

## Holiday Cookies with Julie, RD

### 4 Ingredient Salted Caramel Truffles

Makes about 20 truffles

1 pound (16 ounces or about 1 1/2 cups packed)

Medjool dates, pitted

1/2 tsp sea salt + more for topping

1/4 cup natural salted peanut butter (creamy is best, but crunchy works, too)

1 heaping cup dairy-free bittersweet or dark chocolate, chopped

1. If your dates aren't sticky and super moist when squeezed, soak in hot water for 10-15 minutes to soften. Then drain thoroughly and pit. Otherwise, just pit and add to food processor.
2. Blend/pulse dates until they form a loose "dough."
3. If it's not quite combining, drizzle in a tiny bit of warm water - 1 tsp at a time - scraping down sides as needed, and mix until a rough paste or ball forms. If you add too much water it will be difficult to handle them later as they won't freeze up well.
4. Lastly, add 1/2 tsp sea salt and mix once more to incorporate. Taste and adjust salt as desired.
5. Using a small melon baller or a Tablespoon and finger, scoop out small balls and roll/form them into balls. Place on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
6. In the meantime, drizzle on peanut butter until the top is coated. If your peanut butter is super firm and not, add it to a small mixing bowl and microwave to melt (or heat in a small saucepan).
7. Freeze for 15-20 minutes, or until the peanut butter has formed a semi-firm "shell."
8. Warm the chocolate over a double boiler or in the microwave in 30 second increments.
9. Remove truffles from freezer and, using a fork, scoop truffles up and quickly immerse in chocolate. Then gently shake off excess chocolate and place back on parchment-lined baking sheet.

Top truffles with a small sprinkle of sea salt (optional).

10. Freeze to set again, about 30 minutes. Set out from the freezer or fridge to serve. For softer truffles, let come to room temperature.

### Cut-out Cookies

This recipe is the best effort to date of trying to find a workable low fat alternative to high fat pastry type cookie dough. Increasing the baking soda lightens the cookie, while decreasing it produces a chewier cookie. Sugar can be adjusted up or down as desired.

1/2 c almond meal

1/2 c whole wheat pastry flour

1 1/2 c barley flour

¼ teaspoon Salt

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 1/4 c sucanat

1/3 cup apple sauce

4 tablespoon almond milk

1. Mix the flour in a bowl with the baking soda, and the salt. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and add the maple syrup, applesauce, sucanat, and almond milk. Stir until combined.
2. Shape the dough into a flat disk and refrigerate for 1 hour. Dough can now be rolled and shaped as desired.
3. Bake for 12-14 minutes in a 325F oven.

### Cranberry Thumbprint Cookies

Cookie dough:

1 c oats

1 1/2 c almond flour

2 tbs sucanat

1 tbs maple syrup

7-8 pitted medjool dates

Filling:

1 c raisins

1 c water

2 tbs maple syrup

1 teaspoon arrow root powder

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For the cookie dough:

1. Add the dates to about 1 cup of boiling water and let stand until dates are softened
2. Blend all ingredients in a food processor until dough ball forms and ingredients are combined.
3. Place cookie dough in a mixing bowl in refrigerator until chilled, about 20 minutes.
4. Remove dough from refrigerator and spoon out by the tablespoon. Roll into balls and flatten with thumb print in center to form a well for the filling.
5. Bake cookies on a sprayed baking sheet at 350 degrees for about 20 minutes.

For the filling:

1. Place raisins and water in a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and let stand, covered, until raisins are rehydrated.
2. Place rehydrated raisin + water mixture into blender with maple syrup and arrow root powder and pulse until combined.
3. Transfer filling to a bowl and place in refrigerator until thickened, about 20 minutes.

Assemble the cookies:

1. Once cookies have baked, let cool.
2. Fill the cookies with about 1 teaspoon of filling each. If desired, return to oven to bake for about 5 minutes to set up the filling.