

DARK CHOCOLATE MOLASSES COOKIES

(Vegan & Gluten Free, Inspired by thevegan8.com)

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 packed cup blanched almond flour (for a nut-free option, see note below)
- ¼ cup tapioca starch/flour
- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 tablespoon ground flaxseed
- ½ cup pure maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon + 1 tsp creamy peanut butter or almond butter (sunbutter for nut-free)
- 1 ½ tablespoons blackstrap molasses
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ cup dairy-free dark chocolate chips

**To make this recipe nut-free, you can use raw, unsalted sunflower kernels and grind them up in a food processor into a fine flour and use that in place of almond flour. For this option, increase the flour amount to 1¼ cups sunflower "flour", as it tends to be lighter in baking. Use sunbutter in place of the nut butter.*

METHOD:

Pre-heat an oven to 375 degrees and line a dark metal sheet pan with parchment paper. I have found that dark metal pans bake cookies much crispier on their bottoms, versus aluminum pans, where the bottoms don't seem to cook as well.

In a small bowl, add the syrup and whisk in the flaxseed well and set aside for 5 minutes to thicken. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, whisk together the almond flour (or sunflower), tapioca, baking powder, cocoa and salt together and whisk well. Stir in the chocolate chips.

Next, stir in the molasses, peanut butter and vanilla into the reserved flaxseed mixture and mix well. Pour over the flour mixture and stir for a couple of minutes until it all comes together and thickens up. It should be sticky and fairly thick. If it is on the runny side, add a touch more almond flour.

Drop by large spoonfuls onto the prepared sheet pan and slightly smooth/spread out the batter with the back of the spoon to about 2 inches wide, about ¼ inch tall. This will ensure even baking. Make sure to space each cookie 1-2 inches apart from each other, as they will spread a lot when baking. They will be large and beautiful! Bake for 8-10 minutes or until cracked on top and slightly firm. I took mine out at around 9 minutes. They will crisp up while cooling. If you prefer them a bit crispier, cook for another minute or two. Cool 10 minutes on the pan before transferring them to a cooling rack.

To make them as sandwiches, simply spread chilled peanut butter or almond butter (sunbutter for nut-free) in between 2 cookies. Keep them stored in the fridge to hold the sandwich shape best!