

yumm 20

FOOD AND FUN

SEASONAL & STEALTHY EATS
TO HELP YOU VEG OUT!

for kids

Cupcakes in Bloom

5 RECIPES
to Sweeten Up Spring

Faux Real?

The Truth About
Sugar & Fake
Sweeteners

Pretty in Picnic

The Best
Fresh Recipes
to Make & Take

Easter Extravaganza

10 Goodies You've Got to Have

Trust us—gum paste
flowers are easy
peasy! p. 79

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SPRING 2015

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In Full BLOOM

AS NEW TENDER SHOOTS EMERGE FROM THE GROUND

and bright blooms burst from the trees, *Yum* is taking a leaf out of spring's book and using it in our own. With a new year comes new vision and new goals, so we're reflecting that in our new look. Fresh, clean and just the tiniest bit "all grown up," it's all about the recipes and how you can have fun with them.

In that same vein, we've refreshed some of your favorite columns and added a bouquet of new ones you're sure to love. From expert tips on decoding the craziness of nutritional

labels (**Labelmania**, p. 32) to a leg up in the ever-growing world of food allergies (**Allergy Free**, p. 18), you'll be well equipped for making positive and healthy changes in your family's life. If you still have burning questions about health and diet, just drop us a line and our dietitians will lead you in the right direction (**Ask the Expert**, p. 98).

Of course, we still have all of the fun stuff, too! Join your kids on an expedition of flavor through new lands and cultures (**Passport**, p. 20), or better yet—have them join you in the kitchen as you both explore fun new ingredients and cooking methods (**The Laboratory**, p. 24). And don't forget the sweets: Nestled in these pages, you'll

find some of our cutest treats yet. Whether you're hosting a springy teatime shindig (p. 62) or planning for the sweetest Easter ever (p. 84), you won't be disappointed with the recipes and treat-decorating tips we have in store. Oh, and cupcakes? We've got you covered (p. 80).

We may have a brand-new style and some new tricks up our sleeve, but *Yum* still has the same mission at heart: Keeping your family smiling every day. Spring is the season of new hopes and dreams and we wish you all a happy, healthy and especially honey-sweet year. Welcome to the new *Yum* family—and thank you for letting us be a part of yours. ●




ELISE PORTALE
EDITOR

Clear-Conscience COMFORTS

■ THESE COZY FAVORITES GET A BIT STEALTHY WITH SOME HIDDEN VEGGIES.

RECIPES AND PHOTOGRAPHY FROM *GRAIN-FREE FAMILY TABLE* BY CARRIE VITT

IT'S NO SECRET that kids and adults alike would choose melty, cheesy casseroles over a steaming pile of vegetables. And while preparing these unhealthy dishes seems like giving in to the enemy, that very same melted cheese and flavorful tomato sauce are the perfect camouflage for the good stuff. Hidden cauliflower is easily sneaked into saucy stuffed peppers. Squash lies low between the layers of a cheesy lasagna. These two dishes are a great way to serve up dinner while giving your family a dose of vitamins where they'd least expect it. ●

Tip

Grating the head of a cauliflower—"ricing"—is a very easy process. After rinsing and drying the whole cauliflower, grate the cauliflower with a coarse cheese grater so it is about the size of rice grains.

SOUTHWESTERN STUFFED BELL PEPPERS

These savory and meaty stuffed peppers have a sneaky ingredient—riced cauliflower—that nobody will even notice!

- 2 tablespoons coconut oil
- 6 scallions, cut into ¼-inch slices, white and green parts separated
- 1 pound grass-fed ground beef
- 1½ teaspoons ground cumin
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 cups "riced" cauliflower (see tip, left)
- 1 (4.5-ounce) can chopped green chiles
- ½ teaspoon Celtic sea salt
- 2 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 4 large red, yellow or orange bell peppers, halved lengthwise, stems on, seeds removed
- ½ cup sour cream
- ½ cup salsa

Prep: 15 minutes
Bake: 35 minutes
Series 4-6

- 1 Preheat the oven to 375°F and adjust the rack to the middle position.
- 2 In a large skillet over medium heat, melt the coconut oil. Add the scallion whites, half the scallion greens and the beef, and cook until the meat is no longer pink, 5-7 minutes. Move the beef mixture to the sides of the pan and add the cumin and garlic to the center. Cook until fragrant, about 1 minute, and then stir into the beef mixture. Add the riced cauliflower, chiles, salt and 1 cup of the cheese. Stir until all the ingredients are incorporated.
- 3 Place the peppers cut-side up in a large baking dish. Divide the filling mixture evenly among the peppers. Pour ½ cup hot water in the bottom of the pan and cover the peppers with a sheet of parchment paper. Top with a piece of foil (this way the aluminum doesn't touch the food) and press it around the dish to secure it. Bake for 25 minutes.
- 4 Remove the foil, top each pepper with a bit of sour cream and salsa and sprinkle on the remaining 1 cup cheese. Bake for 10 more minutes, or until the cheese is bubbly and golden brown and the peppers are crisp-tender. Serve.



Tip

Depending on the size of the peppers, you might have a bit of filling left over. If so, put the filling in a small ovenproof bowl and bake alongside the peppers. It makes a great lunch the next day!



EGGPLANT AND ZUCCHINI LASAGNA

With vegetables drenched in sauce, layered with seasoned ricotta cheese and baked bubbly in the oven, your family will never know this lasagna is noodle-less.

FOR THE VEGETABLES

- 5 medium zucchini, cut lengthwise into 1/4-inch-thick slices
- 2 eggplants, peeled and cut lengthwise into 1/4-inch-thick slices
- Celtic sea salt
- 1/4 cup ghee, melted

FOR THE TOMATO-MEAT SAUCE

- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons dried Italian seasoning
- 1 (24-ounce) jar crushed tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon Celtic sea salt
- 1 1/2 pounds grass-fed ground beef

FOR THE RICOTTA FILLING

- 10 ounces ricotta cheese
- 1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
- 2 large eggs, beaten

- 1/2 cup grated mozzarella cheese



- 1 Preheat the oven to 425°F and adjust the rack to the middle position.
- 2 **FOR THE VEGETABLES:** Place the zucchini and eggplant slices on 2 large, rimmed baking sheets and sprinkle both sides with salt. Let sit for 20 minutes. Pat the slices dry with a paper towel or tea towel and brush with melted ghee. Roast for 15 minutes, or until the vegetables begin to shrivel a bit and the edges are just turning golden brown. Reduce the heat to 400°F.
- 3 **FOR THE TOMATO-MEAT SAUCE:** Meanwhile, in a large saucepan over medium heat, combine the garlic, olive oil and Italian seasoning. Cook until the garlic begins to sizzle and is fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the tomatoes and salt and simmer the sauce for 10 minutes. Add the ground beef and cook, breaking the beef apart with the back of a wooden spoon, until cooked through, 8-10 minutes.
- 4 **FOR THE RICOTTA FILLING:** In a small bowl, stir together the ricotta, seasoning and eggs.
- 5 Spoon a few tablespoons of the sauce into an 11x7-inch baking dish and spread evenly to coat the bottom of the dish. Top with half of the zucchini and eggplant slices (they will overlap). Spread half of the ricotta mixture on top, followed by half the remaining sauce. Repeat with the remaining ingredients and top with the mozzarella. Bake for 25-30 minutes, until the lasagna is bubbling and the cheese is golden brown on top.

FOR MORE
ON GRAIN-FREE
FAMILY TABLE, SEE
THE BOOK NOOK,
PAGE 96.



IT'S A WRAP!

MAKE THE SPEEDIEST AND HEALTHIEST PB&J WITH JUST A LEAF OF LETTUCE.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY FROM *YUMUNIVERSE* BY HEATHER CROSBY

Prep: 5 minutes
Serves 2-4

STRAWBERRY-BANANA CRUNCH SNACK WRAPS

4 large leaves of Boston lettuce
Almond butter
2 tablespoons almonds, chopped and toasted
2 tablespoons sunflower seeds, chopped and toasted
1-2 teaspoons hemp seeds
4-5 strawberries, sliced
½-1 banana, sliced
Pinch of sea salt

- 1 On a clean workspace, lay out the Boston lettuce leaves cup-side up.
- 2 Spread a little bit of almond butter on half of a leaf. Top with toasted almonds, sunflower seeds and hemp seeds. Layer strawberries and banana on top. Add a tiny pinch of sea salt and wrap the lettuce up. Repeat these steps with more leaves for as many wraps as you need.

DESPITE THE NAME, oftentimes, there's no time for snack time. Maybe your child needs an afternoon pick-me-up between school and softball practice. Or maybe back-to-back weekend errands have your child running on empty. No matter when snack time strikes, it's never at the right time for you. That's why having a go-to snack recipe that is easily whipped up in fewer than 5 minutes is worth keeping in your back pocket. The next time your little one gets hungry when you're mid-hustle, toss together this delicious and nutritious peanut butter crunch wrap and keep on moving! ●

Tips

You can also try romaine instead of Boston lettuce.

For variety, try out different berries and nut butters inside the wrap.

FOR MORE ON
YUMUNIVERSE, SEE
THE BOOK NOOK,
PAGE 96.

CARROT APPLE SALAD



Springtime DEFROST

TRANSITION MEALTIME INTO THE NEW SEASON WITH WINTER'S HARVEST AND SPRING'S NEW OFFERINGS.

RECIPES AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY NATASHA KRAVCHUK, NATASHASKITCHEN.COM

WHILE THE SEASONS SEEM CUT AND DRY with home décor, produce follows its own calendar. Sure, asparagus and peas seem to be unambiguously springy, but the cold weather in January and February extends the availability of fruits and vegetables for a little longer than their December deadlines. Mix together some winter apples and spring baby carrots for a naturally sweet salad or use the remainder of last year's beets (yes, trust us!) in a steamy pot of beef stew. These three family-friendly, winter-to-spring recipes will melt in your mouth faster than the spring melts away the snow! ●

Tip

Organic carrots tend to be sweeter and take this entire salad up a notch.

CARROT APPLE SALAD

Use the end of the winter apple harvest paired with the beginning of baby carrot season to create a sweet and nutritious salad.

Prep: 10 minutes
Serves 3-4

FOR THE DRESSING

- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- ½ tablespoon sugar
- ⅛ teaspoon sea salt, or to taste
- Pinch of freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE SALAD

- 4 medium carrots, peeled
- 1 apple, diced
- ¼ cup red or sweet onion, finely diced
- ¾ cup dried cranberries

① **FOR THE DRESSING:** In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, lemon juice, sugar, pinch of salt and pepper and mix until well combined. Set aside.

② **FOR THE SALAD:** Using a hand grater or food processor, coarsely grate the carrots and transfer to a large mixing bowl. Then, add the diced apple, diced onion and dried cranberries. Toss to combine.

③ When ready to serve, add the salad dressing (to taste) to the salad mixture and toss the salad until everything is well coated.

SKINNY SPINACH AND ARTICHOKE DIP

Sneak a bit of healthy into a creamy yogurt and Parmesan dip with spinach and artichokes.

- 8 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese
- 2 cups plain, nonfat Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter
- 1½ cups Parmesan cheese
- 1 (14-ounce) can quartered artichoke hearts, drained and coarsely chopped
- 1 (4-ounce) can diced jalapeños, drained (optional)
- 10 ounces frozen spinach, thawed and drained
- 2-3 cloves garlic, pressed
- Multi-grain crackers or tortilla chips, to serve

- ❶ In a medium pot over medium heat, melt together the cream cheese, Greek yogurt, butter and Parmesan cheese, uncovered, stirring frequently until melted and smooth. It should start to bubble lightly.
- ❷ Stir in the coarsely chopped artichoke hearts, drained jalapeños (if using) and drained spinach. (Make sure to squeeze the spinach over the sink to remove excess water.)
- ❸ Stir in the pressed garlic cloves. Let the mixture bubble for a few minutes and serve hot with your favorite multi-grain crackers or lightly salted tortilla chips.

Prep: 10 minutes
Cook: 10 minutes
Serves 8-10



TRADITIONAL BORSCHT WITH MEAT

This fun-colored super soup from Ukraine is full of the cool season's beets and potatoes with a touch of spring's fresh, green herbs.

- 1 pound beef, preferred cut (bone-in or boneless, see tip)
- 1 tablespoon salt plus more to taste
- 2 large or 3 medium beets, washed and peeled
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons tomato sauce or paste (or 3 tablespoons ketchup)
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 medium onion, finely diced
- 2 carrots, grated
- ½ head small cabbage, sliced
- 2 large or 3 medium potatoes, peeled and cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2 tomatoes, peeled and diced (see tip)
- 2 bay leaves
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- 2 cloves garlic, pressed
- Sour cream, to serve
- Sprigs of fresh dill or parsley, to serve

① Wash meat in cold water, cut into 1-inch pieces (if boneless) and place in a large soup pot with 14 cups cold water and salt. Bring it to a boil and remove the foam solids as soon as it boils. (If you wait, it will be hard to get rid of the foam, as it will integrate into the broth and you'll have to strain it later.) Reduce the heat, partially cover the pot and simmer for 45-60 minutes, periodically skimming off any foam that rises to the top.

② Using a coarse grater or a food processor, grate the beets. Place the grated beets in a large heavy-bottomed skillet with the olive oil and vinegar and sauté for 5 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low, and add the sugar and tomato sauce. Mix thoroughly and sauté, stirring occasionally, until the beets start to soften, about 10 minutes. Remove from the pan and set aside.

③ In the same skillet (no need to wash it), sauté the onion in the butter for 2 minutes. Then, add the grated carrot and sliced cabbage and cook until softened, another 5 minutes, adding more oil if it seems too dry.

④ Once the meat has been cooking at least 45 minutes, place the sliced potatoes into the soup pot and cook for 10 minutes. Then, add the cabbage, beets, onion and carrot mixture and chopped tomatoes; cook for another 10 minutes or until the potatoes are easily pierced with a fork.

⑤ Add the 2 bay leaves, ¼ teaspoon pepper and more salt, to taste. Then, add the chopped parsley and pressed garlic; stir them into the soup pot, immediately cover the pot and remove it from heat. Let the pot rest, covered, for 20 minutes so the flavors can meld. Serve with a dollop of sour cream and a sprig of fresh herbs, such as dill or parsley.

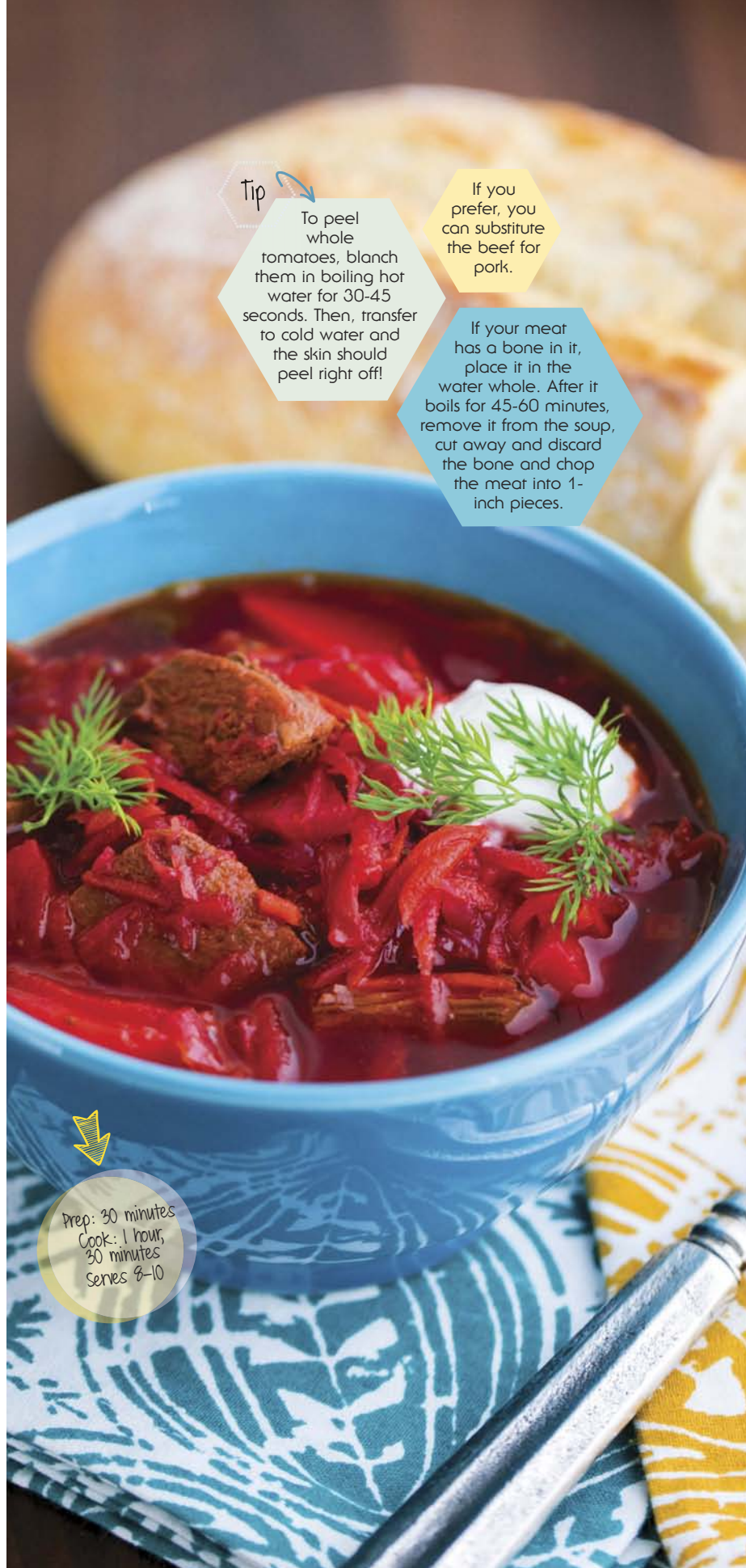
Tip

To peel whole tomatoes, blanch them in boiling hot water for 30-45 seconds. Then, transfer to cold water and the skin should peel right off!

If you prefer, you can substitute the beef for pork.

If your meat has a bone in it, place it in the water whole. After it boils for 45-60 minutes, remove it from the soup, cut away and discard the bone and chop the meat into 1-inch pieces.

Prep: 30 minutes
Cook: 1 hour,
30 minutes
Serves 8-10



LIVING WITH LACTOSE

DAIRY INTOLERANCE DOES NOT MEAN THE END OF TREATS AND GOOD EATS.

BY ELISE PORTALE

ONE OF THE MOST COMMON “ALLERGIES” OF THE MODERN world might possibly be the most confusing. Milk is in so much of our diet—from the cheese in your daughter’s sandwich to the milk in your son’s chocolate. Luckily, as common as it is, lactose intolerance isn’t really a big deal, and understanding how the body treats milk is a good start to helping your child live a healthy, lactose-free life (while still eating all the good stuff!).

The Science

Lactose intolerance isn’t the same as a milk allergy. While the allergy is caused by a person’s immune system reacting negatively to milk, the intolerance is the result of not being able to properly digest milk. Lactose (milk sugar) is broken down in the small intestine by enzymes called lactase. For those with an intolerance, their body does not produce enough lactase to digest milk effectively. Fortunately, consuming lactose in this condition is not dangerous (like an allergy could be) and many with the intolerance can afford to have certain “fermented” dairy, like yogurt or cheese. Regardless, a reaction is certainly not comfortable, coming with an array of symptoms you’d want to avoid for your child.

The Solution

According to the U.S. National Library of Medicine, about 65% of Americans have a lactase deficiency, so there is no shortage of lactose solutions for your child. The first and easiest step is to adjust your child’s diet to avoid as much dairy as possible. Next, familiarize yourself with lactose-free or nondairy products, which are widely available more than ever before. And while it may first seem like dairy is in everything we eat (it nearly is), you’ll soon find that navigating products and recipes to suit your child’s new diet will become very easy. ●

Free
for all?

The term “lactose-free” on some dairy products is a little deceiving, as these products actually still contain real dairy with lactose. However, what makes these products safe for those with lactose intolerance is the addition of the enzyme lactase to help with digestion. Baking and cooking with lactose-free milk is preferable to nondairy milks (soy, coconut, almond, etc.), as the real milk acts the same in frostings and sauces. Many popular brands make lactose-free milk, yogurt, sour cream and even butter, so these substitutes are relatively easy to find.

SOURCE: MAYOCLINIC.ORG, GHR.NLM.NIH.GOV

LACTOSE-FREE STRAWBERRY CUPCAKES

An intolerance for lactose is so common that even famous London bakery LOLA's Cupcakes has crafted a lactose-free cupcake that is still as perfectly sweet as any other recipe.

RECIPE FROM *LOLA'S FOREVER* BY LOLA'S BAKERS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER CASSIDY

FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch of salt
- ⅔ cup lactose-free butter
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla bean paste
- 2 eggs
- ⅔ cup lactose-free whole milk
- ½ cup lactose-free strawberry yogurt

FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- ¾ cup lactose-free butter
- ½ teaspoon vanilla bean paste
- 3½ cups confectioners' sugar
- ¼ cup fresh strawberries, mashed with a fork

Sliced fresh strawberries, to decorate

- 1 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a muffin pan with paper cupcake liners.
- 2 **FOR THE CUPCAKES:** Sift the flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt into a large bowl. Set aside.
- 3 Using an electric hand mixer in a large bowl, beat together the butter, sugar and vanilla bean paste at medium speed for 1-2 minutes, until light and fluffy. Periodically scrape down the sides with a rubber spatula.
- 4 With the mixer on low, add the eggs, one at a time, until fully incorporated. Slowly add the dry ingredients, mixing on low, until combined.
- 5 Scrape down the sides of the bowl and briefly beat at high speed until the mixture is smooth. Mix in milk and yogurt until just incorporated. Do not overmix.
- 6 Using an ice cream scoop, divide the mixture between the muffin cups, filling each to almost ¾ full. Bake in the preheated oven for 20-25 minutes, until well risen and a cake tester comes out clean. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7 **FOR THE BUTTERCREAM:** Using an electric hand mixer in a large bowl, beat the butter and vanilla bean paste until soft and smooth. Sift in half of the confectioners' sugar and mix on low until incorporated. Add the remaining sugar and beat until incorporated. Add the mashed strawberries and briefly mix on medium until the buttercream is light and fluffy.
- 8 Spread the buttercream onto each cake using a palette knife or pipe a swirl of buttercream using a pastry bag. Decorate with fresh strawberry slices and serve.

Prep: 5-10 min.
Bake: 20-25 min.
Makes 12 cupcakes



FOR MORE
ON *LOLA'S
FOREVER*, SEE THE
BOOK NOOK,
PAGE 96.

with Flying COLORS

BY KAREN WILHELMSSEN

MARK YOUR
CALENDARS
AND
CELEBRATE
THE COLORFUL
HOLIDAY OF
HOLI IN THE
KITCHEN.

AS WITH MOST OF OUR FAVORITE HOLIDAYS, Holi (also known as the Hindu festival of colors, Basant Utsav or Vasantotsav as celebrated in West Bengal) gives us a chance to make recipes that are important to a country's rich history. Holi is mainly observed in India and Nepal as well as other countries with large populations of people who practice Hinduism.

Holi falls in the lunar month Phalgun, on the last day of its full moon. This year, get ready for it to take place on March 6. This day celebrates the start of spring—a time for new beginnings and a season with a bountiful harvest. This holiday is a rare opportunity for kids and adults alike to make a mess and celebrate with the community by partaking in a fun tradition: smearing vibrant powders and throwing colored water at each other.

This holiday originates from an important event in Hindu mythology, when the demon Holika was defeated with the help of Lord Vishnu. Thus, this festival also represents good triumphing over evil. Lord Vishnu was later reincarnated as the youthful flute-playing prince Krishna, who was a prankster that poured colored water on people—a fun feature of Holi still cherished today.

Many people celebrate the day before Holi by gathering around a bonfire. Families also often have a quieter celebration at home to exchange gifts and make delicious recipes like gujjias, sweet samosas (hand pies) filled with dried fruits and coconut. Try our savory samosa recipe this year to bring a part of this long-standing custom—and delicious, flavorful Indian spices—to your family's table. ●

Celebrate Holi at Home!

BRING THE MAGIC OF HOLI TO YOUR KIDS WITH THESE EASY TIPS.

- **GET THE RIGHT GEAR.** This is one fun and messy celebration that's best when participated outdoors. If you're going to throw colored powders, make sure your kids are wearing old clothes that you don't mind getting dirty or tossing out afterward. To prevent the powder from getting in eyes, have your kids wear their swimming goggles. You can even break out the water guns and water balloons!

- **SHOW YOUR COLORS.** If you don't have a local Indian or international market nearby, buy the colored powders online. But make sure to look for high-quality powders that will be safer on skin instead of synthetic ones. Find those that are plant-based and made from natural resources like turmeric or marigold flowers. Take extra precaution for kids with allergies to pollen or dust and those with asthma.

- **GOOD, CLEAN FUN.** When the celebration is over, start the cleanup outside so that the mess doesn't get dragged in the house. Use a hose to remove excess powder from skin and clothes. Then, use a mild dish detergent or cleansing lotion on skin and rinse.



BAKED VEGETABLE SAMOSA HAND PIES

Full of potatoes and peas in a flaky crust, these tasty handpies are a great Indian dish to explore a world of new spices.

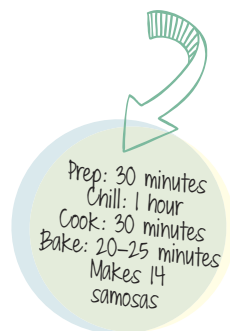
RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JONATHAN MELENDEZ, THECANDIDAPPETITE.COM

FOR THE DOUGH

- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon ajwain (carom or caraway) seeds
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, chilled and diced
- ¼ cup ice-cold water

FOR THE FILLING

- 2 russet potatoes, peeled and diced
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter (or ghee)
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons fresh ginger, grated
- 2 ½ teaspoons garam masala
- ½ teaspoon whole cumin
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- ½ teaspoon ground mango powder (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground coriander
- 2 green chiles, chopped (optional)
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 1 egg, for egg wash



- 1 **FOR THE DOUGH:** In a large mixing bowl, combine the flour, sugar, salt and ajwain seeds. Add the cold butter and cut-in with a pastry blender or with your fingers, until it forms coarse crumbs the size of peas.
- 2 Add the cold water and mix until the dough comes together. Add more water as needed, 1 tablespoon at a time, until desired consistency is reached. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap and place in the fridge to chill for at least 1 hour.
- 3 **FOR THE FILLING:** Place the peeled and diced potatoes in a pot, fill it with cold water and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook until fork tender. Drain and allow to cool.
- 4 Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the butter (or ghee) and melt. Throw in the diced onions and garlic, and sauté for about 5 minutes until translucent and soft. Add the grated ginger and all of the spices. Stir and cook for another 5 minutes to develop the flavors. Add the cooked potatoes, green chiles, cilantro and peas. Stir and cook for another 2 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to cool completely.
- 5 Preheat oven to 375°F. Place the chilled dough on a lightly floured work surface. Roll out into a large rectangle, about ¼ inch thick. Cut out into medium circles and place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Brush the edges with egg wash. Fill each with about a tablespoon of filling in the center. Fold over and, using a fork or your fingers, crimp the edges to seal. Brush the tops with egg wash and bake for about 20-25 minutes or until golden brown.

Tip

These samosas can be frozen and baked right before serving. No thawing necessary, just add a bit more oven time. Any leftovers can be kept in the fridge for up to 4 days.



SERVE
WARM WITH
YOUR FAVORITE
CHUTNEY, SMOKY
JAM OR SAUCE.

The 12-Well Wonder

INTRODUCE YOUR CHILD TO THE MUFFIN TIN, YOUR KITCHEN'S MOST VERSATILE PAN.

THE BEST PART OF COOKING IS EXPERIMENTING.

Following recipes is fun, but nothing is more rewarding than trying something new and with great results. Unless your child is a natural-born chef, nearly everything in the kitchen is new and unique. When it's time to cook, introduce your child to a new part of your pantry and see what you can create.

Nothing is more unique and versatile as the muffin tin. Your child is no doubt familiar with tasty cupcakes and muffins, but the fun doesn't stop there. The shape and size of a muffin tin lends itself to many different concoctions, such as mini quiches, baby meatloaves and even delicately made lattice-top pies. The kitchen is your cooking laboratory—so toss on your aprons and show your kids the magic of the kitchen! ●

WRITTEN, STYLED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY ELISE PORTALE

LEMON-ZUCCHINI MUFFINS

Sneak in some vitamin C-rich zucchini with these lightly iced, zesty lemon muffins.

FOR THE MUFFINS

- 1¾ cup all-purpose flour
- 2½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 egg
- ⅔ cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ cup canola or vegetable oil
- ⅓ cup lemon juice
- 1 large zucchini, finely grated (about 1 cup)

FOR THE ICING

- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 tablespoon whole milk
- 2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

- ❶ **FOR THE MUFFINS:** Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a non-stick muffin tin.
- ❷ In a medium mixing bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, salt and nutmeg. Set aside.
- ❸ In a separate, large mixing bowl, beat together the egg and sugar until well combined. Whisk in the lemon zest, vanilla and vegetable oil until well mixed.
- ❹ Whisk in half of the dry ingredients to the wet mixture and mix. Then, whisk in the lemon juice followed by the rest of the dry mixture until just combined. Fold in the grated zucchini.
- ❺ Spoon the batter into the muffin tin, filling each well about ¾ full. Fill any empty wells halfway with water. Bake the muffins for 13-15 minutes or until the tops are spongy and edges are lightly golden. Let cool 5 minutes, then remove the muffins to a rack to cool completely before icing.
- ❻ **FOR THE ICING:** In a small bowl, whisk together the milk and lemon juice. Then, sift in the confectioners' sugar and whisk vigorously until the glaze is thick and smooth. Using a spoon, drizzle the icing on the top of each muffin. Let set for 10 minutes before serving.



Prep: 5 minutes
Bake: 13-15 minutes
Makes 9 muffins

Tip

If your child has an eagle eye for veggies, use yellow crookneck squash instead of green-skinned zucchini. They won't be able to tell the squash and the lemon zest apart!



HANDHELD LATTICE-TOP PIES

Sweet and adorable, these mini pies are great with all of your child's favorite fillings, including cherry, blueberry and peach!

2 (2-pack) boxes premade pie dough, at room temperature
2 (21-ounce) cans preferred pie filling (or homemade recipe)
1 egg, lightly beaten
¼ cup turbinado sugar (optional)

Prep: 15-20 minutes
Bake: 20-25 minutes
Cool: 20 minutes
Makes 12 mini pies

- 1 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a non-stick muffin tin and set aside.
- 2 Working with a single dough round at a time, roll out the pie dough on a lightly floured work surface until it is about ¼ inch thick. Then, using a pastry cutter or a small mixing bowl or glass, cut out 12 circles, each 4 inches in diameter. (You will need to re-roll the dough.) Set extra dough aside.
- 3 Press each circle into the well of the muffin tin, pressing out any extra air from the bottom. Leave a ¼-inch rim of dough at the top of each well.
- 4 Spoon the pie filling into each well, filling each up to the brim. Do not overfill, as fruit fillings tend to bubble up during baking.
- 5 On a lightly floured surface, roll out the extra dough until it is ¼ inch thick. Then, using a sharp knife, slice the dough into about 3x¼-inch strips. Starting at one side of a pie, lay a dough strip across the filled pie (north to south). Then, take a second strip and lay it perpendicular (east to west) to the first strip, creating an L shape. Take a third strip and lay it parallel to the first strip, leaving a ¼-inch gap between the strips. Repeat in this order, weaving the strips together over the pie, until the lattice covers the entire pie. You should need 7-8 strips per pie.
- 6 Using your fingers or a fork, crimp the edges of the strips on the pie's rim. Cut away any overhanging dough strips. Repeat steps 5-6 for each pie.
- 7 Using a pastry brush, lightly brush the beaten egg on the top of the lattice tops. Sprinkle the turbinado sugar on top of each pie if using.
- 8 Bake the pies for 20-25 minutes or until the tops are golden and the filling is just starting to bubble. Let cool for 5 minutes; then, remove the pies to a rack to cool for another 15 minutes before serving.





Juicy Gossip

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY KARI WINDES

OUR PANEL OF YOUNG "EXPERTS" PUTS THIS FAMOUS SUGARY LUNCHBOX TREAT TO THE TEST.



WHEN IT COMES TO JUICE, nothing beats the freshly squeezed stuff. Sadly, unless your juicer fits in a lunchbox, you're stuck with store-bought juice boxes. Unfortunately, these famed lunchbox treats are infamously high in sugar. Between finding your child's favorite and picking the healthiest option, the grocery aisle is a danger zone.

We did some of the legwork for you. We gathered 11 common brands to compare their sugar content, high fructose corn syrup and nutritive value. Then, our panel of six kid "experts" gave them a taste. And although juice should be a treat more than a necessity, between the best tasting (Kids' Pick), lowest sugar (Parents' Pick) and the best of both worlds (Editor's Pick), here's all you need to know about the juice on the shelf. ●



"It tastes a bit like baby food and apple juice."



No artificial preservatives, flavors or colors

Back to Nature

Juice: 100%
Calories: 80 per 1 (6-ounce) pouch
Total Carbohydrates: 20g
Sugars: 17g
High Fructose Corn Syrup: No
backtonaturefoods.com, \$4.99

KID SCORE:



"Very yummy. Sour aftertaste."



100% of daily vitamin C

Kool-Aid Jammers

Juice: N/A
Calories: 70 per 1 (6-ounce) pouch
Total Carbohydrates: 19g
Sugars: 19g
High Fructose Corn Syrup: Yes
koolaid.com, \$1.88

KID SCORE:



No GMOs

Capri Sun

Juice: 10%
Calories: 60 per 1 (6-ounce) pouch
Total Carbohydrates: 17g
Sugars: 16g
High Fructose Corn Syrup: Yes
caprisun.com, \$1.99

"Sort of a clay aftertaste."

KID SCORE:



KIDS' Pick

"I loved it!"



No added sugar

Minute Maid

Juice: 100%
Calories: 90 per 1 (6-ounce) pouch
Total Carbohydrates: 22g
Sugars: 19g
High Fructose Corn Syrup: No
minutemaids.com, \$3.49

KID SCORE:

★★★★☆

"Weird aftertaste."

Won't stain most fabrics and surfaces

No preservatives



Hansen's Natural Organic

Juice: 100%
Calories: 90 per 1 (6.75-ounce) box
Total Carbohydrates: 24g
Sugars: 24g
High Fructose Corn Syrup: No
hansens.com, \$4.99

KID SCORE:

★★★★☆

"Too sweet and sticky."



No artificial sweeteners

Mott's for Tots

Juice: 53%
Calories: 50 per 1 (6.75-ounce) box
Total Carbohydrates: 13g
Sugars: 13g
High Fructose Corn Syrup: No
motts.com, \$2.50

KID SCORE:

★★★★☆



Hi-C

Juice: 10%
Calories: 80 per 1 (6-ounce) pouch
Total Carbohydrates: 22g
Sugars: 22g
High Fructose Corn Syrup: Yes
coca-colacompany.com, \$1.99

KID SCORE:

★★★★☆

"Mmmm.
Good."

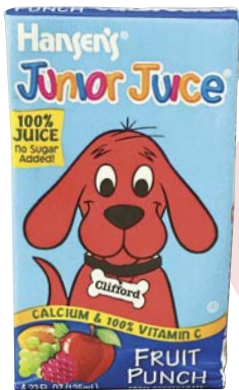


No
added
sugar

Nestle Juicy Juice

Juice: 100%
Calories: 100 per 1 (6.75-ounce) box
Total Carbohydrates: 24g
Sugars: 22g
High Fructose Corn Syrup: No
juicyjuice.com, \$2.99

KID SCORE:



Hansen's Junior Juice

Juice: 100%
Calories: 60 per 1 (4.23-ounce) box
Total Carbohydrates: 15g
Sugars: 14g
High Fructose Corn Syrup: No
hansens.com, \$0.99

KID SCORE:



Gluten
free

"It is 40% less sugar.
Who would like that?"

"It tastes
like really
sweet veggies."



V8 V-Fusion

Juice: 60%
Calories: 60 per 1 (6.75-ounce) box
Total Carbohydrates: 15g
Sugars: 14g
High Fructose Corn Syrup: No
v8juice.com, \$2.99

KID SCORE:



PARENTS'

Pick



"Too
watery."

Honest Kids

Juice: 30%
Calories: 40 per 1 (6.75-ounce) pouch
Total Carbohydrates: 10g
Sugars: 9g
High Fructose Corn Syrup: No
honesttea.com, \$3.99

KID SCORE:





THE SWEET SPOTS

■ INVESTIGATE YOUR FOOD LABELS TO KEEP AN EYE ON SUGAR.

BY KATHRYN STEMLER, R.D.

NUTRITION LABELS. They're printed on the side of nearly everything your family consumes. You know they're important—every article and news segment you've ever heard tells you to mind them—but do you really know what you're looking at? Nutrition Facts are meant to be vital information, but they can seem impossible to understand. Here, we'll make it easier, pointing out what to look for when it comes to sugar and what you need to know from ingredients to grams.

Sugar on Top

A hot-button topic these days is tracking sugar content, particularly added sugar. In the past, parents have turned to packages labeled "sugar-free" to circumvent the issue; however, recently, attitudes toward artificial sweeteners have changed, with many parents advocating against anything except natural sugar in moderation.

Regardless of your opinion on natural vs. artificial sweeteners, you have a right to know and understand what your child is eating. And the first step is decoding the side of the cookie box.

Nutritive Sweeteners

The following sweeteners provide as many calories as regular sugar. Sources of sugar in foods are often made up of glucose and fructose. Keep an eye out for ingredients ending in "-ose." Also, be skeptical of syrups, nectars and concentrates, which may be sugar by another name.

- Cane sugar
- Beet sugar—may be from GM beets
- High fructose corn syrup—likely from GM corn
- Agave syrup—produced from the agave plant
- Molasses—a by-product in sugar refining
- Brown rice syrup—made by fermenting brown rice with enzymes
- Coconut sugar—processed from the sap of the coconut palm
- Maple syrup—may be artificially made from corn syrup
- Fruit juice concentrate
- Honey

Nutrition Facts

Serving size 1 package (21g)
Serving Per Container 1

Amount Per Serving
Calories 100

Calories from Fat 35

Total Fat 3.5g
Saturated Fat 1.5g
Trans Fat 0g
Cholesterol 25mg
Sodium 65 mg
Total Carbohydrate 14g
Dietary Fiber 1g
Sugars 7g
Protein 3g

%Daily Value*

Vitamin A 0% ★ Vitamin C 0% ★ Calcium 2% ★ Iron 4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.
Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat. Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 ★ Carbohydrate 4 ★ Protein 4

Tips

- GM—"generally modified"
- GRAS—"generally recognized as safe"

*** START WITH SERVING SIZE.** It's important to know how much of the food contains the nutrient amounts specified on the label. For example, if the serving size is 1 cookie but you give your child 2, you will need to multiply all the nutrients listed, such as the calories and grams of sugar, by 2.

*** KNOW YOUR CARBOHYDRATES.** Total carbohydrates are broken down into fibers and sugars. Remaining grams of carbohydrates would be from complex carbohydrates (starch or fiber).

Sugar Alcohols

Thought of as reduced-calorie sweeteners, these nutritive sweeteners provide (on average) half the calories of sugars. Sugar alcohols are present naturally in some fruits and vegetables but are typically manufactured from simple sugars to be used in food products. Because they aren't digested well, they can produce loose stools, gas or bloating if eaten in excessive amounts. Food products with these sweeteners can be labeled "sugar-free."

- Sorbitol (GRAS)
- Mannitol (food additive)
- Xylitol (food additive)
- Erythritol (GRAS)
- Isomalt (GRAS)
- Lactitol (GRAS)





* **GRAMS OF SUGAR.** Simple sugars, as reflected by grams of sugar, are naturally occurring in dairy products and fruits. However, there are many products that have added sugars. Grams of added sugar will be included in this measurement.

* **BE AN INGREDIENT DETECTIVE.** You can identify different added sugars and other sweeteners in the ingredients statement. It's important to note that the list is in descending order by weight. So, an ingredient at the beginning of the list will be in greater quantity than ingredients at the end of the list. ●

Label Legible

Sweeteners can be categorized in several ways including naturally sourced nutritive sweeteners, which provide calories (p.33); naturally sourced non-nutritive sweeteners, which provide negligible calories (p.34); and artificial non-nutritive sweeteners, which provide negligible calories and are produced synthetically (below). Keep in mind that most sweeteners, whether nutritive, non-nutritive or from natural sources, undergo at least minimal forms of processing. Methods can include mechanical, heat or chemical.

Non-Nutritive Sweeteners (NNS)

These sweeteners provide negligible calories from the amounts used in food. There are two types of NNS:

1. Naturally Sourced NNS:

Keep in mind that although these sweeteners are from a natural source, the market versions still require extensive refining and/or are combined with other ingredients before being packaged and sold.

- Stevia (GRAS)
- Monk Fruit (GRAS)

2. Artificial NNS:

The following sweeteners are approved for use in food as food additives. The American Academy of Pediatrics has no position on the use of these sweeteners.

- Sucralose
- Aspartame
- Neotame
- Saccharin
- Acesulfame Potassium

SHOULD YOUR CHILD BE EATING ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS? SEE ASK THE EXPERT, PAGE 98.



Sweet Defeat

RECIPES AND PHOTOGRAPHY FROM *I QUIT SUGAR* BY SARAH WILSON

MAKE YOUR CHILD'S SWEET, TOP-SHELF FAVES WHILE SKIPPING ALL THE SUGAR.

THERE ARE CERTAIN FOODS YOUR KIDS JUST LOVE. And if you're a parent concerned about added processed sugar, it's often difficult to have to say "no" so often. It's becoming well known that products on the grocery store shelf are teeming with teaspoons of added sugar, so for those certain treats they just have to have, it's time to take matters into your own hands. Some of the biggest offenders of high-sugar content are often the tastiest—including the chocolate lover's favorites: peanut butter cups and Nutella. Try your hand at these low-sugar versions that are just as tasty as the real thing! ●



SUGAR-FREE "NUTELLA"

Creamy and sweet, this chocolate-hazelnut spread has far less added sugar than the one you'll find on the grocery shelf, but it's just as tasty!

1 cup hazelnuts
½ cup coconut milk
⅓ cup brown rice syrup
1 tablespoon macadamia (or coconut) oil
¼ cup raw cacao powder
1 tablespoon vanilla powder

- 1 Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- 2 Bake the hazelnuts on a baking pan for 8-10 minutes, until browned. Rub off most of the skins, as they can be bitter (you don't have to be too precise).
- 3 Grind the nuts in a food processor until smooth. Add the remaining ingredients and process until well mixed. Add extra coconut milk if you want more of a "sauce" consistency. Serve immediately and store in the refrigerator for up to several weeks.





CHOCOLATE NUT BUTTER CUPS

Candy-aisle peanut butter cups are huge offenders when it comes to sugar, so this homemade recipe uses creamy coconut and brown rice syrup.

- ½ cup coconut oil, melted
- ½ cup raw cacao powder
- 1 tablespoon brown rice syrup
- 2 tablespoons coconut cream
- ¼ cup peanut, macadamia or almond butter
- Large pinch of sea salt

Prep: 5–10 minutes
Freeze: 5 minutes
Makes 20–25 cups

- 1 Arrange small paper candy cups on a baking pan. In a small bowl, combine the coconut oil and cacao powder until smooth; then, stir in the syrup and coconut cream.
- 2 Pour a thin layer of the chocolate mixture into the bottom of the candy cups. Freeze for 5 minutes and then spoon ⅓ teaspoon of the nut butter into each cup. Pour the remaining cacao mixture on top and scatter sea salt over.
- 3 Refrigerate for 30 minutes until set (or freeze them). Serve them straight from the refrigerator, as they will melt at room temperature.

Tastes to Try

Coconut Butter cups

Make a coconut version by using a small ball of coconut butter (well-blended coconut flakes) instead of the nut butter.

Peppermint patties

Add some peppermint freshness by adding a few drops of peppermint oil (to taste) to small balls of coconut butter instead of the nut butter.

Berry cups

Make a seasonal berry version by placing a frozen raspberry in the middle instead of the nut butter.

TO SEE
MORE ON / QUIT
SUGAR, SEE THE
BOOK NOOK,
PAGE 96.

A Real TREAT

CELEBRATE THE
BENEFITS OF LEGIT
SUGAR WITH
SHAUNA SEVER'S
REAL SWEET.

BY ELISE PORTALE | RECIPES AND PHOTOGRAPHY FROM *REAL SWEET* BY SHAUNA SEVER

WHETHER YOU'RE FOR or against artificial sweeteners, one thing is for certain: Real sugar always tastes the best. And that includes more than just white and brown sugar. Natural, unrefined sweeteners come in all textures and flavors, which is great for the parent who is going *au naturel* with their child's sweeteners. And that's exactly the kind of food author Shauna Sever is aiming for with her new book, *Real Sweet*.

Sweet Selection

Subtitled "More than 80 crave-worthy treats made with natural sugars," Sever's *Real Sweet* surely provides varied options. From seven sections covering the typical "Candies and Confections" to treats for "Picnics and Potlucks," there are plenty of options for any occasion. Plus, as advertised, every recipe uses only real, honest sugar—the different types (and personalities) of which Sever introduces us to, from coconut sugar ("The Femme Fatale") to agave ("The Girl Next Door").

She begins the book by explaining her mission to explore more nutritious and balanced options for her family: "That's what I'm going to share with you in these pages—a collection of my favorite sweet treats that use the kind of flavorful, natural, less-processed sugars and sweeteners that have their place in a balanced life. To me, this is truly baking, and eating, in moderation." With a few extra informative notes on the derivation of natural sugars and their unique strengths, *Real Sweet* is the perfect selection of recipes for the health- and flavor-conscious parent. ●

MAPLE SPUN SUGAR

"I'll admit it—this stuff is ridiculous," Sever says. "It's whimsical, it's beautiful and it also has a little bit of that 'Who would even do that at home?' quality. In short, it's the ultimate party trick."

FOR THE SUGAR SYRUP

- 1¼ cups turbinado sugar
- 1¼ cups maple sugar
- ½ cup pure maple syrup or brown rice syrup
- ½ cup water
- ⅛ teaspoon fine sea salt
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

YOU'LL NEED

Long-handled wooden spoons, skewers or thin wooden dowels
A heavy wooden cutting board, pastry boards or a couple of large books
Newspapers
Large bowl of ice water
Cornstarch

① Prepare the space where you'll be spinning your sugar: Find and clear a large, flat work surface, like a countertop or large table. Gather 2-3 long-handled wooden spoons, dowels or thick skewers and lay them on the edge of the countertop with at least 10 inches of overhang. Weigh the sticks down with something heavy you don't mind getting sugar syrup on—some old large books, a hefty wooden cutting board or marble pastry board. Cover the entire floor area underneath the sticks and then some with newspaper (err on the side of more coverage, and if you have cabinetry underneath your work surface, tape some paper onto it as well). Spray the sticks with nonstick cooking spray. Place a large bowl of ice water near your work space.

② **FOR THE SUGAR SYRUP:** In a medium (3-quart) heavy-bottomed saucepan, combine all the ingredients except vanilla extract. Place the pan over medium-high heat and stir gently with a wooden spoon or heatproof spatula to dissolve the sugar. Once the syrup comes to a boil, stop stirring. Clip a candy thermometer onto the side of the pan and increase the heat to high. Cook the syrup to 310°F. Immediately pull the pan from heat and stir in the vanilla extract.

3 Take 2 forks and hold them back to back. Stir the syrup gently with the forks to encourage it to cool a bit; then, carry the pan over to your sugar-spinning setup. Pull the forks up out of the syrup and hold them about 12 inches over the pan. When the syrup has thickened to a honey-like consistency and you can see spider-web-like threads flying off to the sides, the sugar is ready to spin. Swing the forks back and forth over the sticks, about 10 inches above the sticks. At first, it won't look like much, but soon, sugary strands will accumulate, and you'll get the hang of where and how to hold the forks and how fast to swing them in order to get the most control over your sugar.

4 Keep spinning the sugar until you've created about the same amount of strands as shown in the photo (below). Then, dust your hands very lightly with cornstarch, clapping them to remove any excess. Beginning at the end of one side of the sugar strands, carefully begin rolling them up toward the sticks. Gently lift the strands as you continue to roll up the cloud of spun sugar, winding down the second side of the sticks, until all the sugar strands have been collected. Softly cupping the ball of spun sugar, gently form it into a cloud using the heat of your hands. Insert a bamboo skewer or long lollipop stick into the cloud. Continue spinning with the remaining syrup, rewarming it on the stove over low heat as needed to keep it fluid.

5 Spun sugar is best served very soon after its made, but you can get a couple of hours of life out of it by carefully cloaking each cloud with a plastic bag and tying it with twine around the stick to enclose it and keep it cool and dry.



Prep: 10 minutes
Cook: 10 minutes
Spin: 10 minutes
Makes 4-6 candy clouds





FIVE-FLAVORS PARTY CAKE

"Nothing brings out the dessert fangirl in me quite like the heavenly combination of honey, almonds, vanilla, lemon and raspberries."

FOR THE PANS

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup sliced almonds
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon evaporated cane juice

FOR THE CAKE

- 1 cup whole milk, at room temperature
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 6 tablespoons honey
- ½ cup whole raw almonds (or ¾ cup sliced almonds)
- 2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon fine sea salt
- 13 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened yet cool
- 1 cup evaporated cane juice
- 1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon pure almond extract
- 5 large eggs, at room temperature

FOR THE CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

- 4 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened yet cool
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
- ½ cup organic confectioners' sugar, sifted

- 42 almond slices, to serve
- 12 ounces fresh raspberries, to serve



- 1 Position oven racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven and preheat it to 350°F.
- 2 **FOR THE PANS:** Generously grease the sides and bottoms of two 8-inch round cake pans with the butter. Sprinkle the bottoms of both pans with an even coating of almond slices. Dust evaporated cane juice over the almonds, about 2 teaspoons in each pan.
- 3 **FOR THE CAKE:** In a large measuring cup, whisk together the milk and lemon juice. Set aside for at least 10 minutes while you get the rest of your ingredients together. Then, whisk in the honey.
- 4 In the bowl of a food processor fitted with the steel blade, process the almonds until very finely chopped, about 30 seconds. Add the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Blend for 1 minute, or until the almonds have been ground to a powder.
- 5 In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat together the butter, evaporated cane juice, lemon zest, vanilla extract and almond extract on medium-high until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating for about 30 seconds between each.
- 6 Reduce the speed to low. Alternately add the dry and wet ingredients in 5 additions, beginning and ending with the dry ingredients. Fold the batter several times with a large flexible spatula to ensure the batter is well blended.
- 7 Divide the batter equally between the 2 prepared pans, smoothing the tops. Bake until the cakes are golden, a toothpick comes out clean and the cakes spring back when lightly touched, 35-40 minutes. Cool the cakes completely in the pans. Run a thin knife around the edges of each pan and invert the cakes onto a work surface. Choose the better-looking of the pair to be the top layer of the cake. Place the other cake layer almond-side up on a cake plate.
- 8 **FOR THE CREAM CHEESE FROSTING:** In the bowl of an electric mixer, beat the cream cheese until smooth. Add the butter and the honey and beat until smooth, scraping the bowl often with a flexible spatula. Beat in the vanilla extract, lemon juice and lemon zest. Add the confectioners' sugar and mix until smooth.
- 9 To assemble the cake, spoon the frosting into a piping bag fitted with a large round tip. Starting about ½ inch in from the edge of the cake layer, pipe a line of frosting around the circumference to create a nice clean appearance when the cake is stacked. Fill in the circle with frosting and use the back of a spoon or a small spatula to smooth it out into an even layer.
- 10 Place a row of raspberries in a circle, shoulder to shoulder, all around the outer edge of the frosting. Fill in the center with more berries. Pipe a few small dollops of frosting on top of the very center of the berries as "adhesive" for the top layer.
- 11 Top with the second cake layer, almond-side up. Pipe 7 small clouds of frosting, evenly spaced, all around the perimeter of the cake. Top each little cloud with a fresh raspberry. Gently press 6-7 almond slices around each raspberry to form a flower. Chill the cake for about 30 minutes or until you're ready to serve, letting it rest at room temperature for 15 minutes before slicing and serving.

STRAWBERRY AND LEMON CREAM PUFFS

"Here, a dollop of honey-sweetened lemon curd is transformed into a mousse-like filling and sandwiched with gleaming berries," Sever says.

FOR THE DOUGH

- ½ cup nonfat milk (see tip)
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
- 1 tablespoon turbinado sugar
- ¼ teaspoon fine sea salt
- ½ cup unbleached all-purpose flour, spooned, leveled and sifted
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

FOR THE PUFFS

- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon water
- Pinch of fine sea salt
- Turbinado sugar, for sprinkling

FOR THE FILLING

- ⅔ cup heavy whipping cream, chilled
- ⅓ cup lemon curd, store-bought or preferred recipe
- 1½ cups sliced fresh strawberries
- 1 teaspoon honey

Prep: 5 minutes (dough),
5 minutes (filling)
Boil: 5 minutes
Bake: 20–25 minutes
Cool: 5 minutes
Makes 12 cream puffs

- 1 Position an oven rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Set aside.
- 2 **FOR THE DOUGH:** In a small, heavy-bottomed saucepan, combine the milk, butter, sugar and salt. Place the pan over medium-high heat and bring the mixture to a simmer, stirring occasionally. Bring the mixture to a boil. Add the flour all at once, lower the heat to medium and immediately begin stirring quickly with a wooden spoon—don't stop until the dough starts to come off the sides of the pan in a loose ball and a light crust forms on the bottom of the pan, about 2 minutes.
- 3 Turn the dough into the bowl of a standing mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. On medium speed, mix the dough to cool it a bit, about 30 seconds. When the steam subsides, beat in 1 egg until completely incorporated. Beat in the vanilla extract and then add the second egg. Continue mixing on medium for 1 minute, or until the dough is smooth but sticky and elastic. Grab a pinch of dough between your thumb and forefinger, rubbing them together and pulling them apart—the dough is ready when you can pull your fingers apart and stretch a string of dough between them about 1 inch in length.
- 4 Drop 12 rounded portions of dough (about 2 tablespoons each) 2 inches apart onto the prepared baking sheet.
- 5 **FOR THE PUFFS:** In a small bowl, beat together the egg, water and salt until well blended. Brush each puff with the egg wash and follow with a generous sprinkling of sugar.
- 6 Bake the puffs for 15 minutes. Rotate the baking sheet from front to back and reduce the temperature to 375°F. Continue baking until the puffs are deeply golden and sound hollow when their exteriors are tapped, 10–15 minutes more. Crack the door of the oven, turn it off and let the puffs cool for 5 minutes in the oven. Carefully transfer the puffs to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7 **FOR THE FILLING:** In a medium bowl, whip the cream to stiff peaks. Gently fold the lemon curd into the whipped cream until well blended.
- 8 Toss the strawberries with the honey.
- 9 To assemble, slice the puffs in half crosswise. Place the bottoms of the puffs on 6 dessert plates. Dollop 2 generous tablespoons of lemon cream onto each puff. Divide the strawberries equally among the puffs. Sandwich the cream and berries with the tops of the puffs, pressing down gently to adhere.



REAL SWEET BY
SHAUNA SEVER,
PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM
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HARPERCOLLINS.COM



Tip

Typically, whole milk is better for baking because it adds richness and moisture, but for *pâte à choux*, nonfat or skim milk yields a crisper puff. If you only have low-fat (2%) or whole milk, use a mixture of half water, half milk.

BREAKFAST BANANA SPLIT



A SWEET START

WHIP UP THESE 2 "DESSERTS" TO GIVE BREAKFAST A HEALTHY FACE-LIFT.

YOU'D BE HARD-PRESSED TO FIND A CHILD whose favorite meal of the day isn't dessert. On the flip side, a child that willingly eats a well-balanced breakfast is just as rare. But offer a child dessert for breakfast and suddenly, the most important meal of the day is the most exciting. While we can't really recommend pie and ice cream as a wholesome breakfast, we can offer up healthy fruit- and yogurt-based recipes that at least look like dessert. From the bright colors and crunchy granola crust of a morning fruit tart to a fun bowl of a breakfast banana split, these two recipes are guaranteed to help your kids be bright-eyed and bushy-tailed.

Building Blocks

A good, bountiful breakfast requires the same essentials as any well-rounded meal. Between fibers, protein, fats and sugar, a substantial meal needs balance. The base of any breakfast should consist of fiber and protein—foods that keep your child fuller for longer—while sugars (carbohydrates) and fats should be minimized. Many whole, raw fruits and grains—such as bananas, apples and oats—are high in filling fiber and energizing nutrients while providing just the right amount of sugar. Greek yogurt and nut butters are high in protein and have some helpful fats, but just make sure to watch out for high-fat proteins, like peanut and sun butter or full-fat yogurts. A breakfast banana split or fruit tart may seem like just a fun idea, but they're made using the right nutritive building blocks for a great breakfast! ●

BEAUTIFUL BREAKFAST TART



Prep: 5 minutes
Series 1

BREAKFAST BANANA SPLIT

What kid could resist the option of having a banana split for breakfast (even if this one is made entirely from healthy fruits and yogurt instead of ice cream)?

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY FROM *THE CRUMBS FAMILY COOKBOOK* BY CLAIRE AND LUCY McDONALD

A couple of strawberries (or any other berries)
1 banana
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup Greek yogurt
Drizzle of honey
Flaked/slivered almonds, to serve

- 1 Chop up the berries and place on the bottom of a banana split dish.
- 2 Split the banana lengthwise and place it on top of the strawberries in the dish. Then, scoop on the Greek yogurt and drizzle some honey on top. Sprinkle with some flaked almonds before serving.

TO SEE MORE
ON *THE CRUMBS
FAMILY COOKBOOK*,
SEE THE BOOK NOOK,
PAGE 96.

Prep: 5–10 min.
Bake: 15 min.
Series 6–8

BEAUTIFUL BREAKFAST TART

Although it looks just like a fancy French fruit tart, this healthy, granola-crust tart gets its creamy filling from healthy yogurt.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUSAN MORAN, THEVIEWFROMGREATISLAND.COM

$1\frac{1}{2}$ cup old-fashioned oats
1 cup mixed chopped nuts and seeds (such as almonds, pistachios, hazelnuts, walnuts, pumpkin seeds and sesame seeds)
5 tablespoons butter, melted
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup honey
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 cups Greek yogurt or almond yogurt (strained, if needed)
Assorted fruit (such as banana, kiwi, strawberries and blueberries), sliced or whole

- 1 Preheat the oven to 325°F. Grease a 10-inch pie plate or tart pan with a removable bottom. Set aside.
- 2 In a medium mixing bowl, combine the oats, nuts and seeds, melted butter, honey and vanilla until everything is thoroughly coated.
- 3 Press the mixture into the prepared tart pan. Use the bottom of a measuring cup to help press the granola evenly across the pan and up the sides.
- 4 Bake for about 15 minutes, until lightly golden. Let cool.
- 5 Fill the tart with Greek yogurt and smooth it out evenly.
- 6 Arrange the fruit on top. Sliced strawberries, kiwi and banana work well with dots of fresh berries. Serve immediately.

Tip

You can make the crust the day before and store it in the refrigerator, but once you fill the crust with yogurt, it's best to eat it sooner rather than later. The yogurt will eventually make the granola a little soggy if left to sit too long.

Use sweetened or flavored yogurt if you don't like it plain, but the thick, Greek-style yogurt works best if you intend to slice the tart.

CHICKEN QUINOA LETTUCE WRAPS WITH EASY PEANUT DIPPING SAUCE



FEAST FROM THE EAST

MAKE LUNCH
LIGHT AND
FLAVORFUL WITH
2 ASIAN-
INSPIRED MEALS.

LUNCH IS A TRICKY MEAL. You want a nice, hearty dish to keep your child going through their action-packed day until dinnertime, but you need to avoid heavy foods that are going to slow them down. The perfect balance of carbs, vegetables and protein is the perfect one-two punch for a happy lunchtime. Lean chicken and fiber-full quinoa are made tastier with a bit of teriyaki and a sweet peanut sauce, while soy sauce-seasoned noodles are only 5 minutes away! Try these two recipes inspired by your child's Eastern favorites for a fun and filling midday meal. ●

CHICKEN QUINOA LETTUCE WRAPS WITH EASY PEANUT DIPPING SAUCE

Protein- and fiber-rich quinoa combined with hearty veggies and chicken makes a great-tasting, long-lasting lunch.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY NATASHA KRAVCHUK, NATASHASKITCHEN.COM

FOR THE TERIYAKI CHICKEN

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 garlic cloves, pressed
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger (or substitute ¼ teaspoon dried, ground ginger)
- ½ tablespoon sesame oil
- 2 large chicken breasts, boneless and skinless

FOR THE PEANUT DIPPING SAUCE

- ¾ cup low-fat sesame ginger dressing, store-bought or homemade
- 2 tablespoons creamy peanut butter, at room temperature
- ⅓ cup chopped peanuts (optional)



RECIPE CONTINUES ON PAGE 52.

FOR THE WRAPS

- 2 heads butter lettuce
- 1 medium or 3 small cucumbers, thinly sliced
- 1 large or 2 medium carrots, sliced into matchsticks
- ¼ bunch fresh cilantro
- 2½ cups cooked quinoa (see below)

King of Quinoa

For perfect quinoa, first rinse the grains in a fine colander until the water runs clear to get rid of any natural bitterness. Quinoa is cooked similar to rice: The ratio is ¾ cup dry quinoa to 1½ cups filtered water. Cook it in a rice cooker on the white rice setting without adding any salt or butter for about 20 minutes. Then, transfer the quinoa to a bowl and cool to room temperature or cooler before using in wraps.

① **FOR THE TERIYAKI CHICKEN:** In a small bowl, stir together the marinade ingredients.

② Place the chicken breast in a medium bowl, add the marinade and stir to coat the chicken evenly. Refrigerate for 20 minutes. (Meanwhile, you can slice vegetables.)

③ Heat a large skillet over medium, add the marinated chicken along with some of the marinade's oil and sauté until fully cooked and caramelized and browned on both sides. If the chicken breasts are particularly large, cover with the lid when cooking on the second side to cook the chicken through.

④ Remove from the heat and let the chicken breasts rest on a cutting board for 5 minutes before slicing into thin strips on the diagonal.

⑤ **FOR THE PEANUT DIPPING SAUCE:** In a small bowl, whisk together the sesame ginger dressing with the peanut butter. Top with chopped peanuts if using.

⑥ **FOR THE WRAPS:** To assemble the wraps, start with a lettuce leaf and add a heaping tablespoon of cooked quinoa, 1-2 strips of chicken breast, sliced cucumber and carrots along with a couple of sprigs of cilantro. Drizzle with prepared creamy peanut sauce and serve.

SPEEDY GONZALES NOODLES

Easy, delicious and savory, these quick Asian noodles are a great addition to a lunch box or perfect for eating right on the spot.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY FROM *THE CRUMBS FAMILY COOKBOOK* BY CLAIRE AND LUCY McDONALD

Garlic-infused oil

Handful of cooked frozen shrimp

Handful of frozen peas

10 ounces ready-cooked noodles

1 egg, beaten

Soy sauce

① In a large frying pan, heat some garlic-infused oil until it is hot. Add the frozen shrimp and peas and cook for about 2 minutes. Then, add the noodles and cook for another 90 seconds, stirring constantly.

② Add the egg, still stirring, and a splash of soy sauce. This is very salty (which means kids love it!), so go easy for younger children. Serve hot.

Tip

Replace the peas with corn kernels, carrot ribbons or bean sprouts. You can also use leftover meat from last night's dinner, shredded and added to the pan with the peas. Just make sure that it is properly heated through before serving.

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Prep: 1 minute
Cook: 4 minutes
Series 2

SPEEDY GONZALES NOODLES

A WELL-ROUNDED WEEKNIGHT

■ FIND BALANCE AT THE DINNER TABLE WITH 5 FRESH, HEALTHFUL RECIPES.

RECIPES AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMILY AND ERICA WALKER, FAVFAMILYRECIPES.COM

SPRINGTIME IS A TIME TO RE-EVALUATE FOOD OPTIONS.

Are you eating out too much? Are you eating the wrong things? Are the healthy foods you usually make too bland? Finding nutritional ways to bring dinner back into style can be a tricky path to navigate, especially as your kids most likely don't volunteer to eat their peas and broccoli. A good-tasting and good-for-you family dinner is all about compromise: Monday may be salad night, but Friday is splurge-worthy pasta night. Traditionally fatty, cream dressings or cheese sauce can be balanced out with some greens. These five weeknight recipes aren't for hard-core dieters, but they're just "bad" enough that your family will love and eat them. And that's real balance. ●

Pantry Staples

- Mayonnaise
- White vinegar
- Granulated sugar
- Salt
- Cayenne pepper
- Black pepper
- Ground cumin
- Vegetable oil
- Soy sauce
- Brown sugar
- Cornstarch
- Taco seasoning
- Red pepper flakes (optional)

Fresh Produce

- 3 hearts of romaine
- 8-9 green onions
- Fresh cilantro
- 1 lime
- 1 head garlic
- Ginger
- 1 white onion
- 1 cob corn
- 1 avocado
- 1 (16-ounce) bag shredded cabbage
- 2 tomatoes (optional)
- 4 russet potatoes

Frozen Goods

- 1 (10-ounce) bag frozen corn
- 1 (2.25-pound) package frozen, breaded chicken strips

Canned Goods

- 1 (16-ounce) bottle barbecue sauce
- 2 (15.5-ounce) cans black beans
- 1 large bag tortilla chips
- 1 (12-ounce) jar cilantro dressing or chipotle ranch dressing
- 1 jar salsa (optional)
- 1 (32-ounce) jar spaghetti sauce

Shopping List

Meat & Fish

- 3-4 chicken breasts, boneless and skinless
- 2 pounds flank steak
- 1 pound (4-5 fillets) tilapia

Dairy

- 1 (16-ounce) bag shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 (8-ounce) carton milk
- Cotija cheese (optional)
- 1 (8-ounce) container sour cream
- 4 sticks of butter
- 24-26 ounces sharp or medium Cheddar cheese (block)
- 1 (12-ounce) can evaporated milk
- 16 ounces mozzarella cheese (block)
- 1 (16-ounce) package Italian-blend cheese

Dry Goods

- 1 (32-ounce) bag brown rice
- 1 (1-pound) box large/jumbo pasta shells



Monday

Prep: 5 minutes
Marinate: 1 hour
Cook: 7-10 minutes
Serves 4-6

BARBECUE CHICKEN SALAD WITH CREAMY BARBECUE DRESSING

With the perfect balance of healthy and flavor, this salad is full of lean chicken, tasty veggies and a creamy dressing to start the week off right.

FOR THE SALAD

- 3-4 chicken breasts, boneless and skinless
- 1½ cup barbecue sauce, divided
- 3 hearts of romaine, chopped
- 1 cup frozen corn, thawed
- 1 (15.5-ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 5-6 green onions, chopped
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1-2 cups crumbled tortilla chips

FOR THE CREAMY BARBECUE DRESSING

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- ⅓ cup milk
- ⅓ cup buttermilk (see tip, left)
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- 1 teaspoon granulated sugar
- 1 garlic clove, finely minced
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼-½ cup barbecue sauce

❶ **FOR THE SALAD:** In a plastic bag, combine the chicken and 1 cup barbecue sauce. Seal tightly and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

❷ Remove chicken from bag, discard marinade and grill chicken on the barbecue or grill pan until cooked through. Use the remaining barbecue sauce to baste the chicken while cooking. Remove the chicken from heat and cut into slices or cubes.

❸ In a large serving bowl, toss the romaine with the corn, black beans and green onions. Top with shredded cheese and tortilla chips.

❹ **FOR THE CREAMY BARBECUE DRESSING:** Combine all ingredients together and whisk vigorously. Alternatively, blitz ingredients in a blender for an even smoother dressing.

❺ Drizzle dressing over the top of the salad, toss and serve.

Tips

Unless you really think you can use an entire carton of buttermilk in one week, skip the waste and try this easy substitute: Combine 1 teaspoon lemon juice (or white vinegar) and 5 tablespoons milk. Let the mixture stand at room temperature for 5-10 minutes, until the milk curdles. Then, use in the recipe!

MONGOLIAN BEEF

Enjoy this Chinese-restaurant classic that is hearty, flavorful and served on a bed of steaming, fiber-filled brown rice (or even vegetables!).

4 teaspoons plus 2 cups vegetable oil
2 teaspoons minced ginger
2 tablespoons minced garlic
1 cup soy sauce
1 cup water
1 cup brown sugar, packed
2 pounds flank steak
½ cup cornstarch
3 green onions
Brown rice, steamed

❶ In a medium saucepan over medium-low, heat 4 teaspoons of vegetable oil. Add the ginger and garlic and quickly add the soy sauce and water before the garlic scorches. Dissolve the brown sugar in the liquid; then, raise the heat to medium and boil the sauce for 2-3 minutes or until it thickens slightly. Remove the pan from heat.

❷ Slice the flank steak against the grain into ¼-inch slices. For wider slices, cut the meat at a 45-degree angle. Dip the steak pieces in cornstarch to apply a very thin dusting to both sides of each piece of beef. Let the beef rest for about 10 minutes so the cornstarch sticks.

❸ In a wok or skillet, heat 1 cup of oil over medium until hot but not smoking. Add the beef to the oil and sauté for just 2 minutes, or until beef just begins to darken on the edges. Stir the meat so that it cooks evenly.

❹ After a few minutes, use a large slotted spoon to remove the meat to paper towels; then, pour most of the oil out of the skillet. Put the pan back over the heat, add the meat again and stir-fry for 1 minute. Add the sauce, cook for 1 minute while stirring and add green onions; cook for 1 more minute.

❺ Remove the beef with a slotted spoon and either discard the sauce or thicken it with a mixture of cornstarch and water to the preferred thickness. Serve the beef over steamed brown rice with extra sauce on the side.

Tuesday

Prep: 5 minutes
Cook: 12 minutes
Rest: 10 minutes
Serves 4-6



Wednesday



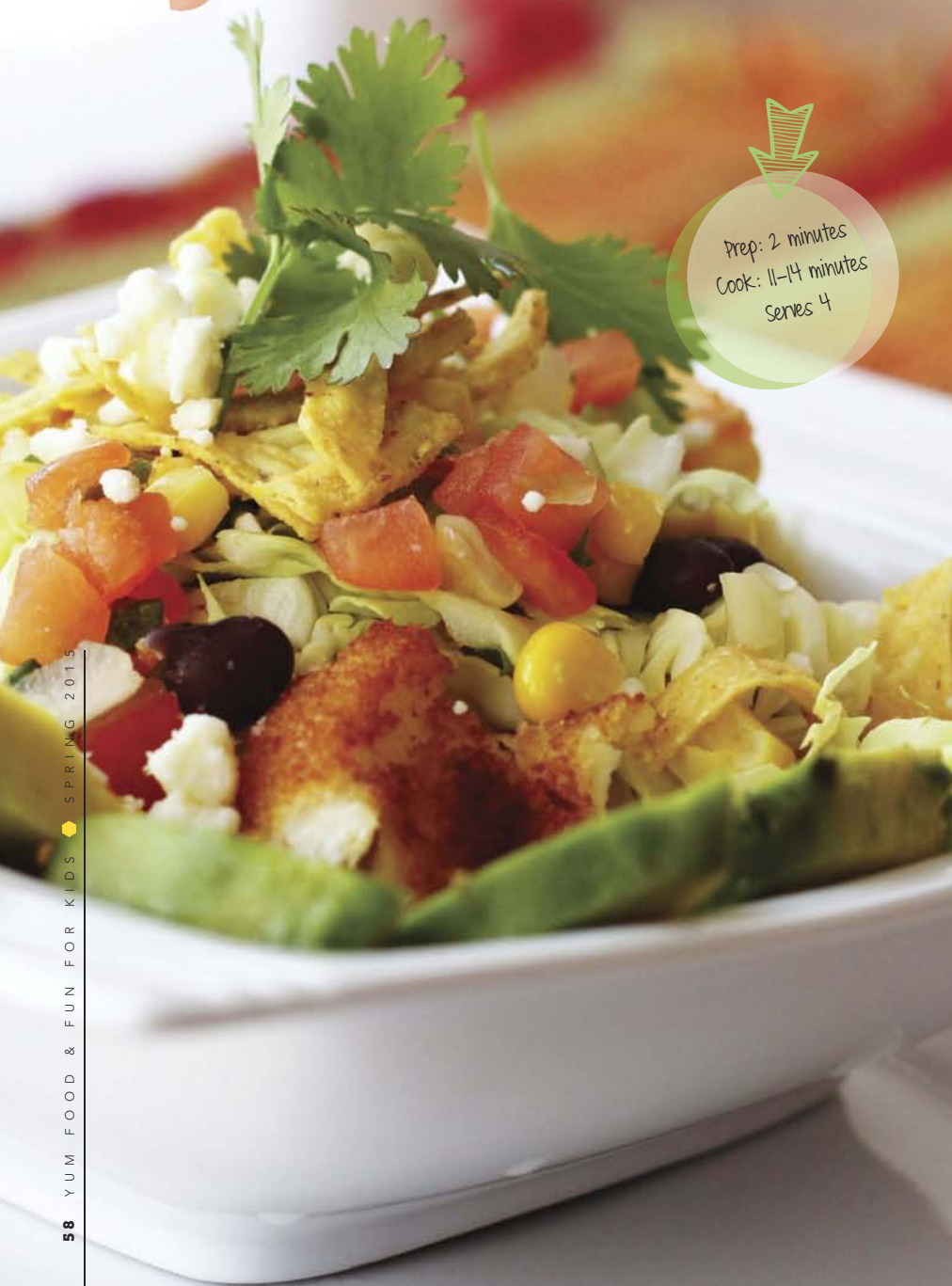
Prep: 2 minutes
Cook: 11-14 minutes
Series 4

FIESTA FISH TACO BOWLS

Tossed with tasty dressing and topped with all the best taco fixings, they'll never know that this meal is full of fiber, vegetables and lean protein.

- 1 pound (about 4-5 fillets) tilapia
- ¼ cup taco seasoning
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 white onion, diced
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 (15.5-ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cob corn, steamed and kernels cut off (about 1 cup)
- 2-3 cups brown rice, cooked
- ½ cup cilantro dressing or chipotle ranch dressing, store-bought
- 1 avocado, peeled, pitted and diced
- 1 cup shredded cabbage
- 1 cup crumbled tortilla chips
- Salsa, sour cream, diced tomatoes, cilantro, limes or cotija cheese, to serve (optional)

- ① Generously rub each tilapia fillet with taco seasoning. In a large skillet over medium, heat oil and add tilapia. Fry fillets on each side for about 4-5 minutes or until cooked through and flaky. Remove fish from skillet and flake into pieces; set aside and cover with foil to keep warm.
- ② In the same pan, add garlic and onion (add more oil if needed) and sauté until onion is soft, 1-2 minutes.
- ③ Add black beans and corn and sauté another 2 minutes.
- ④ To serve, in each bowl, layer rice, cooked fish, dressing, corn and black beans, avocado, cabbage and tortilla chips. Add any extra toppings—such as salsa, sour cream, tomatoes, cilantro, lime or cotija cheese—if desired.



BROCCOLI-CHEESE-STUFFED POTATO SKINS

These crispy potato skins feel like a splurge, but the winning combination of creamy cheese and broccoli adds a touch of stealthy healthy to this dinner.

FOR THE POTATOES

- 4 russet potatoes, baked
- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) butter, melted
- 16 ounces sharp or medium Cheddar cheese, shredded

FOR THE CHEESE SAUCE

- 8-10 ounces cheddar cheese, shredded (see tip, right)
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 (12-ounce) can evaporated milk
- Salt, to taste
- 1 teaspoon Frank's RedHot sauce (or to taste)

- 1-2 heads of broccoli, steamed or boiled
- Sour cream, to serve
- Red pepper flakes (optional)

❶ **FOR THE POTATOES:** Be sure to bake your potatoes in advance, so they have some time to cool before handling. Once they are cool enough, halve each potato and scoop out the center (see tip, right), leaving a ½-inch layer of potato.

❷ Brush the potatoes lightly with melted butter and put under the broiler for 6-8 minutes or until they look a little browned. Divide the shredded cheese between all the skins and broil again for 1-2 more minutes or until the cheese is melted.

❸ **FOR THE CHEESE SAUCE:** Toss the shredded cheese with cornstarch until well coated. In a small saucepan, combine evaporated milk, salt and cheese over medium heat. Stir constantly with a wooden spoon until cheese is completely melted and sauce becomes smooth. Then, whisk in a little bit of Frank's RedHot sauce to give it a little more flavor. Adjust amount to taste.

❹ Remove potatoes to a serving plate. Scoop a large spoonful of cooked broccoli into each potato skin. Then, drizzle with melted cheese sauce. Top with a dollop of sour cream and, if desired, sprinkle with a little bit of red pepper flakes.

Thursday

Prep: 10 minutes
Cook: 7-10 minutes
Series 4

Tips

You can bake potatoes with or without aluminum foil, but if you bake the potatoes in foil, be sure to unwrap them right out of the oven so the skins don't get soggy.

For the best results, shred your own cheese for the sauce. Packaged shreds are already coated with flour and will mess up the sauce's consistency!

Love your leftovers: Save the scooped-out potato for mashed potatoes (or even potato latkes) later in the week.



Friday

CHICKEN PARMESAN-STUFFED SHELLS

Cut down on pasta without cutting out satisfaction with these cheesy, chicken-stuffed shells.

- 1 (1-pound) box large/jumbo pasta shells
- 8-10 frozen, breaded chicken strips, cooked
- 1 (1-pound) block mozzarella cheese
- 1 (32-ounce) jar spaghetti sauce
- Shredded Italian blend cheese, to taste
- Fresh basil, chopped, to serve

- 1 Preheat the oven to 375°F.
- 2 Cook the pasta shells according to package directions. Drain and cool for easier handling.
- 3 Cut the cooked chicken strips into 1½-inch pieces (4-5 pieces per strip)—they should be about the same size as the shells.
- 4 Cut the mozzarella into strips to a desired thickness.
- 5 Place some cheese strips on top of a piece of chicken and stuff both inside a shell. (Use a toothpick to hold it together if needed.)
- 6 In the bottom of a 9x13-inch glass baking dish, spread about ½ cup of spaghetti sauce. Place the prepared stuffed shells in the baking dish and cover evenly with the remaining spaghetti sauce.
- 7 Top the shells with the Italian cheese blend and bake for 20-25 minutes or until the sauce is hot and visibly bubbly.
- 8 Let stand for 5-10 minutes. Top with fresh basil and serve.

Prep: 5-10 minutes
Bake: 20-25 minutes
Rest: 5-10 minutes
Serves 4

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YUM Food and Fun for Kids

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An Afternoon Affair

CLASSIC AND CLASSY, A VINTAGE TEA PARTY IS PERFECT FOR THE BURGEONING SOCIALITE.

WRITTEN AND STYLED BY SARA DE ST. JEAN | PHOTOGRAPHY BY MAGGIE RUSSO

EARL GREY, CRUMPETS, MACARONS—nothing captures springtime more than the sweetness and serenity of teatime. And while there's a time for stomping in puddles and getting grass stains on your knees, little girls find it hard to resist the dainty clinking of teacups and the tastiness of tiny tea sandwiches. When your spring chick is ready to have her next birthday party, trade in shiny, metallic Mylar balloons for a vintage floral tea party.

Old and weathered (or even new) metal tea tins make the perfect vase for simple flower arrangements.



If you're going to splurge on one thing, do it on a great flower arrangement—unless you happen to have your own gorgeous garden. Flowers make a big impact and help bring the outdoors in when you just can't pull off an outdoor party.



Cup of Quaintness

A Victorian style might be your first instinct, but the vivid colors and soft textures of a vintage party make for a brighter and more cheerful event. Start your party planning with your invitations—set the tone with colors, textures and patterns. Pretty pastels—such as pink, yellow and aqua—work well together and open up a wide palette for your party's accents. Next, it's time to hit the antique stores for fun and affordable vintage finds. Just a few things are all you need to add to the character of the party. Never shy away from mixing old and new—cheerful, 1950s yellow floral tablecloths along with a couple of other small vintage linens and a bright yellow vintage scale fit right in the color scheme and provide a sweet, rustic atmosphere. A couple of thrift shop mix-matched tea cups combined with a modern teapot add the practical finishing touch to the scene.

Sweets for Sweeties

When it comes to what to serve, think “accessorize.” Small bites, such as crumpets and finger sandwiches, are the perfect accompaniment to a steaming cup of tea. Supply the sweets table with a spectrum of seasonal jams—the little ladies will surely love sampling all of them. Of course, no tea party is complete without the perfect cookie: Bowls of colorful French macarons are a fan favorite while tea bag-shaped sugar cookies dipped in pink-tinted chocolate add the perfect touch of whimsy.

And let's not forget the necessity of proper manners. Practice teatime etiquette or read a clever, illustrated manual, such as the must-have socialite classic *Tea with Ruby*, to learn proper table manners in a fun way. ●

Sweet Tea Party Favors

This favor is cute and as easy as pie! First, fill a mason jar with a small lemon and fancy cloth tea bags. Tie on a “Sweet Tea” tag and slip a couple of honey sticks into the ribbon. To add a little more fun to the jar, cover the top of the jar with a punch-out of the flowers that match the rest of the paper set or use a square of vintage fabric.





PERFECTLY PEACH JAM

Sweet and flavorful, sun-kissed peaches make a delicious jam for crumpets and biscuits.

- ¾ cup unsweetened apple juice
- 1 (1.75-ounce) package no-sugar-needed fruit pectin
- 5-6 medium peaches, peeled, pitted, diced and coarsely puréed in a food processor (about 3 cups of purée)
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 5 (8-ounce) freezer-safe glass jelly jars and lids, washed and dried

- 1 In a medium saucepan, heat the juice over medium-high heat until it comes to a boil. Add in the pectin, whisking constantly until dissolved. Keep mixture at a hard boil for 1 minute.
- 2 Stir in the peach purée, sugar and cinnamon. Bring mixture back to a boil and keep at a rolling boil for 5 minutes. Remove from heat.
- 3 Transfer the mixture to a measuring cup. Divide the hot mixture between the 5 jars, leaving a ½ inch of room at the top of each jar for expansion during the freezing process.
- 4 Place the tops on the jars and let them sit at room temperature until they are completely cooled off (about 24 hours). Freeze for later or refrigerate immediately.

Prep: 5 min
Cook: 7-10 min.
Makes 5 (8-ounce) jars







PINK TEA BAG COOKIES

A basic sugar cookie recipe gets the vintage tea party makeover with a candy melt dip and a bit of twine.

- 2 cups (4 sticks) unsalted butter
- 2 cups superfine granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs, slightly beaten
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 6 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt

Pink candy melts

Blue baker's twine, to decorate

Printable tea tag, to decorate (see sidebar, left)

- ❶ In a large mixing bowl with an electric hand mixer, cream together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
- ❷ Add the eggs, and almond and vanilla extracts; mix well.
- ❸ In a separate mixing bowl, combine dry ingredients. Then, add the dry mixture gradually to the butter mixture. Mix until flour is completely incorporated and the dough comes together. Then, chill the dough for 1-2 hours.
- ❹ Preheat the oven to 350°F and line a cookie sheet with parchment paper.
- ❺ On a sheet of parchment paper, roll out the chilled dough to the desired thickness and cut out tea bag shapes. Using a straw, punch a hole on the top of each cookie.
- ❻ Bake the cookies until the edges just begin to brown, 8-10 minutes. Let cool completely before decorating.
- ❼ In a microwave-safe bowl, melt the pink candy melts in the microwave, periodically stirring the mixture until smooth. Then, dip each cookie in the melted candy and place on a sheet of wax paper until set.
- ❽ String a length of baker's twine through the hole of each cookie and hot glue a tea tag (or personalized tags) to the bottom of the twine.

Prep: 10-15 min
Chill: 1-2 hours
Bake: 8-10 min.
Makes 4 dozen cookies

Sara De St. Jean is a designer, party stylist, wife and mother of three. She believes that a little imagination and paper are all you need to throw a party without breaking the bank. To see her homespun spin on parties large and small, visit homespunhostess.com.

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PHOTOGRAPHY: Maggie Russo,
maggierussophoto.com
COOKIES: Cecilia Derolf,
Little Miss Sweet Tooth

Picnic-Blanket PARADISE

■ STAGE A DELICIOUS FAMILY OUTING WITH THESE 6 MAKE-AND-TAKE RECIPES.

WITH OUR BUSY SCHEDULES,

it's easy to miss the fun, fresh days of spring. When it's time to slow down and relax with your children, lay down a blanket and crack open the picnic basket to enjoy a nice family lunch. From tasty and portable eats in Mason jars to the perfect lemonade paired with flower-filled ice cubes, your family is sure to enjoy a true *al fresco* experience. And even though these six recipes are light and healthy, running after a Frisbee on a fine spring day always does the growing body good! ●

LAVENDER-CHIA LEMONADE

No springtime outdoor meal is complete without some fresh lemonade, such as this extra-hydrating recipe with chia seeds.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY FROM YUMUNIVERSE BY HEATHER CROSBY

8 cups water
 ¼ cup lemon zest
 1 cup lemon juice
 2 tablespoons culinary lavender buds
 2 tablespoons chia seeds
 ½ cup raw honey (optional)

- ❶ In a pot filled with 8 cups of water, add the lemon zest, juice and lavender buds. Bring to a boil.
- ❷ Turn off the heat and allow it to steep, like tea, until cool. Refrigerate for about 4 hours (or overnight).
- ❸ Strain the lemonade into a pitcher; then, stir in the chia seeds.
- ❹ Sweeten with honey if preferred. Serve chilled or at room temperature.

Tip

If your kids aren't into chia seeds, feel free to skip the chia part of the recipe.

You'll need about 5-6 large lemons to make this recipe.



Prep: 2 minutes
Cook: 5-10 minutes
Chill: 4-8 hours
Serves 2

BURRITO BOWL MASON JAR SALADS

These hearty and fresh burrito salads are easily stored in a picnic-goer's favorite container—the Mason jar!

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINA CALIN, STRICTLYDELICIOUS.COM

FOR THE CILANTRO LIME QUINOA

- 1 cup quinoa, rinsed
- 2 cups water
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Juice and zest of 1 lime
- ¼ cup freshly chopped cilantro

FOR THE BURRITO SALAD

- 2 large chicken breasts
- 2 teaspoons sea salt
- 1 tablespoon coconut oil or ghee (clarified butter)
- 1 large sweet potato, washed and ends trimmed
- 1 tablespoon coconut oil (optional)
- 3 cups chopped lettuce
- 5 tablespoons plain Greek yogurt
- ¾ cup shredded Cheddar or Colby Jack cheese
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro

❶ **FOR THE CILANTRO LIME QUINOA:** In a medium pot, combine the quinoa, water and salt. Bring to a boil over medium heat, then cover and cook for 20-25 minutes without stirring, or until the quinoa is soft and fluffy. Set aside to cool.

❷ When the quinoa has cooled, add the lime juice, lime zest and chopped cilantro, then gently toss to combine. Taste and add more lime or cilantro as needed.

❸ **FOR THE BURRITO SALAD:** Dry off both chicken breasts thoroughly with paper towels. Season both sides of the breasts using the sea salt.

❹ In a large skillet, heat the coconut oil or ghee over medium-high heat until it is very hot. Add the chicken breasts to the hot skillet and cook for about 4 minutes on each side, or until the chicken is cooked through. Both sides of the breasts should have a brown sear on them.

❺ Remove the cooked chicken to a cutting board to cool; then, cut into ½-inch cubes.

❻ Cut up the sweet potato into small, ½-inch cubes. In a large skillet over medium, heat 1 tablespoon of coconut oil. When the oil is hot, add the sweet potato. Sear the potatoes on all sides, stirring every 3-5 minutes, until browned.

❼ Turn the heat down to medium-low, cover the skillet and continue cooking the sweet potatoes until they can be easily pierced with a fork. Set aside.

❽ When all ingredients have cooled, assemble the salads. Add 1 tablespoon of Greek yogurt each to the bottom of 5 pint-sized Mason jars. Into each jar, layer about 2 tablespoons of sweet potato cubes, 3-4 tablespoons of the cilantro lime quinoa, 1-2 tablespoons of cheese and a layer of chicken.

❾ Fill the remaining space in the Mason jar with chopped lettuce and sprinkle some additional chopped cilantro on top before screwing on the lid. To serve, empty the contents of the jar into a bowl. Jarred salads will last 1 week.

Prep: 15 minutes
Cook: 40-45 minutes
Cool: 10 minutes
Makes 5 salads

For a vegetarian option, substitute the chicken for a can of rinsed black or pinto beans.

EDIBLE FLOWER ICE CUBES

These colorful cubes add a little color and flower power to your picnic drinks and are fun to make with your family!

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUSAN MORAN,
THEVIEWFROMGREATISLAND.COM

**12 freshly picked edible blossoms (pesticide free),
clean and dry**
2-3 cups distilled water

- 1 In a saucepan, boil the distilled water and let cool completely.
- 2 Fill the bottom third of each ice tray square (preferably silicone) with water. Set a flower or petal into each square. As it is hard to predict how the flowers will shift during freezing, alternate some face down and some facing up. Then, freeze until firm, about 1 hour.
- 3 Remove the tray from the freezer and pour a little more water on top, about another third of the way up. Gently push the flower down if it floats. Put the tray back in the freezer until firm, about 1 hour.
- 4 Remove from the freezer again and top off each square with water. Freeze until firm, about 1 hour. Use ice cubes immediately or store in the freezer for up to 3 months.

Edible Petals

Many common blooms are edible and quite tasty, including flowers from your favorite herbs, such as basil or chive.

Whichever you pick, just make sure they are organic and pesticide free.

- Roses
- Pansies
- Nasturtiums
- Marigolds
- Violets (not African Violets)
- Geraniums

Prep: 10 minutes
Freeze: 3-4 hours
Makes 12 ice cubes





Prep: 5 minutes
Makes 1 parfait

HEALTHY STRAWBERRY CHEESECAKE PARFAIT

Top off your spring outing with a sweet and healthy version of everyone's favorite dessert.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAURA FUENTES, MOMABLES.COM

- 1 (6-ounce) cup vanilla Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon almond butter
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup or honey
- 2-3 strawberries, sliced
- 1 graham cracker, crumbled

- ❶ In a small bowl, mix together the yogurt, almond butter, maple syrup and strawberries.
- ❷ Place inside a chilled thermos container, top with crumbled graham cracker and pack for dessert.

ZESTY MINI QUICHES

Full of eggs for lean protein, these flavorful little bites are great for a light lunch *al fresco*.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAURA FUENTES, MOMABLES.COM

- 6 eggs
- ½ cup mild salsa
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

- ❶ Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a mini muffin pan and set aside.
- ❷ In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs and salsa. Then, add the cheese, salt and pepper.
- ❸ Distribute the egg mixture evenly into the prepared mini muffin pan. Bake for 15-18 minutes. Allow the mini quiches to cool in the pan before carefully removing with a small knife or spatula.



Prep: 5 minutes
Bake: 15-18 minutes
Makes 24 quiches

HEALTHY CHICKEN SALAD

A picnic-basket classic gets a healthy and flavorful remix that is easy to personalize to your family's tastes.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLOW ARLEN, WILLCOOKFORFRIENDS.COM

- 2 medium chicken breasts, cooked and shredded or cubed
- 1-2 stalks celery, chopped
- ½ large apple, chopped
- ¾-1 cup toasted walnuts, roughly chopped
- 1 cup grapes, halved
- ¼ cup plain Greek yogurt
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon fresh tarragon, chopped
- Pinch of salt and pepper, to taste.

- 1 Place the shredded or cubed chicken in a bowl. Add the chopped celery, apple and toasted walnuts.
- 2 In a separate bowl, stir together the yogurt, mayonnaise, vinegar, tarragon and a pinch of salt and pepper, to taste. Add the dressing to the chicken mixture, and stir to combine.
- 3 Mix in the halved grapes last to keep them from getting bruised. Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary. If the mixture is a little dry, add a bit more yogurt or mayonnaise.
- 4 Store in an airtight container in the fridge. Salad is best served after 2 hours, once the flavors have had a chance to mingle. Serve as is, in a wrap, on a sandwich or in a salad.

Tip

Personalize the salad with different nuts and fruits, like chopped apples and walnuts, dried cranberries and pecans, almonds and mandarin oranges, or sunflower seeds and raisins. Or try adding fresh veggies like cherry tomatoes, bell peppers and onion. You can also swap the fresh tarragon for any other herbs, like basil, oregano or rosemary.

This recipe is a great way to use up leftover rotisserie chicken!

Prep: 5 minutes
Chill: 2 hours
Serves 4





Flower POWER

SHOWER YOUR KIDS WITH THESE 2 TASTY
SPRINGTIME-INSPIRED TREATS.

RECIPES AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHANIE EDDY

APRIL SHOWERS bring May flowers—and what do May flowers bring? Sweets and treats galore! From bright and cheery cookies topped with a light glaze to delicate mint-colored cupcakes bursting with edible blooms, spring is the best inspiration for delightful goodies. Celebrate the coming of the year's freshest season with these two lovely recipes—and try your hand at the fanciest (and easiest!) little edible flowers around. ●

SPRING BLOSSOM CUPCAKES

With a fluffy, whipped green buttercream, these light vanilla cupcakes are a springtime dream come true.

FOR THE CUPCAKES

½ cup butter, at room temperature
1 cup sugar
3 eggs
1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
1½ cups all-purpose flour
1½ teaspoons baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
⅓ cup milk

FOR THE WHIPPED BUTTERCREAM

3 cups confectioners' sugar
1 cup butter, at room temperature
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 tablespoon milk or cream
Green food coloring

Sprinkles, to serve
Gum paste flowers (page 79)



- 1 **FOR THE CUPCAKES:** Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a muffin tin with cupcake liners and set aside.
- 2 Using an electric hand mixer or standing mixer, cream together the butter and sugar. Then, beat in the eggs one at a time, ensuring that each egg has been completely beaten in before adding the next. Scrape down the bowl, add the vanilla and beat until fully incorporated.
- 3 In a separate bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder and salt.
- 4 Either by hand or with a mixer on low speed, stir in ⅓ of the flour mixture into the egg and butter mixture followed by half of the milk. Repeat with another ⅓ of the flour mixture and the remainder of the milk. Then, add the final ⅓ of flour and stir until just combined.
- 5 Divide the batter evenly between the 12 lined cupcake wells. Bake for 17-20 minutes until a toothpick comes out clean. Allow to cool completely before decorating.
- 6 **FOR THE WHIPPED BUTTERCREAM:** Beat ½ cup of confectioners' sugar into the butter. Once combined, mix on high for 30 seconds or until fluffy.
- 7 Beat in the vanilla and milk until combined.
- 8 Repeat step 6 until all the sugar has been added and the buttercream is sweet and fluffy. Don't forget to beat on high after each addition of sugar to incorporate air into the icing and give it a fluffier texture.
- 9 Add a single drop of green food coloring and stir to combine. Pipe or spread the icing on the cupcakes and top with sprinkles or gum paste flowers (page 79).

Stephanie
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Calgary, Alberta, and is
the creator of Clockwork
Lemon, a blog dedicated to
baking, brunches and other
kitchen adventures. For more
recipes, visit
clockworklemon.com.



Prep: 5 minutes
Freeze: 20 minutes
Bake: 10-13 minutes
Set: 1 hour
Makes 24 cookies

PINK LEMONADE SHORTBREAD

Lightly flavored with fresh lemon juice, these sweet shortbread cookies get a delicate touch of the season with pink icing and colorful sprinkles.

FOR THE COOKIES

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- Zest of 1 lemon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ½ cup confectioners' sugar

FOR THE GLAZE

- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- ⅔ cup plus 3 tablespoons confectioners' sugar
- Red food coloring
- Sprinkles, to serve

- 1 **FOR THE COOKIES:** In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, cornstarch, lemon zest and salt.
- 2 In the bowl of a standing mixer, cream together the butter, lemon juice and confectioners' sugar until the mixture is smooth and fluffy.
- 3 Turn the mixer on low and slowly add the flour mixture. Continue to mix on low until a dough comes together.
- 4 Place the dough in a large freezer bag. Leaving the bag unzipped, roll the dough out to ¼-inch thickness. (Rolling the dough inside the freezer bag prevents any crumbly mess!) Transfer the bag of dough onto a tray and chill in the freezer until firm, about 20 minutes.
- 5 Preheat the oven to 375°F. Remove the chilled dough from the bag and slice into 1½-inch squares. Place squares ½ inch apart on parchment paper-lined cookie sheets and bake for 10-13 minutes or until cookies are slightly golden on bottom edges. Cool on a wire rack.
- 6 **FOR THE GLAZE:** Whisk the confectioners' sugar into the lemon juice until it becomes smooth and creamy. Stir in a small drop of red food coloring to turn the glaze pink.
- 7 Once the cookies have cooled, place them on a fresh sheet of parchment paper and use a spoon to drizzle or spread glaze over each one. Top with sprinkles and allow the glaze to harden (approximately 1 hour) before serving.



These little blossoms can be made in large batches ahead of time and will keep for up to 10 months in an airtight container at room temperature.



Tip

Try brushing the whole flower with water and adding edible glitter for a sparkling bloom!

GUM PASTE FLOWERS

These little flowers have a big impact and are easier to make than you think!

- Wilton premixed gum paste
- Food coloring
- Shortening
- Small rolling pin
- Small flower cookie cutters
- Small paintbrush
- White nonpareils
- Toothpick

Prep: 5 minutes
Dry: 1 hour, 15 minutes

- 1 Take a piece of the gum paste and knead in a small drop of red food coloring. Make sure to keep any gum paste you are not working with sealed in its bag to prevent it from drying out. Lightly grease your work surface with shortening. Then, roll the pink gum paste out to a millimeter thickness. Stamp out the shapes using small flower cookie cutters.
- 2 Pinch the flowers around the bottom end of small paintbrush to give them shape and make a small indentation in the center where the sprinkles will go. Allow to dry for 10-15 minutes.
- 3 Once the flowers have had time to set but are not completely dry, use the paintbrush to spread a little water in the center of each flower. Wet the end of the toothpick and use it to pick up 3 white nonpareils and stick them to the center of the flowers. Allow to dry for 1 hour before using.



Prep: 10-15
minutes
Bake: 20-25 minutes
Makes 12
cupcakes

Everything's

Coming Up | GET CREATIVE WITH YOUR SPRINGTIME CUPCAKES AND TRY THESE 3 FUN FLAVORS.

CUPCAKES

YOU'D THINK THAT cupcakes would be passé, wouldn't you? Instead, their popularity is higher than ever, with some of the strangest flavors sprouting up in every cupcake shop across the world. We're sure your child would agree: This is most certainly a good thing. From a vivid swirl of rainbow frosting to the creamy, gooey filling borrowed from your favorite Easter candy, these three cupcake recipes are the perfect way to get creative in your kitchen. April showers bring May flowers, but cupcakes bring the best thing of all: joy. ●

RAINBOW SWIRL CUPCAKES

With a dash of food coloring, these vanilla cupcakes are a fun and colorful way to ring in spring.

RECIPE FROM *LOLA'S FOREVER* BY LOLA'S BAKERS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER CASSIDY

FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1½ cups self-rising flour (or cake flour mixed with 3 teaspoons baking powder)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) butter
- 1¼ cups granulated sugar
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla bean paste
- 3 eggs
- ¾ cup sour cream
- ⅓ teaspoon each of pink, blue and yellow gel food coloring (or preferred colors)

FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 10 tablespoons (1¼ sticks) unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste
- 3 cups confectioners' sugar
- 3-4 tablespoons whole milk
- ⅓ teaspoon each pink, blue and yellow gel food coloring (or preferred colors)

Colored sprinkles, to serve

- 1 FOR THE CUPCAKES:** Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a muffin pan with 12 paper cupcake liners. Set aside.
- 2** Sift the flour and baking powder into a bowl and set aside.
- 3** Place the butter and sugar into the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment and beat the mixture at medium to high speed for 1-2 minutes, until light and fluffy. Occasionally stop to scrape down the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula.
- 4** Add the vanilla bean paste and mix. Mixing at low speed, add the eggs, one at a time, beating until incorporated.
- 5** Slowly add the sifted dry ingredients and mix, at low speed, until combined. Scrape down the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula, and briefly beat at high speed until the mixture is smooth. Add the sour cream and mix until incorporated. Do not over-mix.
- 6** Divide the mixture evenly between 3 bowls and add one of the food coloring gels to each bowl. Mix them all thoroughly until well blended.
- 7** Take a teaspoonful of one batter and place into each muffin well. Repeat with the other colors, layering colors until all the batters have been used up. Then, take a toothpick (or the end of a knife) and swirl the batters together slightly in a figure eight.
- 8** Bake cupcakes for 20-25 minutes, until well risen and a skewer inserted into a cake comes out clean. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 9 FOR THE BUTTERCREAM:** Place the butter into the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment and beat until soft and fluffy. Add the vanilla bean paste and mix again. Sift in half of the confectioners' sugar and mix at low speed until incorporated. Add the second half of the sugar and beat, slowly, until incorporated. Add the milk, a tablespoon at a time, mixing at medium speed, until the buttercream is light and fluffy. If the buttercream is too stiff, add a little more milk.
- 10** Using the same technique as for the cake batter, divide the buttercream into 3 equal portions and color each portion with one of the food coloring gels, mixing until blended.
- 11** Spoon one of the buttercreams down one side of a pastry bag, leaving space near the nozzle to add the other colors, if possible. Repeat with the second and third colors until the pastry bag is full. Then, pipe a swirl of buttercream onto each cupcake and decorate with colored sprinkles.

CADBURY CREME EGG CUPCAKES

More than just plopping a Creme Egg on a swirl of frosting, these cupcakes recreate the classic Cadbury center.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY CARLA CARDELLO, CHOCOLATEMOOSEY.COM

FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup sugar
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 2 egg whites
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, melted
- ⅔ cup buttermilk

FOR THE FONDANT CREAM

- ¼ cup corn syrup
- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 1 ½ cup confectioners' sugar

FOR THE FROSTING

- ½ cup powdered sugar
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter
- 2 tablespoons fondant cream (reserved from the filling)
- Pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Prep: 15–20 minutes
Bake: 20–25 minutes
Makes 12 cupcakes

1 FOR THE CUPCAKES: Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a muffin pan with 12 paper cupcake liners. In a small bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Set aside.

2 In a large bowl, beat together the sugar and oil until smooth. Add in the egg whites, one at a time, until smooth. Beat in vanilla and melted chocolate. Alternately beat in the flour mixture and buttermilk, starting and ending with flour.

3 Fill each lined cupcake well with the batter. Bake for 20–25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let the cupcakes cool completely.

4 FOR THE FONDANT CREAM: In a mixing bowl, beat together the corn syrup and butter until smooth. Beat in the vanilla, salt and confectioners' sugar. Reserve 2 tablespoons of cream for the frosting.

5 Once the cupcakes are cool, cut a hole out of the middle of each one, being careful not to cut too far down. Fill the center of each cupcake with the cream and then cover it up with some of the removed cake. You may not use all of the cream. For a true Creme Egg look, color some of the cream yellow and place a small dollop on top of the white cream for a "yolk."

6 FOR THE FROSTING: Using an electric hand mixer in a large bowl, beat together the sugar, butter, fondant cream and salt until creamy. Add the vanilla. Beat on high for a few more minutes or until light and fluffy. Pipe the frosting onto the cupcakes, covering the filling in the center.

LEMON POPPY SEED CUPCAKES

Sweet with a little prickly of sourness, these lemon cupcakes are a decadent version of their muffin cousins.

RECIPE FROM *LOLA'S FOREVER* BY LOLA'S BAKERS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER CASSIDY

FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 1¾ cups self-rising flour (or cake flour mixed with 4 teaspoons baking powder)
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- Zest of 2 lemons, plus more to serve
- 3 eggs
- ¼ cup lemon curd, plus more to serve
- ⅓ cup sour cream
- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons poppy seeds, plus more to serve

FOR THE LEMON SYRUP

- Freshly squeezed juice of 2 lemons
- ¼ cup sugar

FOR THE BUTTERCREAM

- 14 tablespoons (1¾ sticks) butter
- Scant 3½ cups confectioners' sugar
- ⅓ cup lemon curd
- 1-2 tablespoons whole milk

- 1 FOR THE CUPCAKES:** Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a muffin pan with 12 paper cupcake liners. Set aside.
- 2** Sift the flour and baking powder into a large bowl. Add the sugar and lemon zest and set aside.
- 3** Place the eggs, lemon curd and sour cream into the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment and whisk until fully combined. Pour this into the flour mixture and add the melted butter. Mix until smooth and all ingredients are incorporated. Then, add the poppy seeds and give the batter a final mix.
- 4** Using an ice cream scoop, divide the mixture between the lined muffin wells, filling to almost ¾ full. Bake in the preheated oven for 20-25 minutes, until well risen and a skewer inserted into the cakes comes out clean. Transfer to a wire rack and, while still warm, prick the cupcakes all over with a toothpick.
- 5 FOR THE LEMON SYRUP:** Place the lemon juice and sugar in a small saucepan and warm gently until the sugar has melted. Remove from the heat.
- 6** Using a teaspoon, spoon the warm syrup over each cupcake, until all the syrup has been absorbed into the cakes. Allow the cupcakes to cool completely before frosting.
- 7 FOR THE BUTTERCREAM:** Place the butter into the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment and beat until soft and fluffy. Sift in half of the confectioners' sugar and slowly mix until incorporated. Add the second half of the sugar, then beat, slowly, until all the sugar has been incorporated. Add the lemon curd, then add the milk, a tablespoon at a time, mixing until light and fluffy at medium speed. If the buttercream is too stiff, add a little more milk.
- 8** Spoon the buttercream into a pastry bag and pipe a swirl onto the top of each cake. Alternatively, spread the buttercream onto each cake using a spatula.
- 9** Decorate each cupcake with some freshly grated lemon zest, a drizzle of lemon curd and a sprinkling of poppy seeds before serving.



Prep: 10-15 minutes
Bake: 20-25 minutes
Cook: 5 minutes
Makes 12 cupcakes

FOR MORE
ON *LOLA'S
FOREVER*, SEE THE
BOOK NOOK,
PAGE 96.

A Sweeter EASTER

■ HAVE THE BEST SUNDAY OF THE YEAR WITH THESE 8 PLAYFUL TREATS.

PAINTED EGGS, chocolate bunnies and sugar-coated marshmallow chicks—Easter is pretty predictable year to year. And while nothing is wrong with a little tradition (nobody can resist biting the ears off a chocolate rabbit), sometimes you need to mix it up to keep things interesting. Spring is a season of fresh flavors and lush colors full of inspiration for new treats and tricks. From new takes on carrot cake to a slew of the wackiest hybrid food from your child's imagination, these eight sweet treats are sure to bring a fun twist to the holiday.

EDIBLE PIÑATA

Forget filling up plastic eggs—these edible piñatas are just as delicious and way more fun for your kids to make!

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY FROM *THE CRUMBS FAMILY COOKBOOK* BY CLAIRE AND LUCY McDONALD

1 waffle cone, about 1½ inches wide at the top
1 bottle of icing, store-bought or homemade
Sprinkles
Edible glitter and other fun candies
Handful of small, unwrapped candies, like jelly beans, M&M's or Skittles
1 small meringue cookie, about 1½ inches wide

- 1 Decorate the waffle cone with sprinkles and edible glitter, using the icing as glue. (If you don't want your children's fingers to get too sticky, skip this part.) Once the cone is a masterpiece, fill it with candies.
- 2 Line the cone's rim with icing and carefully fit the meringue on top.
- 3 Repeat steps 1-2 for all cones you plan to make. Let the cones rest until the icing sets. Serve.

Tip

Feel free to make your own icing for this treat, but the canned icing is easily found and easy for kids to use.





CARROT CAKE COOKIE SANDWICHES

An Easter classic gets a cute, single-serving update with little icing carrots and a buttercream filling.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY ABEER RIZVI, CAKEWHLZ.COM

FOR THE COOKIES

- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter
- ½ cup shortening
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour

Prep: 5–10 minutes
Bake: 15–18 minutes
Cool: 20–25 minutes
Set: 5–10 minutes
Makes 12 cookie sandwiches

- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ cup finely chopped crystallized ginger
- ⅓ cup finely chopped toasted pecans
- 1¼ cups grated carrots

FOR THE DECORATIONS

- Frosting, colored white, orange and green, store-bought or homemade
- White chocolate, melted
- Tip # 12 (also called the round tip)
- Tip # 233 (also called the grass tip)

1 FOR THE COOKIES: Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

2 In a deep bowl, cream together the butter and shortening until the mixture is light and fluffy. Add the granulated sugar and brown sugar, and mix until it's thoroughly combined into the butter mixture. Then, add the egg and vanilla extract and mix again.

3 In a separate mixing bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg. Add the flour mixture to the butter mixture and stir until just combined. Stir in the crystallized ginger, pecans and grated carrots.

4 Spoon out the batter onto the prepared sheet and bake for 15–18 minutes. Remove from the oven and allow to cool completely, 20–25 minutes, before decorating.

5 FOR THE DECORATIONS: In a double boiler or microwave-safe bowl, melt the white chocolate, stirring until it is smooth. (Keep an eye on it, as white chocolate seizes quickly.)

6 Using a spoon, pour and spread some chocolate on top of the cookies and let set, about 5–10 minutes.

7 Fill a pastry bag fitted with the "grass" tip (#233) with green buttercream. Holding the pastry bag at a 45-degree angle to the top of the white chocolate circle, squeeze the bag and quickly pull away to create the tops of the carrots.

8 Fill another pastry bag fitted with a round tip (#12) with orange buttercream. Starting at the base of the carrot tops, squeeze the bag until frosting comes out; then, pull it toward yourself, wiggling your hand slightly to create subtle texture on the carrot.

9 Repeat steps 7–8 for half the batch of cookies.

10 Fill another pastry bag with white buttercream and frost the backside of a decorated cookie. Then, take an undecorated cookie and press it so that the backside sandwiches the frosting. Repeat for each cookie sandwich and serve.

CARROT CAKE BAKED DOUGHNUTS

Whether its with mom's coffee or your daughter's morning milk, celebrate the tastiness of carrot cake in a brand-new and trendy way: baked doughnuts!

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY CARLA CARDELLO,
CHOCOLATEMOOSEY.COM

FOR THE DOUGHNUTS

- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground clove
- 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup finely shredded carrots
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts

FOR THE CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

- 2 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 2 tablespoons (1/4 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- Pinch of salt
- 1/4 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts

1 FOR THE DOUGHNUTS: Preheat the oven to 375°F. Lightly grease two 6-cavity doughnut pans. (If you only have one pan, chill the pan in the refrigerator for 5 minutes between uses.)

2 In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg and clove.

3 In a large bowl, beat together the butter and brown sugar until smooth. Beat in the egg and vanilla until fully incorporated; then, beat in the sour cream. Gradually add the flour mixture. Lastly, mix in the carrots, raisins and walnuts.

4 Fill each doughnut cavity about half full with the batter. Bake 10-12 minutes or until firm and a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes in the pan; then, remove to a rack to cool completely.

5 FOR THE CREAM CHEESE FROSTING: In a mixing bowl, beat together the cream cheese, butter and salt until smooth. Gradually add the confectioners' sugar and then the milk. Beat until smooth.

6 Dip (or spread with a knife) each cooled doughnut into the frosting and top with chopped walnuts.

While you will enjoy these doughnuts with your morning coffee, your kids will be just as happy to dip it in a nice, tall glass of milk!

Prep: 5-10 minutes
Bake: 12-14 minutes
Set: 15-20 minutes
Makes 12 doughnuts





Prep: 5 minutes
Set: 10-15 minutes
Makes 1 flower

EDIBLE FLOWER PUZZLES

Half treat, half activity, these flowers are a fun way to entertain your kids on Easter.

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY ABEER RIZVI, CAKEWHLZ.COM

- 8 mini candy canes, unwrapped
- White chocolate, melted
- Pink crystal sugar sprinkles
- 1 red gumball
- 1 large candy cane, preferably green
- 2 green Mike and Ike candies

- 1 On a sheet of wax paper, arrange 2 mini candy canes in the shape of a heart and use a couple of dots of melted chocolate to hold them in place. Repeat until there are 4 hearts.
- 2 Fill the inside of each heart with melted white chocolate. Then, sprinkle the pink crystal sugar on the melted chocolate. Refrigerate until the chocolate hardens, 10-15 minutes.
- 3 To assemble the puzzle, arrange the hearts in the shape of a flower. Place a red gumball in the center. Then, place the large candy cane as the flower's stem. Arrange a green Mike and Ike candy on the either side of the candy cane for the leaves.
- 4 Add all the puzzle "pieces" to a bowl and let your child make their own flower before snacking on the final product.

WOBBLER

Topped with ice cream and plums, your kids will love this funny-looking waffle fruit cobbler.

RECIPE FROM *BAKING MASH-UP* BY VICTORIA GLASS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLARE WINFIELD

FOR THE WAFFLES

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2½ tablespoons granulated sugar, plus 1 tablespoon to serve
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs, separated
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted
- 1¾ cups whole milk
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, to serve

FOR THE PLUMS

- 12 plums, pitted and quartered
- ¼ cup light muscovado sugar
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened

1 **FOR THE WAFFLES:** Preheat the waffle iron.

2 In a large mixing bowl, stir together the flour, sugar and baking powder. Add the egg yolks, melted butter, milk and vanilla extract and lightly whisk together until fully incorporated. Don't over-mix the ingredients or the waffles will be dense instead of fluffy.

3 In another bowl, whisk the egg whites with the salt until stiff but not dry. Fold the egg whites into the batter with a large metal spoon.

4 Grease the waffle iron. Ladle the batter into the hot iron and bake for 2-3 minutes until golden brown. Mix together the granulated sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle a little over each waffle while they're still hot. Set aside.

5 **FOR THE PLUMS:** Preheat the oven to 350°F.

6 Arrange the plums in an even layer in an ovenproof dish. Sprinkle over the light muscovado sugar and vanilla extract. Break off little pieces of butter and scatter over the plums. Place the waffles over the top of the plums and place a sheet of parchment paper followed by a sheet of foil over the top. Bake for 20 minutes, remove the parchment and foil and bake, uncovered, for another 10 minutes, or until the waffles are golden brown with a few crispy edges. Serve hot with warm custard or vanilla ice cream.

Prep: 5 minutes
Cook: 5-10 minutes
Bake: 30 minutes
Serves 6





PRETZANT

Flaky pastry with a crispy, salty shell, this mash-up between a croissant and a pretzel is a satisfying treat.

RECIPE FROM *BAKING MASH-UP* BY VICTORIA GLASS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLARE WINFIELD

- 2½ cups bread flour, sifted, plus extra to dust
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2½ tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 (¼-ounce) packet of fast-acting dried yeast
- 1 tablespoon malt extract
- ¾ cup warm water
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, chilled
- 1 tablespoon baking soda
- Sesame seeds, to serve
- Poppy seeds, to serve
- Sea salt, to serve

- 1 Put the flour into a large mixing bowl. Put the salt on one side of the bowl and the sugar and yeast on the other. In a separate bowl, stir the malt extract into the warm water. Pour half of the wet mixture into the dry and mix together, adding a little of the wet at a time, until fully combined.
- 2 Tip the mixture out onto a lightly floured surface and knead for a few minutes until the dough is elastic. Put the dough back in the mixing bowl, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour.

- 3 On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough to a 8x16-inch rectangle. Put the butter between 2 pieces of parchment and smash it with a rolling pin until it is a flat rectangle about ½ inch thick. Place the butter in the center of the rolled dough and fold the overhanging dough over the butter to form a parcel. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
- 4 On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough again to a 8x16-inch rectangle. Position the dough so that one of the narrow ends is facing you. Brush off any excess flour and fold the dough into thirds. Fold the section furthest away from you toward the middle and then fold the bottom section up to cover it. Press the edges together with your fingers. Turn the dough 90 degrees so that the folds run vertically in front of you.
- 5 Repeat step 4. Then, seal the edges with your fingers and wrap the dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour to rest.
- 6 Repeat the rolling, folding and resting two more times. Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and set in the fridge to rest for a few hours.
- 7 Roll the dough out a final time until it is ¼ inch thick. Cut the rolled dough into approximately 8x4-inch isosceles triangles. With the narrow point of the triangle facing away from you, roll up the base toward it and place on the prepared baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining triangles. Set aside for 1 hour to rise.
- 8 Preheat the oven to 400°F. Grease and line 2 baking sheets with parchment. Set aside.
- 9 Stir the baking soda into a large pot of boiling water. Drop the Pretzants into the water, a few at a time, for a few seconds before removing carefully with a slotted spoon.
- 10 Place the Pretzants on the baking sheets and sprinkle with the seeds and salt. Bake for 15-20 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely before serving.

MILLIONAIRE JACKS

The super British millionaire bars and flapjacks are merged to make a caramel- and chocolate-topped base of syrupy oats.

RECIPE FROM *BAKING MASH-UP* BY VICTORIA GLASS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLARE WINFIELD

FOR THE FLAPJACKS

- ¾ cup light muscovado sugar
- 10 tablespoons (1¼ sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 1½ cups rolled oats
- Pinch of salt

FOR THE CARAMEL TOPPING

- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter
- ⅓ cup light muscovado sugar
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt
- 1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk

6½ ounces bittersweet chocolate, broken into pieces

- 1 FOR THE FLAPJACKS:** Preheat the oven to 300°F. Grease and line an 8-inch spring-form cake pan with parchment paper.
- 2** In a saucepan over low heat, melt together the sugar, butter and corn syrup, stirring constantly. Remove the pan from heat and stir in the rolled oats and salt until fully combined and coated.
- 3** Spoon the flapjack mixture into the prepared pan and press it level with the back of a spoon. Bake for 35-40 minutes. Remove and let cool in the pan on top of a wire rack.
- 4 FOR THE CARAMEL TOPPING:** Place all the ingredients, except the sweetened condensed milk, into a saucepan or pot and stir over a gentle heat until the butter has melted and the sugar has dissolved. Add the condensed milk and increase the heat, stirring frequently, and being careful not to let the base of the mixture seize. Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally, until the mixture has thickened and turned a deep golden color. Remove the pan from heat and let cool slightly.
- 5** Pour the warm caramel over the cooled flapjack base and let cool completely.
- 6** In a heatproof bowl suspended over a pan of barely simmering water, melt the chocolate, stirring occasionally. Once melted, let cool slightly before pouring the chocolate over the cold caramel. Let cool completely before pushing the base of the pan out and cutting the Millionaire Jacks into squares



BAVLOVA

This light and fluffy Pavlova mixed with tart blackcurrant Bavarian cream will end Easter dinner on a high note.

RECIPE FROM *BAKING MASH-UP* BY VICTORIA GLASS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLARE WINFIELD

FOR THE PAVLOVA

- 6 egg whites
- Pinch of salt
- 1 1/3 cups superfine granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon white wine vinegar
- 1 vanilla bean, halved lengthwise and seeds scraped out

FOR THE BAVAROIS

- 2 egg yolks
- 1/4 cup superfine granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup light cream
- Scant 1/2 cup whipping cream
- 3/4 cup blackcurrant or blackberry purée (see tip, right)
- 1 tablespoon blackcurrant juice

- 3 ounces melted white chocolate
- 3 sheets of gelatin
- 1 tablespoon hot water
- 1 egg white
- 1 pound mixed berries, to serve
- Confectioners' sugar, to serve

Prep: 10 minutes
Bake: 1 hour
Cool: 8 hours (overnight)
Chill: 12 hours
Serves 8

- 1 **FOR THE PAVLOVA:** Preheat the oven to 300°F. Grease and line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Set aside.
- 2 In a large bowl, beat together the egg whites and salt until stiff peaks form. Then, a spoonful at a time, add the sugar, whisking between each addition, until the mixture is thick and glossy. Whisk in the cornstarch and vinegar before whisking in the vanilla.
- 3 Onto the baking sheet, spoon out generous dollops of the mixture into a ring shape about 10 inches in diameter. Spoon more of the mixture in the middle and build up the sides higher so that there is plenty of room in the middle for the filling.
- 4 Put the Pavlova in the oven and immediately reduce the temperature to 275°F. Bake for 1 hour.
- 5 Turn the oven off, but leave the Pavlova inside, with the oven door shut, until the oven is cold. It's easiest to bake the Pavlova in the evening and leave it in the oven overnight to cool.
- 6 **FOR THE BAVAROIS:** In a heatproof bowl, whisk together the egg yolks and superfine sugar. Place the cream in a saucepan or pot and heat until it begins to boil. Then, whisk the hot cream in the egg mixture before tipping the custard back into the pan and stirring until the custard has thickened slightly.
- 7 Remove the custard to a cold pitcher and stir in the berry purée and juice into the custard. Leave to cool completely before transferring to the fridge. (Leave this in the fridge overnight while the Pavlova slowly cools in the oven.)
- 8 Once the Pavlova has cooled completely, paint the inside with cooled melted white chocolate to keep the bavarois from seeping through the meringue.
- 9 Soak the gelatin sheets in cold water for 10 minutes to soften. Then, squeeze the cold water out of the gelatin and melt it with hot water. Whisk the melted gelatin into the bavarois.
- 10 In a spotlessly clean bowl, whisk the egg whites until stiff but not dry. In a separate bowl, but with the same whisk (no need to wash it), whisk the cream and fold it into the custard until fully combined. Fold in the whipped egg whites until fully combined.
- 11 Carefully pour the bavarois in the middle dip of the Pavlova and refrigerate it for at least 6 hours.
- 12 To serve, top with berries and dust with confectioners' sugar.





FOR MORE
ON THE BOOKS
FEATURED IN THIS
STORY, SEE THE BOOK
NOOK, PAGE 96.

Tip

For
blackberry (or
any seasonal
berry) purée, blend
8 ounces of berries
and strain them in
a fine-mesh
strainer.

BOTTOMS

UP!



WRITTEN, STYLED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY SARAH JANE O'KEEFE

■ THIS LITTLE BUNNY IS THE PERFECT ADDITION TO A COLORFUL SPRING CELEBRATION.

ON A GLOOMY, RAINY DAY, fend off boredom with craft time! This cute bunny centerpiece is as sweet as it is quirky—and it doubles as an unexpected candy dish for your upcoming Easter party! Kids are sure to get a kick out of crafting this clever trickster who's diving in for colorful candies amid the flowers. ●

COTTONTAIL CANDY DISH

FOR THE BUNNY

Yarn, preferred color

Scissors

Craft glue

Cardstock

Marker

FOR THE CANDY DISH

Paint, preferred color (optional)

Paintbrush

Small terracotta pot, new

Craft glue

Candy, such as M&M's, Jordan almonds or jelly beans

Fake flowers

1 FOR THE BUNNY: Wrap a single piece of yarn—still attached to the skein or ball—around four of your fingers. (The figures, right, show how to make the tail, which is the same process but with three fingers). Tie it off with a simple slipknot so that it won't slide off too easily.

2 Proceed to loop yarn around your fingers until the yarn piles up almost 1 inch off of your fingers and is approximately 3 inches wide. Trim, separating yarn from the ball or skein.

3 Cut a piece of yarn off the skein or ball and slip it between your middle and ring fingers. Tie the individual piece of yarn around the bundle to keep it together and slide off of your fingers.

4 Once secure, slide scissors through the loop of the yarn bundle and snip. Repeat until no loops remain.

5 Fluff and trim until the ball reaches the desired shape for the bunny's body.

6 Repeat steps 1-5 to create the bunny's tail. When wrapping the yarn, only use two or three fingers. Loop the yarn around your fingers approximately 30 times to get the appropriate size.

7 Using the craft glue, attach the tail to the bunny body.

8 Cut 2 ovals out of cardstock—these will be the bunny's feet. Outline the shape with a marker and draw little ovals for toes and hearts for the pads. Set aside.

9 Cut a bunny ear shape out of the same cardstock. To create the look of a flopped over ear, draw the lower half of the ear shape, then draw the top half off to the side (see finished craft, left). Outline with marker.

10 FOR THE CANDY DISH: Begin by painting the bottom portion of the terracotta pot, if desired. Let the pot dry completely before continuing.

11 Apply craft glue in a 3-inch long strip along the inside of the pot's rim. Carefully place the bunny's body so that the tail sticks up and out.

12 Once the glue has dried, fill the pot with the candy of your choice—smaller pieces work better for keeping flowers upright.

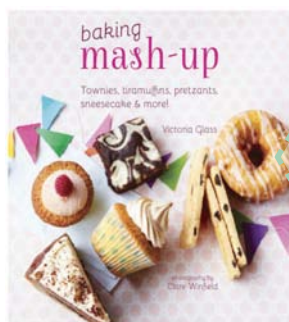
13 Trim the stems of fake flowers so that they will stand about 6-8 inches out of the pot. Arrange them so that they fill in around the bunny but leave space for kids to grab candies.

14 Apply dabs of glue on the top back of the cardstock bunny feet. Press them onto the outside of the pot's rim, just below the bunny body.

15 Once the bunny is in place, draw thin lines of glue along the bottom edge of the ears and nestle them into place among the yarn. Place in the center of a coffee table and enjoy!

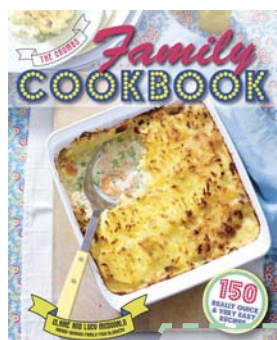


GREAT READS THAT FEED!



Baking Mash-Up

by Victoria Glass, published by Ryland Peters & Small, ©2014; \$16.95, rylandpeters.com. Bavlova (92), Millionaire Jacks (91), Prezant (90)



The Crumbs Family Cookbook

by Claire and Lucy McDonald, published by CICO Books, ©2014; \$19.95, rylandpeters.com. Breakfast Banana Split (47), Edible Piñata (84), Speedy Gonzales Noodles (52)



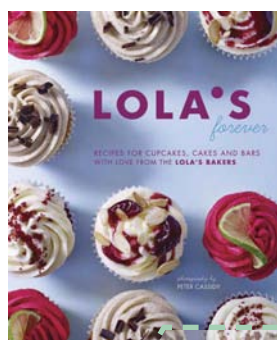
Grain-Free Family Table

by Carrie Vitt, published by William Morrow Cookbooks, ©2014; \$29.99, harpercollins.com. Eggplant and Zucchini Lasagna (11), Southwestern Stuffed Bell Peppers (8)



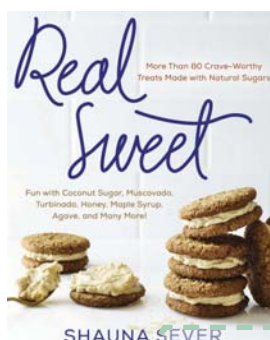
I Quit Sugar

by Sarah Wilson, published by Clarkson Potter, ©2014; \$25, crownpublishing.com. Chocolate Nut Butter Cups (39), Sugar-Free "Nutella" (37)



LOLA's Forever

by LOLA's bakers, published by Ryland Peters & Small, ©2014; \$24.95, rylandpeters.com. Lactose-Free Strawberry Cupcakes (19), Lemon Poppyseed Cupcakes (83), Rainbow Swirl Cupcakes (81)



Real Sweet

by Shauna Sever, published by William Morrow Cookbooks, ©2015; \$27.50, harpercollins.com. Five-Flavors Party Cake (43), Maple Spun Sugar (40), Strawberry and Lemon Cream Puffs (44)



YumUniverse

by Heather Crosby, published by BenBella Books, ©2014; \$19.95, benbellabooks.com. Lavender-Chia Lemonade (70), Strawberry-Banana Crunch Snack Wraps (13)

Featured Book

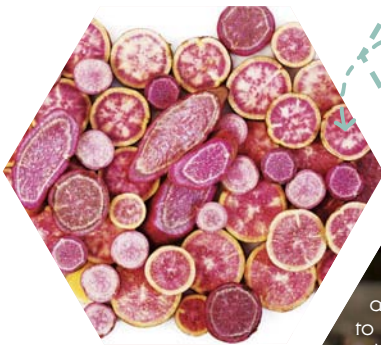
Flavorful Factoids

LEARN EVERYTHING ABOUT FOOD—EVEN THE BIZARRE STUFF!

FOOD IS WEIRD. Sure, things like apples and bananas are pretty normal, even if you're not a fan of them. But some food is truly strange or does strange things—such as the cupuaçu fruit, which smells like a mix of chocolate and pineapple. That fact and 299 more like it are the basis of National Geographic Kids' *Weird But True Food* by Julie Beer. With more than 200 colorful pages full of interesting, funny and even gross food facts, your kids will learn about the wonderful culinary world and have fun doing it.

To tease your palate, here are a few of the book's weird facts: ●

An Israeli artist creates miniature replicas of food that are 12-times smaller than the real thing.



Sweet potatoes come not only in orange but also in white, yellow, red and purple.



A café in Japan offers solo customers a giant stuffed animal to keep them company as they eat.



WEIRD BUT TRUE FOOD: 300 BITE-SIZE FACTS ABOUT INCREDIBLE EDIBLES BY JULIE BEER, PUBLISHED BY NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS, © 2015, \$7.99, KIDS.NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM.

Diners at the Robot Restaurant in China have their whole meal cooked and served by robots.



TRUE or FAUX?

LEARN HOW TO DECIDE IF YOUR CHILD SHOULD HAVE REAL OR ARTIFICIAL SUGARS.

Question

"Dear expert, I hear a lot of talk about how artificial sweeteners are bad for you. Is this true, and should I avoid giving them to my child, especially if I want to monitor how much sugar they are eating?" -Editor

PLACING VARIOUS SWEETENERS INTO

"do" and "do not" categories is not all that simple.

Answer

Hypothetically, the best sweetener would be naturally sourced with minimal processing, be high in nutrient value and not empty calories, have a clean, sweet flavor, and help your kids develop healthy long-term eating habits. The truth is, a perfect sweetener does not exist, making it hard for you to choose foods for your child's snack attack. Despite this, we can identify when you should raise concerns and why.

It is well known that excessive intake of sugars leads to higher caloric intake and lower diet quality, which contributes to greater risk for obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. The World Health Organization recommends that added sugars should not exceed 10% of total calories for the day. For an adolescent on an 1,800-calorie diet, this amounts to 180 calories or 45 grams of added sugar (about 11 teaspoons) daily. Keep in mind, it adds up quickly in products like sugar-sweetened beverages, grain-based desserts, snack bars, breakfast cereals and flavored yogurt. The idea behind the sugar limitation is that you are leaving room in your child's meal pattern to include nutrient-dense foods.

All this talk about sugar may lead you to consider non-nutritive and/or artificial sweeteners; in other words, sweeteners that impart intense sweetness without the calories of real sugars. These sweeteners are characterized as either food additives or generally recognized as safe (GRAS). The FDA carries out strict approval processes for both groups, assuring "reasonable certainty of no harm" when consumed. There is some evidence that choosing non-nutritive instead of sugar-sweetened products can result in calorie savings; however, there is little evidence supporting long-term weight management. Additionally, there is an ongoing debate about the safety of these substances. Not to mention, there is concern that children may form a preference for sweet flavors in beverages and other foods. Habitual consumption of sweet beverages and snacks may displace healthier, more nutrient-dense options. Additionally, the American Academy of Pediatrics has no position on the use of these sweeteners; therefore, it may be wise to avoid them given the lack of approval for their consumption.

The take away is this: It would be best to limit both caloric and non-nutritive sweeteners in your child's diet. ●

The Expert

KATHRYN STEMLER, R.D.

Kathryn is a registered dietitian passionate about nutrition and is an enthused bon vivant. She has experience in clinical nutrition, disease management, food-service management, hospitality and food safety.

HAVE A BURNING QUESTION ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S DIET? GET OUR EXPERTS' OPINION IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF YUM!

Send questions to: Ask the Expert Engaged Media, Inc. Yum Food & Fun for Kids 22840 Savi Ranch Pkwy, #200 Yorba Linda, CA 92887

OR EMAIL YOUR QUESTIONS TO EDITORIAL@YUMFOODFUN.COM.



TODAY'S
special

WEIRD FOOD

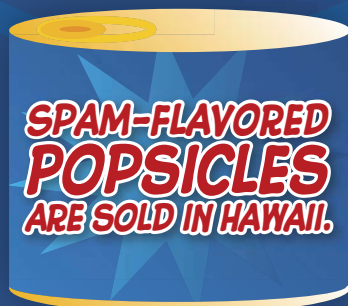
Here are some tasty tidbits
to whet your appetite for
this fascinating book, filled
with 300 weird-but-true
food facts and fun photos.



According to a recent study,

**Americans
crave
cheese**

more than
any other
food.

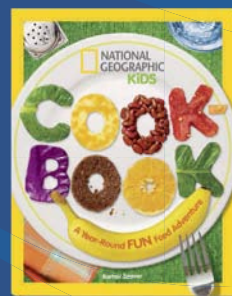


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