

# decadent chocolate cake with a kick

*This is for those times when you are asked to make (specifically) a cake for a work/book club/party event, and you don't want any gluten or massively massive doses of sugar, but you still want to impress the guests. There aren't a lot of ingredients here, it's not too complex, and it is so so so decadent and intense that you really will be happy after even just a small bite.*

*This recipe is loosely based off one in Cook's Illustrated (aka my cooking bible); however, the kinds of chocolate I like to use (a mixture of Trader Joe's 85% and 72% dark chocolate) only come in 3.5-ounce bars. So, a recipe using 14 ounces of chocolate (vs. a full pound) was born. Plus, I suppose I feel a teeny bit less guilty saying that the recipe calls for less than a pound of chocolate. You will be sabotaging your clean eating and nicely regulated insulin levels if you eat this cake every night. Dark chocolate—even the 85% dark stuff—contains some sugar.*

*Good quality, good tasting chocolate makes a difference.*

- 7 large eggs, cold
- 14 ounces (380 g) bittersweet chocolate, 72%–85% works great
- 14 tablespoons butter
- ¼ cup (60 mL) brewed espresso or coffee
- ¼ cup (40 g) coconut flour
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons chipotle powder
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (165°C).
2. Line the bottom of an 8- or 9-inch spring-form pan with parchment. Grease the inside walls and the parchment with butter. Take a very large piece of aluminum foil and tightly wrap the entire outside of the pan (this is to prevent water from seeping into the pan once placed in the water bath).
3. Using either a hand mixer or a KitchenAid stand mixer, beat the eggs until almost doubled in size, about 5–7 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, using either a double boiler or the microwave, melt the chocolate, butter, and espresso together (if using the microwave, use a glass bowl, and heat in 30-second intervals, removing and stirring after each interval).
5. Gently fold in a few spoonfuls of the eggs into the chocolate mixture along with the coconut flour, until few streaks of egg remain. Add about ½ the remaining eggs, folding again, then adding in the rest until combined. Mix in the vanilla, chipotle powder and cayenne until incorporated throughout.
6. Spoon batter into spring-form pan. Place this pan into a large roasting pan or Pyrex baking dish, and fill the dish halfway up the sides of the cake pan with boiling water.
7. Bake for 18–22 minutes, or until an instant read thermometer registers 140°F (60°C). Trust me, you don't want to overcook this cake!
8. Remove pan from water bath, and let sit on a rack to cool. Once it's reached room temperature, remove the sides of the spring form pan, and invert cake onto a plate so as to remove the paper/spring-form bottom.
9. Turn right side up onto a cake stand or platter.

**Variation**—*If you don't want it to have that subtle kick, ditch the cayenne and chipotle powder. Easy enough!*

**Ingredient Notes**—*I attempted this once with clarified butter. While I'd love to say that the results were great, it was kind of an oily result. The milk solids in the butter are important for the mixture, and without it (clarifying the butter removes the milk solids), it just was super oily. I did a version with half butter and half coconut oil, which turned out okay, although a bit on the oily side. If dairy is on your no-no list, you might want to skip over this recipe.*

# cool berry tart

You can serve this tasty treat nearly year round. If berries are out of season, buy the frozen kind and make do. This dessert, like most, packs a pretty potent sugar punch.

Let patience rule the day and wait until strawberries and blackberries are in season if you can. Fresh berries are so incredibly sweet you won't need to add the honey to this recipe. Stock up when they are in season and freeze them yourself. My last two batches of tarts have come from berries I froze last season.

If you happen to be in East Tennessee in the spring, we highly recommend stopping by Mayfield Farm and Nursery to discover what a real berry is supposed to taste like. My brother's berries are some of the best we have found.

## For the filling

- 1 cup (250 mL) water
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 cups (400 g) strawberries
- 2 cups (200 g) blackberries

## For the crust

- 1½ cups (225 g) almond flour
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- ¼ cup (60 mL) macadamia nut or other neutral tasting oil
- 1 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Heat water, honey, strawberries and blackberries in medium sauce pan. Crush berries with potato masher and simmer on medium heat for 15 minutes stirring occasionally. The fruit filling should reduce by a fourth.
2. While fruit is simmering preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
3. Combine almond flour, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, and nutmeg in a large bowl.
4. Mix oil, honey, and vanilla in a separate bowl and pour the wet ingredients into the dry. Mix until thoroughly combined.
5. Press the dough into a pie pan and bake for 10 minutes or until light brown.
6. Remove crust from oven and allow to cool for 5 minutes. If you time it right, your fruit filling should be done now and cooling.
7. After fruit mixture has cooled a bit, pour in crust and place in refrigerator for 1 hour before serving.

**Variations**—Consider using raspberries in place of either of your other berries. You can also try using small ramekins instead of a big pan. Just press the dough down the sides. Adding dairy in your diet? Consider whipping up a little heavy cream and put a dollop on top when you serve.

**Tips & Tricks**—Gently crushing your berries will release the juices and keep the texture intact. If you're looking for a smoother texture, then blend the mixture once reduced.

# strawberry shortcakes

Springtime in the South is a sight to be seen, and I missed it for the eight long years I lived in Los Angeles. Springtime also means super-fresh crops of strawberries—usually starting in late April or early May—and I love strawberries and could eat them by the bowl. The problem is that fresh, local strawberries are typically only available for a few short weeks around April and May. My suggestion is to buy a bunch and freeze them.

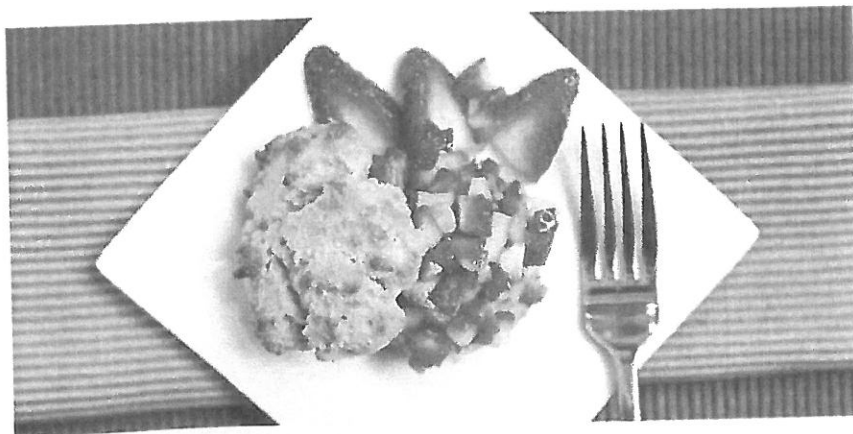
This recipe is our take on wanting to let the strawberries speak for themselves, while also doing a spin on the classic strawberry shortcake. The “cakes” here are a little bit like scones, little bit like biscuits, and definitely pretty tasty.

- 16 ounces (450 g) fresh strawberries
- 1–2 teaspoons honey (optional)
- 2 cups (300 g) blanched almond flour
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3 tablespoons cold grass-fed butter or coconut oil
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Wash, hull, and slice the strawberries as small as you desire.
2. Mix in a bowl together with honey, if desired, to somewhat macerate the strawberries.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
4. Line a sheet pan with some parchment paper.
5. In a large bowl, combine the almond flour, baking soda, and cinnamon. Using a fork or knife, cut the butter into the almond flour to form and mix, so that you’ve formed some small beads of the butter in the dough.
6. In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs, honey, and vanilla. Stir the wet ingredients into the dry.
7. Using a spoon or measuring cup, drop the dough onto the sheet pan into 8 evenly sized cakes, leaving room in between each cake.
8. Bake for 15–20 minutes until golden brown.
9. Allow cakes to cool, then slice horizontally, and spoon some of the strawberry mixture into the middle, and some extra on the side.

**Variation**—You know what I’m going to say. If you are allowing dairy into your life, whip up some fresh cream and serve it on these. You won’t be disappointed!

**Tips & Tricks**—When storing strawberries, moisture is the enemy. Don’t wash strawberries until you are ready to eat them.



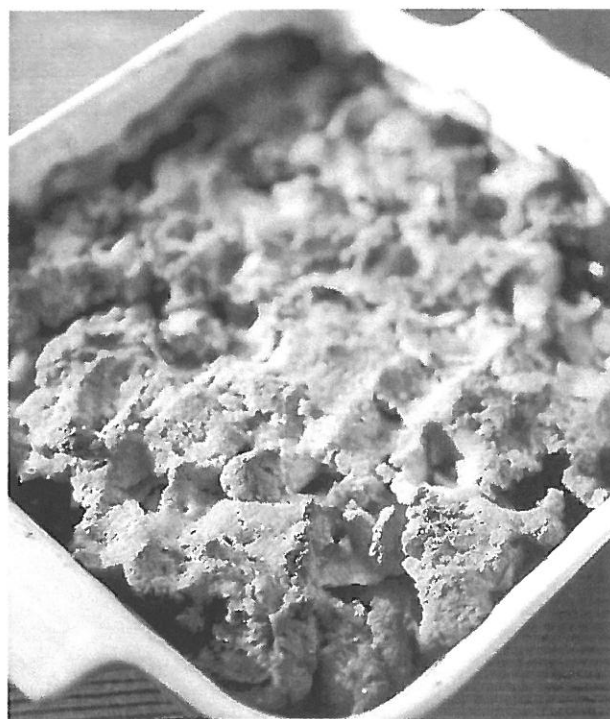
# peachberry cobbler

*Eat your heart out, Martha! We find it amusing how much sugar most recipes call for when making a cobbler. Fresh peaches, blackberries, and blueberries are naturally about the sweetest things in the world. In fact, if they are in season, why not take a trip to a local farm and pick your own? Check the Internet to find out when blackberries and/or blueberries are in season where you live. Both fruits freeze very well, so load up.*

- ½ cup (125 mL) butter
- 1 ½ cups (180g) finely chopped nuts, such as pecans or almonds
- ½ cup (75 g) coconut flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ cup (125 mL) coconut milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups (450 g) fresh peaches, peeled and cut into small pieces
- 3 cups (300 g) fresh blueberries or blackberries

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175 °C). Meanwhile, allow butter to come to room temperature to soften.
2. In large bowl, mix all dry ingredients. Mix in butter, coconut milk and vanilla and mix very well.
3. Place fruit in deep baking dish and push down until it has a flat surface. Using your fist works really well and you can lick off all the tasty sweetness when you're done. You'll want to release a few of the juices of the berries but still have them maintain their form.
4. Spread the doughy top over the entire surface of the berries and press down to flat.
5. Place in oven and bake for 60–75 minutes. Depending on the size of your dish, your crust may be a little thick and will extra need time to cook all the way through.
6. Serve piping hot.

**Variation**—*Sprinkle a little cinnamon on the berries prior to putting them in the dish.*



# apple crisp

*“Sullivan’s Apple Pie” was a family tradition at Christmas, Thanksgiving, and pretty much any other holiday. People always asked me the secret to the recipe, as it was not an overly sweet pie; rather, it was tart and tangy from the use of the Granny Smith apples (Granny Smiths were the secret). I’ve been making this pie since high school, and it always reminds me of home (and wondering which family member ate all the crisp topping, leaving the apples behind).*

*I was never really big on pie crust. Just wasn’t my thing. For me, it was always about the warm, gooey apples, and the crumb topping. This recipe pays homage to that. Baking this dessert will fill your house with some of the most amazing aromas.*

- 
- |     |  |   |
|-----|--|---|
| 1   | cup (150 g) almond flour                                 | 1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).   |
| 1   | cup (150 g) Steve’s Paleo Krunch, ground into rough meal | 2. Combine flour, Paleo Krunch, 2 teaspoons of cinnamon, and nutmeg in a bowl.  |
| 3   | teaspoons cinnamon                                       | 3. In a separate bowl, use a fork to combine coconut oil (or butter), honey (if desired) and vanilla. Mix into the flour/Krunch mixture.                                  |
| 1   | teaspoon nutmeg  | 4. Scatter apple slices in a 9 inch x 9 inch (23cm x 23cm) baking dish or similar-sized dish, and combine with lemon juice. Stir in remaining cinnamon, and combine well. |
| 1/3 | cup (80 mL) coconut oil or butter, softened              | 5. Sprinkle the almond/Krunch mixture over the apples, cover with foil, and bake for 45 minutes or until apples are soft and bubbly.                                      |
| 2   | tablespoons honey (optional)                             | 6. Remove foil, and bake 10–15 more minutes or until topping is browned.  |
| 2   | teaspoons vanilla extract                                |   |
| 5–7 | Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored and sliced            |   |
| ~   | juice of 1 lemon   |   |
- 

**Variation**—*If you are allowing dairy into your life, this crisp is absolutely sinful still warm from the oven with some fresh whipped cream on top. Pears combined with apples makes for a tasty crisp too.*

**Ingredient Notes**—*A great substitution for this recipe, if you don’t have Steve’s Paleo Krunch handy, is 1 cup (120 g) of finely chopped pecans.*



# jules' banana pudding

*Banana pudding is a staple in the South, and typically involves a vanilla cream pudding (sometimes from an instant mix), bananas, and vanilla wafers. While I could have “invented” a vanilla wafer substitute, the point here is to create something that’s reminiscent of the old conventional pudding but reframing the flavors and the dish in such a way as to enable folks to enjoy it without the health concerns (sorry all you vanilla wafer lovers out there).*

*While there is no added sugar here, I know you know that bananas are naturally very high in sugar, so again, this is a once-in-a-while treat.*

- 
- 1 can coconut milk
  - 2 large egg yolks
  - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
  - 1 tablespoon coconut oil
  - 1 tablespoon coconut butter
  - 3 really ripe bananas (almost black)
  - ½ teaspoon cinnamon

1. Whisk coconut milk, egg yolks, and vanilla together over medium heat. Stir constantly with whisk or wooden spoon until mixture starts to thicken.
2. Remove from heat.
3. In a small frying pan, heat the coconut oil and coconut butter over medium heat, and add slightly mashed bananas along with cinnamon. You’re just cooking long enough to let bananas start to caramelize somewhat.
4. Pour the coconut milk and egg mixture into a food processor or blender along with the cooked bananas, and process until smooth and creamy.
5. Empty contents into a bowl, and place a layer of plastic wrap directly on the surface. This will prevent a skin from forming.
6. Refrigerate to chill and serve topped with some sliced bananas!

---

**Variation**—*This is actually really tasty served frozen—almost like a banana ice cream.*

**Ingredient Notes**—*Using bananas that haven’t yet ripened all the way will drastically take away from the flavor of this dessert. Be sure to ask the clerk at your grocery store if they have any “extra” ripe ones in back. Most groceries don’t keep extra brown bananas on the store shelves.*

**Tips & Tricks**—*To ripen bananas quickly, place them in a paper bag with either a tomato or apple. Seal the bag shut and they should be ripe within 24 hours.*

# sweet potato pie

*Why should pumpkin get all the fame and glory when it comes to pie? Sweet potato pie is a Southern comfort staple, whereas pumpkin has much more of a national flair around the holidays. You can easily substitute out the sweet potato for pumpkin, but I for one love the flavor and texture of the sweet potatoes.*

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | Nutty Pie Crust recipe                                 | 1. Prepare pie crust as stated in Nutty Pie Crust recipe (page 114).   |
| 2 | cups (400 g) sweet potatoes, peeled, boiled and mashed | 2. Preheat oven to 400°F (205°C).  |
| 1 | tablespoon butter or coconut butter, melted            | 3. In a large bowl or food processor, mix sweet potatoes and butter. Add in eggs and mix until fluffy.   |
| 2 | large eggs   | 4. Meanwhile, in a separate bowl, combine cinnamon, nutmeg, baking soda, baking powder and salt.   |
| 1 | teaspoon cinnamon                                      | 5. Combine coconut milk, apple cider vinegar and mixture of spices to the bowl containing the sweet potatoes.  |
| ¼ | teaspoon nutmeg  | 6. Mix until fully combined. Add honey if desired.   |
| 1 | teaspoon baking soda                                   | 7. Pour contents into prepared pie crust and bake for 10 minutes at 400°F (205°C), then reduce heat to 325°F (165°C) and bake for 30 minutes or until set. |
| 1 | teaspoon baking powder                                 |  |
| ¼ | teaspoon salt  |  |
| ⅔ | cup (160 mL) coconut milk                              |  |
| 1 | teaspoon apple cider vinegar                           |  |
| ¼ | cup honey (optional)                                   |  |

**Do Ahead**—Especially if you are making this pie for Thanksgiving or some other holiday, make your crust a day or two ahead of time and keep refrigerated until ready to use. It will make your to-do list that much shorter on your actual holiday! Come to think of it, make the whole thing a day or two before serving. It just lets all those flavors meld together.



# luscious lemon squares

Lemon squares are one of those desserts that always made my teeth hurt they were so sweet. Conventional lemon squares recipes typically call for anywhere from 2–3 cups of cane or confectioner's sugar. This variation certainly won't make your teeth hurt, and they don't have nearly as much sugar, but as there is a bit of honey in this (and sugar is sugar after all), it's definitely a treat. Make this once a year for that summertime party you have to go to. It's nice to have a gluten-free dessert to share with all — one that won't mess you up for days like Cousin Betty's peanut butter gluten-bomb brownies.

- 1 cup (150 g) Steve's Original Paleo Krunch
- ¾ cup (120 g) raw almonds
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 3 teaspoons lemon zest
- 2 large eggs
- ¼ cup (60 mL) coconut oil, melted
- ¼ cup (60 mL) butter, melted
- 6 egg yolks
- ¼ cup (60 mL) honey
- ~ zest of 1 lemon
- 6 tablespoons coconut oil or clarified butter
- ½ cup (120 mL) lemon juice

## For the crust

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C) and grease a 9 inch x 9 inch (23cm x 23 cm) baking pan.
2. Combine the Paleo Krunch and almonds in a food processor and blend until a coarse meal is formed. Add in the honey, lemon zest, and eggs and pulse in processor until thoroughly mixed.
3. Empty contents of processor into the baking pan, pressing down to form a crust on the bottom of the pan, and bake for 15 minutes or until golden brown.

## For the lemon custard

1. Combine the egg yolks, honey and lemon zest in a sauce pan. Whisk until combined.
2. Add in coconut oil or butter and turn on stove to medium.
3. Add in lemon juice and continue whisking until mixture starts to thicken.
4. Remove from heat and strain mixture through fine sieve.
5. Refrigerate until cooled completely.

## To make lemon bars

1. Once crust and lemon custard have cooled completely (I suggest waiting until the next day), preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. Spread lemon custard over crust, and place in oven.
3. Bake for 10–15 minutes or until custard looks almost translucent.
4. Allow bars to cool completely, then cut into squares.

**Variation**—If you don't have Steve's Paleo Krunch, just substitute in almond or any other nut meal.

**Ingredient Notes**—Steve's Paleo Krunch is pretty awesome stuff, in that it's like granola/cereal that's paleo friendly, and it supports an awesome organization that provides programs for disadvantaged youth. We highly recommend supporting Steve's Club and getting your hands on some Paleo Kits and Paleo Krunch today. [www.stevesclub.org](http://www.stevesclub.org).



# chocolate coconut pudding

*Mmmmm, chocolate pudding. Great for those days you just aren't feeling so hot and are needing a little something comforting. This isn't your usual "out of the box" pudding, so don't go expecting it. It is, however, decadent, rich, and a sweet treat to have once in a while. We are guessing that even Bill Cosby would approve of this delicious recipe.*

- 3 tablespoons high-fat cocoa powder
- ¼ cup (40 g) arrowroot powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 can coconut milk
- 4 ounces (113 g) good-quality dark chocolate
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 large egg yolks

1. In a small bowl, combine the cocoa powder, arrowroot powder and vanilla.
2. Add about 2 tablespoons of the coconut milk to combine all and whisk out any lumps.
3. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, bring remaining coconut milk up to a low simmer.
4. Add in the dark chocolate to melt it, stirring often.
5. Mix in the arrowroot/cocoa/vanilla mixture, and whisk continuously.
6. In a small bowl, whisk the egg yolks to break them apart, stir in a little bit of the warm coconut milk mixture, then pour all the contents back into the saucepan, and return to the heat.
7. Whisk all until smooth and the mixture coats the back of a spatula.
8. Pour into small ramekins, place plastic wrap directly on the surface to prevent any skin forming, and put in refrigerator to chill.
9. Serve cold.

**Variation**—If you prefer not to use honey, puree a really ripe banana in a blender or Magic Bullet to add the desired sweetness to the pudding.

**Tips & Tricks**—Cooking the egg yolks in the pudding to a temperature of at least 160°F (72°C) will destroy any bacteria that may reside.

**Ingredient Notes**—Penzey's Spices has some amazing high-fat cocoa that really adds the decadent flavor to this. Don't skimp and use poor-quality powdered chocolate.