

edible

PIONEER VALLEY

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Member of Edible Communities

Place avocado, cocoa powder, butter, oil, sweetener, milk, vanilla, and salt in a food processor or blender and process until the mixture is completely smooth. Chill for at least an hour before serving.

Open can of coconut milk, skim off the thick solid layer of coconut cream and place it in cold mixing bowl. Save liquid for another use. Whip coconut cream with beater attachment of electric mixer until stiff peaks form, about 3 minutes. Add powdered sugar and vanilla. Beat for 30 seconds. Stop mixer and scrape sides. Beat for another 30 seconds.

Whipped cream and whipped coconut cream can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator up to 3 days.

CREAM CHEESE BROWNIES

Virginia Willis's new cookbook called *Lighten Up, Y'all* (Ten Speed Press, March 2015), she gives credit to French-trained pastry chef Claire Saffron for helping her build the recipe for these dark, rich, knock-your-socks-off chocolate brownies. Willis likes to call these "grown woman" brownies, and advises to make them for yourself and your loved ones rather than the next PTA meeting. The secret ingredients are local applesauce and buttermilk. Makes 16 (2-inch-square) brownies.

8 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese
 2 tablespoons sugar
 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
 2 large eggs, at room temperature
 1 cup (115 grams) whole-wheat pastry flour
 1/2 cup (50 grams) best-quality cocoa powder
 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt
 1/2 cup canola oil
 1 cup (170 grams) best-quality semi-sweet chocolate, finely chopped
 1/2 cup sugar
 1/2 cup low-fat buttermilk
 1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
 1/2 cup pure vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 325°. Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.

In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with paddle attachment, beat the cream cheese, 2 tablespoons sugar, and vanilla, beating until creamy and smooth. Separate 1 of the eggs, reserving the yolk and add the yolk to the cream cheese mixture. Beat to combine and set aside.

In a small bowl, whisk together the flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt; set aside.



In a medium saucepan, heat the oil and chocolate over medium heat; whisking until the chocolate is melted. Whisk in 1 cup sugar and stir until melted. Add buttermilk, applesauce, and vanilla. Remove from the heat. Add remaining whole egg and reserved egg white, whisking constantly until incorporated to prevent the eggs from curdling. Add flour mixture, mixing until just combined. Transfer brownie batter to prepared pan.

Using a tablespoon, drop 9 dollops of cream cheese mixture on top of the brownie batter. Draw the tip of a sharp knife or skewer through the two batters in a crisscross fashion to create a swirled effect.

Bake the brownies until the top is just firm to the touch, rotating halfway through baking, about 40 minutes. Let cool completely in the pan on a wire rack.

Coat a knife with nonstick cooking spray and cut brownies into 16 squares. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

FIBER-FILLED FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE TORTE

Katie Webster is a food writer, recipe developer, and photographer who focuses on seasonal, healthy eating in the Burlington, Vermont, area. She eats chocolate every single day. With this recipe, she sneaks in a cup of pitted prunes to add both moisture and fiber to this dense torte. You really only notice the chocolate. Webster blogs at HealthySeasonalRecipes.com and is working on her first cookbook: *It's about cooking sweet and savory dishes with maple syrup*. Serves 8.

1 cup pitted prunes, about 14 prunes
 1 cup boiling water, plus more for water bath
 1 cup (100 grams) best-quality cocoa powder
 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 4 large eggs
 1/2 cup sugar
 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
 3 ounces (85 grams) dark chocolate, finely chopped and melted

