#OurThanksgivingTable

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BANANA BREAD

with dates and cranberries

vegan

For 1 loaf (11 × 29 cm)

100 ml unsweetened almond, cashew or oat milk
1 tsp apple vinegar
2 tsp ground flaxseeds
3 bananas, ripe!
5 dates, pitted
125 ml vegetable oil
50 ml maple syrup
75 g Muscovado sugar or raw sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp ground nutmeg
½ tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp baking powder
225 g all-purpose flour
35 g whole grain oatmeal
75 g walnuts, coarsely chopped
35 g dried cranberries, raisins, or dried cherries
1 apple, cored but not peeled and coarsely grated
vegetable oil for greasing

1 Preheat the oven to 180 °C convection heat. Lightly oil a baking dish and line with baking paper.

2 Using a blender or an immersion blender, mix together the nut or oat milk with the vinegar, flaxseeds, bananas, dates, vegetable oil, maple syrup, sugar, and vanilla. In a large bowl, combine the salt, spices, baking soda, baking powder, flour, and oats. In a separate bowl, combine the walnuts with the dried fruits and grated apple.

3 Add the liquid mixture to the flour mixture and stir to combine. Fold in the walnut and apple mixture. Pour everything into the baking dish and bake for 35–40 minutes until golden. Leave the banana bread for 10 minutes to cool before removing from the baking dish.

Extra

I love homemade vanilla extract: easy to do and makes a great gift.

Ingredients
2 vanilla pods
250 ml vodka (or any other type of alcohol with 40 %)
1 bottle with screw cap

Cut the vanilla pods in half lengthwise and put them directly into the bottle. It is not necessary to scrape out the seeds! Now pour the alcohol into the glass, taking care that the pods are well covered. Let everything steep for a few weeks. Shake the bottle twice a week. The vanilla extract lasts forever – when vou're running low, simply top it up with alcohol and vanilla pods.

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

with walnuts and brown butter

Makes about 40 cookies (10 cm diameter)

250 g butter
150 g flour
100 g starch
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp salt
300–400 g dark chocolate, coarsely chopped
200 g walnuts, slightly broken up
175 g brown sugar (I prefer muscovado for a caramel flavour)
100 g sugar
2 eggs, cold
2 tbsp water
2 tsp vanilla extract

1 Melt the butter over medium heat for several minutes until it begins to foam. Continue to stir so the butter browns evenly. Be patient and use a saucepan with a light-coloured bottom so you can see the colour. When the butter is dark golden, transfer it to a bowl to cool for 15 minutes before use.

2 Combine the flour, baking soda, and salt. Set aside. In a small bowl, combine the chocolate and the walnuts.

3 Using a kitchen machine or hand mixer, cream the butter and the sugars together for several minutes. Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing well after each addition, then add 2 tablespoons of water and the vanilla extract. Reduce the speed to low, add the flour mixture and mix for 5–10 seconds until just combined. Using a wooden spoon or spatula, fold in the chocolate and the walnuts. (The dough may be used in batches and can be refrigerated for up to 1 week.)

4 Preheat the oven to 180 °C convection or bottom heat. Line a baking tray with baking paper and set aside.

5 Using a tablespoon, ice cream scoop or simply your hands (my preference), scoop out small mounds of dough onto the baking tray and slightly flatten them. Make sure all the cookies are the same size and leave 3–4 cm in between.
Bake for about 10–11 minutes until golden, depending on size. Transfer to a wire rack and cool for 10 minutes.
Repeat with the remaining dough or chill for baking batches the next day.

Homemade GRANOLA

vegan

Makes about 500g

150 g rolled oats (or a mixture of grains such as rolled spelt and/or quinoa flakes)
100 g walnuts
50 g coconut chips
50 g slivered almonds
1 tbsp flaxseeds
¼ tsp salt
3 tbsp maple syrup
3 tbsp coconut oil, olive oil or any other vegetable oil of your choice
50 g raw or muscovado sugar
50 g dried cherries, cranberries or raisins

1 Preheat the oven to 150 °C convection or bottom heat.
Line a baking tray with baking paper. Combine the oats, walnuts, coconut, almonds, flaxseeds, and salt.

2 In a small saucepan, gently heat the maple syrup, oil and sugar until the sugar has dissolved. Fold into the oat mixture making sure to coat everything thoroughly.

3 Spread the mixture evenly over the baking tray and bake for about 30 minutes until just dried out. Remove from the oven, stir in the dried fruits. Leave to cool.

MY TIP
For gluten-free granola, use gluten-free flakes.

For the dough
175 g flour
50 g pistachios, very finely chopped
40 g sugar
125 g butter, softened
1 egg yolk (use the egg white for the filling)
butter for greasing

For the filling
2 eggs
1 egg white
175 g sugar
½ tsp salt
½ tsp baking powder
1 tbsp grated zest of 1 organic lemon
5 tbsp lemon juice
75 g whole pistachios
icing sugar for dusting

1 Preheat the oven to 180 °C convection heat.
Lightly butter a baking dish (23 × 23 cm).

2 Mix together the flour, finely chopped pistachios and sugar.
Using a hand mixer or a kitchen machine, mix in the butter and the egg yolk. Press the dough evenly into the baking dish.
Bake for 20 minutes until golden.

3 While the crust is baking, combine the eggs, egg white, sugar, salt, baking powder, lemon zest, and juice. Whisk together for several minutes until foamy. Pour over the baked base and bake for another 15 minutes. Remove from the oven, sprinkle with the pistachios and bake for another 5 minutes.

4 Leave to cool, dust with the icing sugar and cut into slices.

PISTACHIO LEMON BARS

revival of my childhood

For a square 23 × 23 cm baking dish
Makes 12 to 25 bars, depending on size

ALMOND GRANOLA BARS

with dried fruits

vegan

For a 23 × 23 cm baking dish

150 g oatmeal
100 g quick cooking oats
50 g brown (or raw sugar)
50 g slivered almonds
½ tsp sea salt (or vanilla salt)
¼ tsp ground cinnamon
2 tbsp flaxseeds
2 tbsp chia seeds
200 g dried fruits, such as raisins, pitted prunes, and/or dried cranberries
4 dates, stoned, and finely chopped
1 apple, cored but not peeled and coarsely grated
200 g almond butter
50 ml olive oil or sunflower oil
50 ml maple syrup or rice syrup
1 tbsp water
vegetable oil for brushing

1 Preheat oven to 170 °C convection or bottom heat.
Lightly oil a square 23 × 23 cm baking dish.

2 In a large bowl, combine the oats, sugar, slivered almonds, salt, cinnamon, flax, and chia seeds. Add the dried fruits followed by the grated apple. I like to use my hands to separate the dried fruits and lightly knead all the ingredients together.

3 In a separate bowl, stir together the almond butter, oil, syrup, and water.

4 Add the liquid ingredients to the oat mixture and stir with a wooden spoon to combine well. Transfer the mixture to the baking dish, patting it down evenly with your hands.

5 Bake the almond granola bars for 30 minutes. Check their colour after 15 minutes and cover with baking paper if they are getting too dark.

6 Leave to cool, then slice.

For the base
150 g ground almonds
40 g sugar
90 g gluten-free oats (if the tarte should be gluten-free)
45 g rice flour
30 g polenta
¼ tsp salt
135 g butter, chilled
butter for greasing

For the filling
3 eggs
60 g muscovado sugar
500 g Greek yoghurt
1 tsp vanilla extract
grated zest of 1 organic lemon
2 tbsp lemon juice
a pinch of salt

1 Preheat oven to 180 °C convection or bottom heat. Lightly grease a 23 cm diameter tarte dish.

2 In a large bowl, combine the ground almonds, sugar, oats, rice flour, polenta, and salt. Add the butter in small pats and quickly work it into the mixture using your fingertips. Put the mixture into the baking dish and press down evenly. Chill for 15 minutes while you make the filling. This helps the base keep its shape while baking.

3 In a large bowl, beat together the eggs and the sugar. Beat in the Greek yoghurt, then the vanilla extract. Stir in the lemon zest, lemon juice and salt.

4 Pour the filling onto the chilled base and bake for 30 minutes until golden. Remove from the oven and leave on a rack to cool. Refrigerate for several hours before serving. This tarte is delicious served with fresh berries.

ALMONDTART

with greek yoghurt
gluten-free

Makes a 23 cm diameter tart

PECAN AND DATE SCONES

with orange zest

Makes 12–14 scones

275 g flour
75 g oats
3 tbsp raw cane sugar
2. tsp baking powder
¾ tsp salt
finely grated zest of 1 organic orange
100 g pecans, coarsely chopped
100 g dates, pitted, and chopped
1 tbsp flour
1 egg
100 ml milk, cold
150 g butter, very cold

Optional
2 tbsp milk for brushing
2 tbsp raw cane sugar for sprinkling

1 Preheat the oven to 210 °C convection or bottom heat. Line a baking tray with baking paper. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, oats, sugar, baking powder, salt and orange zest.

2 In a small bowl, combine the pecans with the dates. Dust with 1 tablespoon of flour so they don't stick together. Combine the egg with the milk.
Cut the cold butter into thin lices.

3 Work the butter into the flour mixture with your fingertips until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Do this quickly: only cold butter makes a light and flaky scone (your goal!). Now add the liquids and stir with a fork to just combine. Do not overmix! Add the pecans and dates to the mixture and lightly stir in.

4 Transfer the entire mixture onto your work surface and briefly knead. Roll out the dough about 2 cm thick. The dough will be a bit dry which is a good thing – a dry dough makes a light scone!

5 Using a glass or a dough cutter, cut out circles of about 6 cm diameter, then place them 4 cm apart onto the baking tray. Dip the cutter into flour before cutting each scone to prevent pressing the sides of the dough. If desired, brush with the milk and sprinkle with the sugar.

6 Bake the scones for about 15 minutes until golden. Cool on a rack for 10 minutes before serving. Delicious with butter, clotted cream, or simply on their own.

PECAN PIE

with chocolate and cranberries

Makes 1 pie of 23 cm diameter

For the crust
125 g cold butter
25 g vegetable shortening
180 g flour
25 g starch or wholemeal flour
½ tsp salt
1 tsp sugar
75 ml ice cold water

For the filling
100 g muscovado sugar
3 eggs
200 ml maple syrup
. tsp salt
1 tbsp vanilla extract
25 g butter, melted
100 g dark chocolate, coarsely chopped
100 g dried cranberries or cherries lightly floured (optional)
200 g pecans, left whole

1 For a light and flaky crust, cut the butter and the shortening into small pieces and chill in the fridge while you prepare the rest of the ingredients. In a large bowl, combine the dry ingredients. Blend in the cold butter and shortening with your fingertips or a pastry blender until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Add cold water and stir with a fork until a dough just forms.

2 Transfer the dough onto a lightly floured work surface and quickly knead the dough into a circle. Wrap the dough in baking paper and chill for about 2 hours (The dough will keep in the fridge for several days and in the freezer for several months.)

3 Preheat the oven to 200 °C convection or bottom heat. Have a pie or tart form of 23 cm diameter ready. On a lightly floured work surface, roll out the dough to about 2–3mm thick. Work with a little flour on your rolling pin and on your work surface to make sure it does not stick. Do not use too much flour or the crust will become stiff and dry.

4 Place the rolled-out dough into the pie dish and gently press into the sides. Trim the edges to an about 5mm overhang. With your fingertips, crimp the edges. Chill while you make the filling.

5 Make the filling. In a large bowl, whisk the brown sugar with the eggs, then stir in the syrup. Add the salt, vanilla extract, and melted butter and stir to combine.

6 Place the chopped chocolate onto the bottom of the pie dough, followed by the dried fruits, if using, and the pecans. Carefully pour the egg mixture over the pecans.

7 Bake for 10 minutes at 200 °C, then reduce the heat to 190 °C and bake for another 10 minutes. If it seems to be getting brown too quickly, cover the pie with baking paper. Reduce the heat once again to 180 °C and bake for another 14–16 minutes until golden. Leave to cool on a rack for several hours before serving.

SWEET POTATO CUPCAKES

with peanut brittle

Makes 12 cupcakes

1 large sweet potato (about 250g)
150 g all-purpose flour
50 g wholemeal flour
½ tsp baking powder
¼ tsp baking soda
¼ tsp salt
½ tsp ground cinnamon
¼ tsp ground nutmeg
100 g butter, softened
65 g muscovado sugar
2 eggs
1 tsp vanilla extract
150 ml buttermilk

For the frosting
175 g full-fat cream cheese
50 g butter, softened
200 g icing sugar

For the peanut brittle
100 g sugar
30 ml water
1 tbsp glucose syrup
90 g salted peanuts
a pinch of baking soda

1 Preheat the oven to 200 °C convection or bottom heat. Bake the unpeeled sweet potato for 30–40 minutes until soft. Pull off the skin, mash the flesh and set aside.
Lower the oven temperature to 180 °C. Prepare a muffin tin with cupcake liners.

2 In a large bowl, combine both flours with the baking powder, baking soda, salt, and the spices.

3 With a kitchen machine or hand mixer, beat the butter with the sugar. Add the eggs, vanilla extract, and buttermilk, then work in the mashed sweet potato. Beat thoroughly.

4 On a low speed (or simply by hand) quickly work in the flour and spice mixture until everything is combined. Do not overmix!

5 Using a large ice cream scoop, portion out the batter into the cupcake liners.

6 Bake the cupcakes for 25–27 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the centre of a cupcake comes out clean.

7 To make the frosting, beat all the ingredients with a kitchen machine or hand mixer on high speed for several minutes until the mixture is light and airy.
Chill for 1 hour in the fridge to firm up the frosting.

8 To make the peanut brittle, lightly grease a baking tray. In a heavy-bottomed saucepan with high sides, combine the sugar, water, and corn syrup without stirring. Heat until sugar begins to melt and turn golden. Continue to cook the caramel until the temperature reaches 148 °C. Remove from the heat, stir in the peanuts and the baking soda. Mix well with a wooden spoon and pour the brittle out onto a greased baking tray. Let cool. Break into pieces.
Finely chop some of the pieces for use as a cupcake garnish.
Store the rest in an airtight jar for future use.

9 Once the cupcakes are completely cooled, decorate them with the frosting and garnish with the peanut brittle!