

½ sunflower seeds – soaked

1 cup brazil nuts

½ cup almonds

¼ cup dried figs - chopped

¼ cup sultanas

½ cup pitted and soaked dates

Method

Process nuts and sunflower seeds to a semi coarse powder. Leave a bit of crunch

Add figs and sultanas and pulse a few times

Add dates and process until the mixture comes together

Line a 20cm x 20cm (8in x 8in) pan with cling wrap and press mixture into base. Freeze while preparing mint topping



Mint Topping Ingredients

½ cup melted cacao butter

½ cup coconut oil

½ cup finely ground cashews

¼ cup agave

¼ tsp peppermint oil

*¼ cup **chocolate recipe no. 3***

Method

In a blender combine all ingredients except chocolate. Taste test to achieve the desired peppermint flavor

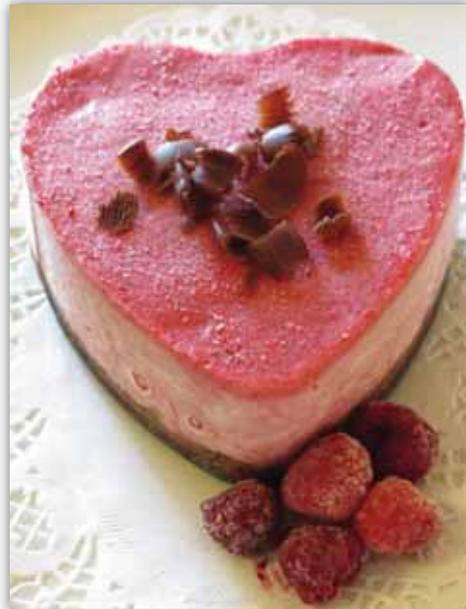
Pour topping over base. Before it sets drizzle melted **chocolate recipe no.3** over topping and swirl it around using a skewer.

Place in fridge overnight. Cut into small squares

Store in fridge in an airtight container

Lovers Blush Tart

This is a delicious frozen fruit pie with a chocolaty base



Tools

Processor

Base Ingredients

1 cup almonds

1 cup coconut

½ cup pitted and soaked dates

½ cup cacao powder

4 Tbsp coconut oil

½ tsp cinnamon

Method

Grind nuts and coconut to a powder. Leave a bit of crunch

Add rest of ingredients and process until the mixture comes together

Press into base of one large spring form pan heart shape if possible (with removable base)

Place in freezer while preparing the filling



Blush Filling Ingredients

2 cups sliced frozen bananas

2 cups frozen raspberries

¼ cup agave

1 Tbsp coconut oil

Method

Process the frozen fruits until you have a soft serve consistency. It is a good idea to let the fruit thaw a little before processing as it will whip more effectively.

Add agave and oil and process until combined

Fill the tin with the Blush Filling and return to freezer

Freeze overnight

Carefully remove the sides of the pan to release the tart

Decorate and serve

Variation

For serious chocolate lovers this pie is amazing with a layer of **chocolate recipe no.3** spread over the base before the filling is poured in. Make sure the chocolate is set before adding the filling.

Nutty Chocolate Slab

This is a seriously delicious chocolate hit!



Ingredients

½ cup cacao butter
½ cup coconut oil
¼ cup agave
1 cup cacao powder
½ cup brazil nuts
½ cup sultanas
½ cup macadamia nuts
⅓ cup chopped dried apricots

Method

Melt the cacao butter and coconut oil in a basin over very warm water

Add the cacao and agave and mix well

Mix in dried fruit and nuts

Pour into a cling wrap lined 15cm x 15cm (6in x6in) pan and set overnight in the fridge

Tip slab out on to a cutting board, remove cling wrap and cut into squares

Store in an airtight container in the fridge

Chocolate Mousse Pie

You will amaze your friends and family when you tell them what is in this deliciously smooth chocolaty pie



Tools

Food Processor

Serves

12

Base Ingredients

1 cup almonds

1 cup desiccated (fine) coconut

1 cup pitted and soaked dates

Method

Process the almonds and coconut to a fine powder with still a little crunch

Add dates and process until the mixture comes together

Press mixture into the base and sides of a 20cm (8in) round flan dish

Place in fridge while making filling



Mousse Filling Ingredients

3 avocados

1/3 cup agave

1/2 cup cacao powder

2/3 cup coconut oil

1 cup pitted and soaked dates

1/2 cup water

Method

Process the avocados, agave, dates and water to a smooth mousse

Add the cacao powder and process to combine

Add the coconut oil and process to combine

Pour the mousse filling over the pie base and place in fridge to set

Decorate and serve

Choc Top Energy Slice



Tools

Processor

Ingredients

½ cup cashews

½ cup almonds

½ cup pepitas

½ cup goji berries

½ cup raisins

¼ cup sunflower seeds

½ cup sesame seeds

½ cup pitted and soaked dates

¼ cup cacao nibs

⅓ cup melted coconut oil

⅓ cup agave

Pinch salt

⅓ cup dried cranberries – chopped

½ cup chocolate recipe no. 3 - melted



Method

Process the cashews, almonds, pepitas, goji berries, raisins, sunflower seeds and sesame seeds until the mixture is still a little crunchy

Add the rest of the ingredients except the chocolate and process until the mixture comes together

Spoon the mixture into a 15cm x 20cm (6in x 8in) tray and set in the fridge overnight

Turn out on to a cutting board and cut into bars

Either dip the end in melted chocolate or dunk the face of the bar in the chocolate

Place on a greased paper covered tray and set in fridge

Store in an airtight container in the fridge and nibble whenever you feel like it!

Variations

Replace the cranberries with dried apricots

After coating in chocolate sprinkle with chopped nuts

Chocolate Bliss Balls

These balls are a staple in my household. There is always a box in the fridge for a quick nibble or to share when friends drop in for coffee.



Tools

Food Processor

Ingredients

2 cups almonds

1 cup raisins

1 cup sultanas

½ cup sunflower seeds

½ cup pepitas

¼ cup chia seeds

¼ cup sesame seeds

⅓ cup cacao powder

2 ½ cups pitted and soaked dates

½ cup walnuts

Extra coconut for coating balls

Method

Process nuts, seeds and dried fruit, except walnuts, until finely ground. Place in a bowl

Chop walnuts by hand and add. They will give texture

Add cacao powder

Process pitted and soaked dates until they form a paste then add to bowl

Mix well together

Roll tablespoonfuls of mixture into balls and roll in coconut

Store in an airtight container in the fridge

Frozen Chocolate Banana Pie

Black sapote, or chocolate pudding fruit, is an amazing tropical fruit that, when ripe, tastes exactly like chocolate pudding. I found some at our local farmers market and decided to include this recipe for a bit of fun. They are also delicious added to a frozen banana smoothie.



Tools

Food Processor

Base Ingredients

1 cup almonds

1 cup desiccated (fine) coconut

1 cup pitted and soaked dates



Method

Process the almonds and coconut to a powder but with still a little crunchy

Add dates and process until the mixture comes together

Press mixture into the base and sides of a 20cm (8in) round flan dish

Place in fridge while making filling

Frozen Fruit Filling Ingredients

2 cups sliced frozen banana slices

1 cup frozen berries (raspberries, blueberries etc)

¼ cup agave

2 Tbsp lemon juice

*1 black sapote (chocolate pudding fruit) or ⅓ cup melted **chocolate recipe no. 3***

Extra frozen berries for serving

Method

Place all ingredients in the processor and combine to form a soft serve ice-cream consistency

Spoon immediately over base and return to freezer for a few hours to re- freeze

Cut into slices, decorate with extra frozen berries and serve

Store leftovers in the freezer

Coconut Cream Chocolate Gateau



Tools

Food Processor

Chocolate Fudge Ingredients

1 cup almonds

1 cup walnuts

1 ¼ cup pitted and soaked dates

¼ cup cacao powder

½ tsp vanilla

Method

Process nuts to a fine texture

Add cacao powder, vanilla and dates and process until the mixture comes together

Line a 15cm (6in) diameter tin with cling wrap. Press ⅓ mixture into base

Coconut Cream Ingredients

3 cups desiccated (fine) coconut

½ cups coconut oil – melted

¼ cup tahini

⅛ cup maple syrup

½ cup agave

⅓ cup water



Method

Combine coconut with the water.

Add rest of ingredients and mix well

Spread ½ on top of chocolate fudge layer

Take ½ of remaining chocolate fudge and form into a round the same diameter as the tin. Carefully place on top of coconut cream and pat down

Spread with remaining coconut cream

Form another round with the remaining chocolate fudge and again carefully place on top of coconut cream layer

Place in fridge overnight to set

Frosting Ingredients

1 ½ avocados

½ cup pitted and soaked dates

¼ cup cacao powder

1 tablespoon agave

1 tablespoon coconut oil

Method

Process all ingredients except oil to a creamy mousse like consistency

Add oil and process to combine. Adjust sweetness if necessary

Frost sides and top of cake, reserving some frosting for decoration

Decoration Ingredients

8 strawberries

*⅓ cup **chocolate recipe no. 3***

*Small quantity **white chocolate recipe***

Method

Dip strawberries in chocolate leaving some red showing. Place on greased paper and set in fridge. Put leftover chocolate in freezer to firm up to make chocolate swirls for centre of cake

Drizzle or pipe white chocolate lines over brown chocolate on strawberry



Pipe a swirl of frosting evenly around cake. Place strawberry on top - see photo

To make chocolate swirls scrape a melon baller or spoon across the surface of the chocolate. Carefully lift swirls on to cake using a cold spoon. If you try to pick up the swirls with your fingers they will melt and collapse

Stand back and admire your creation!

Store in an airtight container in the fridge

Seriously Smooth Chocolate Ice Cream



Tools

Blender

Ingredients

2 cups cashews – soaked

2/3 cup dates

1 cup water

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/3 cup cacao powder

pinch salt

Method

Blend all ingredients to a smooth, creamy mousse like consistency. This may take a while. If necessary stop the blender and scrape down the sides. At this stage you can increase the richness of the ice cream by adding more cacao powder

Pour into an airtight freezer container and freeze overnight.

Eat straight from the freezer

Rich Chocolate Cheesecake With Raspberry Sauce



Tools

Food processor
Blender

Base Ingredients

1 cup almonds
1 cup coconut
1 cup dates – soaked overnight
1/3 cup cacao powder

Method

Process nuts until finely ground – less for a crunchier base
Add cacao and dates and process until the mixture comes together
Line the base of a 20cm (8in) flan dish or 4 individual dishes and place in fridge while making filling.

Filling Ingredients

2 cups cashews
1/2 tsp vanilla
1/2 cup coconut oil
3/4 cup water
1 cup chocolate sauce recipe
raspberries for decoration



Method

Blend cashews, chocolate, agave, vanilla and water until smooth. This may take some time. Stop and scrape down the sides as necessary

Add coconut oil and process till combined.

Pour into flan dishes and place in fridge to set

Raspberry Sauce Ingredients

½ cup fresh or frozen raspberries

juice of ½ lemon

1 tablespoon agave

Method

Puree all ingredients in the blender. Adjust sweetness if necessary

Decorate cheesecake with raspberries and drizzle with raspberry sauce

Store in an airtight container in the fridge

Chocolate Walnut Caramels



Ingredients

1 cup raw tahini

1 cup maple syrup

1/3 cup coconut oil

1/3 cup walnuts

*1/2 cup **chocolate recipe no. 3***

Method

Mix together tahini, maple syrup and coconut oil

Place in fridge overnight to set

Roll into small balls

Chop walnuts till quite fine and roll balls in the walnuts

If the balls are getting quite soft and sticky place them in the fridge for a few hours to firm up again

Melt **chocolate recipe no. 3** over a basin of very warm water and coat balls in chocolate

Return to fridge to set

Store in an airtight container in the fridge to set



References

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