**Cooks-N-Books**

**February 2022**

**Blog-a-licious**

### Best Vegan Chili -rainbowplantlife.com

### INGREDIENTS

* 3 tablespoons olive oil
* 1 large yellow onion, diced
* 6 garlic cloves, chopped finely
* 2 jalapenos, diced (remove membranes for less heat)
* 2 tablespoons tomato paste
* 4 tablespoons homemade chili powder (recipe below), or store-bought ancho chili powder\*
* 1 tablespoon ground cumin
* 1 ½ teaspoons smoked paprika
* 1 tablespoon Mexican oregano (or 2 teaspoons regular oregano or marjoram)\*\*
* 3/4 cup (180 mL) dry red wine, such as Malbec, Syrah or Pinot Noir
* 2 cups (480 mL) vegetable broth
* 2 (15-ounce/425g) cans of pinto beans, drained and rinsed
* 1 (15-ounce/425g) can of navy beans (or other small white beans), drained and rinsed
* 2 tablespoons cocoa powder (I prefer Dutch process cocoa powder)
* 2 bay leaves
* 1 ½ tablespoons tamari or soy sauce if you have vegan Worcestershire sauce, you can use that
* 2 chipotle peppers in adobo, chop the peppers + measure out 1 tablespoon adobo sauce\*\*
* 1 (28-ounce/800g) can whole peeled tomatoes, crushed by hand (include juices)
* 1 ½ teaspoons kosher salt plus more as needed
* Freshly cracked black pepper to taste
* 1 tablespoon pure maple syrup, plus more to finish as needed\*\*\*
* 1 to 1 1/2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice
* 1 teaspoon red wine vinegar (or apple cider vinegar)
* 3 tablespoons masa harina (Mexican corn flour) (optional)
* 1 cup (12g) cilantro leaves and tender stems, chopped

#### Toppings of choice

* Vegan sour cream or diced avocado
* Sliced scallions or chopped cilantro
* Shredded vegan cheese or Vegan Queso
* Quick Pickled Red Onions\*\*\*\*

### INSTRUCTIONS

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* Read all the instructions and notes before getting started, especially about moderating the spiciness level.
* Heat a Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the olive oil, and once it’s shimmering, add the onions and season with a few pinches of salt. Stir frequently and cook the onions until nicely golden brown, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes. If they start to burn around the edges, stir more frequently and/or add a splash of water.
* Add the garlic, jalapeños, and tomato paste, and cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring very frequently, until tomato paste is darker in color. If it starts to dry out, add a splash of water and scrape up any browned bits.
* Stir in the chili powder, cumin, paprika, and oregano and stir vigorously for 30 seconds.
* Pour in the red wine to deglaze the pot, scraping up any browned bits. Simmer rapidly for 3 to 4 minutes, or until the smell of alcohol has cooked off and it's jammy.
* Pour in the vegetable broth, pinto beans, navy beans, cocoa powder, bay leaves, soy sauce, chopped chipotle peppers + adobo sauce, hand-crushed tomatoes + their juices, salt, black pepper to taste, and 1 tablespoon maple syrup. Stir well.
* Bring the chili to a boil over high heat, then reduce to a gentle simmer (this is lowest heat on my small burner). Take care to not boil or too rapidly simmer the chili, as it will break down the beans too much.

Cook, stirring every 10 minutes, until thick and velvety and the flavors have melded together, about 1 1/2 hours (or up to 2 hours). Discard the bay leaf.

* Stir in the masa harina, if using. Simmer for 3 minutes, until the texture has further thickened.
* Stir in 1 tablespoon lime juice, the vinegar, and cilantro. Taste and add more lime juice as needed for tanginess and add up to 1 more tablespoon maple syrup for sweetness to balance any bitterness. Season with salt and pepper, as needed.
* Serve with toppings of choice, such as pickled onions, chopped cilantro, sliced scallions, vegan sour cream, avocado, tortilla chips, etc.

### NOTES

This chili recipe is spicy, so here are ways to moderate the heat.

**Jalapeños**: remove the the seeds and membranes and/or use 1 pepper instead of 2. **Chipotle peppers in adobo**: use 1 chipotle pepper + 1 tsp adobo sauce. **Homemade chili powder**: omit the spicy chile de arbol peppers (or use just 1).

\*My **homemade chili powder recipe** is below. If using store-bought, I recommend an [ancho chili powder](https://amzn.to/2ZRbIpF)(simply ground ancho peppers, in contrast to a standard chili powder which has other seasonings and is usually less flavorful).

\***Store-bought chili powder** is not spicy, so you might want to make some adjustments: (1) you may not need as much maple syrup or lime juice to balance the flavors in step 8. (2) if you like your chili spicy(!), consider adding 3 jalapeño peppers.

\*\***Mexican oregano** (citrus, bright, floral) is most traditionally used in chili and better suited to Mexican dishes than standard/Mediterranean oregano (bitter, mint, peppery). If you don't have Mexican oregano, sub with 2 teaspoons marjoram or standard oregano.

\*\*\*Need to clarify that this is **just 2 peppers from a can of chipotle peppers in adobo sauce, not 2 whole cans** (one reader has done that before in another recipe!!). If you're looking for milder heat, use 1 pepper only and 1 teaspoon of adobo sauce.

\*\*\*\***For quick pickled onions**:

* Very thinly slice 1 medium red onion. Add to a large mason jar.
* Mix together freshly boiled water (3/4 cup or 180 mL) with 1/2 cup (120 mL) apple cider vinegar or distilled white vinegar. Add in 1 tablespoon organic cane sugar or maple syrup, stir until dissolved.
* Pour the hot liquid over the onions. Cool to room temperature, at least 30 minutes.
* You can serve now, but I prefer to refrigerate them for a more developed flavor

### Chocolate Glaze Pumpkin Pie Turnovers – athensfoods.com

###### **Ingredients**

* 4 sheets [Athens® Phyllo Dough](https://athensfoods.com/products/phyllo-dough-sheets/) (9” x 14”), thawed
* 1/2 cup pumpkin puree
* 6 tablespoons brown sugar, packed
* 1 tablespoon almond milk
* 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
* 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
* 1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
* 1/2 cup vegan butter melted
* 3/4 cup vegan chocolate chips
* 1 teaspoon coconut oil

###### **Directions**

1. Thaw one roll of phyllo, following thawing instructions on package. Preheat oven to 375ºF. Unroll and cover phyllo sheets with plastic wrap, then a slightly damp towel to prevent drying out. Stir together the pumpkin puree, brown sugar, almond milk, vanilla extract, cinnamon and pumpkin pie spice. Set the mixture aside.
2. Place 1 sheet of phyllo on work surface and lightly brush the surface with melted butter. Layer and repeat with 3 more sheets. Once you have 4 layers buttered and carefully stacked on top of each other, use a pizza cutter to divide the dough in half, lengthwise.
3. Spoon roughly 1 heaping tablespoon of filling onto the end of the dough leaving roughly a half-inch of room to the edge. Fold into a triangle. Keep folding the dough over itself to form a triangle until you get to the end of the sheets. Place the turnover on the prepared baking sheet. Repeat until you’ve used all the filling. Reroll unused sheets and follow storing instructions on package. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown.
4. Melt the chocolate and coconut oil together in a microwave-safe bowl on 50% power to prevent burning. Stop every 40 seconds to stir until smooth. Drizzle the chocolate over the turnovers and let sit at room temperature until chocolate hardens.

### Crash Hot Potatoes – The Pioneer Woman

**Ingredients**

12 whole new potatoes (or other small round potatoes)

3 tbsp. olive oil

Kosher salt, to taste

Black pepper, to taste

Rosemary (or other herbs of choice), to taste

Parmesan, finely grated

**Directions**

1. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees.
2. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add in as many potatoes as you wish to make and cook them until they are fork-tender.
3. Drizzle a sheet pan with olive oil. Place tender potatoes on the sheet pan, leaving plenty of room between each potato.
4. With a potato masher, gently press down each potato until it slightly mashes, then push the excess out of the masher back on top of the potatoes. Rotate the potato masher 90 degrees and mash again, pushing out the excess. Drizzle the tops of each crushed potato generously with more olive oil.
5. Sprinkle potatoes with kosher salt, fresh ground black pepper and fresh chopped rosemary (or chives or thyme or whatever herb you have available.) Add grated Parmesan.
6. Bake in a 450 degree oven for 20-25 minutes until golden brown and sizzling.

### French Apple Cake (not the exact recipe) Betty’s came from Milkstreet

### INGREDIENTS

### ½ cup unsalted butter + 1 tbsp (for greasing the pan)  1 cup all-purpose flour 1 tsp baking powder

### ¼ tsp ground allspice ¼ tsp salt 2 large eggs 2 large baking apples (or 3 small apples) ¾ cup sugar + 2 tbsp for sprinkling 1 tsp vanilla extract 3 tbsp dark rum (or Cognac)

### INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat your oven to 350ºF with a rack in the middle. Line 8-inch or 9-inch springform pan with parchment paper at the bottom and grease the sides with 1 tbsp of butter.

1. Melt the butter in a sauce saucepan and set aside to cool.
2. Peel and core the apples, then dice them into 1/2-inch (1.25cm) pieces.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together the all-purpose flour, baking powder, and salt.
4. In a large bowl, beat the eggs and sugar together until pale and a ribbon forms from the whisk. Whisk in the dark rum and vanilla extract. Whisk in half of the flour mixture, gently stir. Add in half of the melted butter, gently stir. Stir in the remaining flour mixture, then the rest of the butter.
5. Fold in the apples until they are evenly coated with the batter (it will look like there is too much apple and not enough batter, but this is normal).  Scrape the batter into the prepared cake pan and smooth the top a little bit, with a spatula. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons of sugar evenly on top of the batter.

Bake the cake for 45 minutes, or until a knife inserted into the center comes out clean. Let the cake cool for 15 minutes and remove it carefully from the pan.

Enjoy warm or cool. For serving (optional), dust with top of the cake with icing sugar and serve each slice with a dollop of crème fraiche on top.

### Garlic Parmesan White Bean Hummus – The Busy Baker

### Ingredients

* 4 cloves garlic
* 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese plus extra for garnish (use the real stuff!)
* 1 can white beans rinsed and drained
* zest of half a lemon
* a pinch of salt
* 1 tbsp olive oil plus 2 teaspoons of olive oil for garnish
* 3 tbsp water
* 1 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice

### Instructions

* Add the garlic, Parmesan cheese, white beans, lemon zest and salt to your food processor.
* Process on high speed until blended, stopping to scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl if necessary.
* Once the mixture is well blended, add the olive oil, the water and the lemon juice in a slow stream as the mixture continues to blend on high speed.
* Continue to blend on high speed until the mixture is smooth.
* Serve with a drizzle of olive oil (about 2 teaspoons) and some freshly grated Parmesan, and your favorite veggies and crackers for dipping!

**Guinness Brownies – The Pioneer Woman**

**Ingredients**

1 15-oz. can Irish stout beer (such as Guinness)

2 3/4 c. firmly packed brown sugar, divided

2 tbsp. freshly brewed coffee

1 tbsp. vanilla extract

3 4-oz. bars semi-sweet chocolate, chopped

3/4 c. unsalted butter

1 3/4 c. all-purpose flour, divided

1/2 tsp. plus 1 pinch salt, divided

4 large eggs, divided

8 oz. cream cheese, softened

Nonstick cooking spray

**Directions**

1. In a medium saucepan, bring the beer to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to medium, and simmer until the beer is reduced to about 3/4 cup, about 20 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in 1/4 cup brown sugar, coffee, and the vanilla. Let cool for 10 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, in a microwave-safe bowl, combine the chocolate and butter. Microwave in 30-second intervals until melted, stirring in between each interval. Stir until smooth. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, stir together 2 1/4 cups brown sugar, 1 1/2 cups of the flour, and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Add the chocolate mixture and 3/4 cup of the Guinness syrup mixture to the flour mixture, stirring until just combined. Add three eggs and one egg yolk (reserve 1 egg white); whisk to combine.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together the softened cream cheese, the remaining 1/4 cup brown sugar, and the remaining 1/4 cup flour until smooth. Whisk in the reserved egg white and 1/4 cup of the reserved Guinness syrup mixture until the cream cheese mixture is smooth.
5. Preheat the oven to 350°. Line a 13-by-9-inch baking pan with aluminum foil and spray it with nonstick cooking spray. Spread the brownie batter evenly in the pan. Spoon dollops of the cream cheese mixture, with a little space in between each spoonful, over the brownie batter. Swirl them together using a knife or toothpick to make an even layer.
6. Bake until the brownies are set and a tester comes out clean, 35 to 40 minutes.

**Heavenly Lemon Oreo Dessert -Lifeinthelofthouse.com**

### Ingredients

* 1 package (14.3 ounces) Golden Oreo cookies
* 1/2 cup salted butter, melted
* 2 packages (3.4 ounces, each) instant lemon pudding mix
* 3 ¼ cups milk
* 2 containers (8 ounces, each) Cool Whip, thawed
* 1 block (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
* 1 cup powdered sugar

### Instructions

* Crush all Oreo cookies in a food processor or crush with a rolling pin in a large ziplock bag. (They can be as thick or fine crumbs as you prefer.)

Reserve 3/4 cup of the crushed Oreos for the topping.

* Pour the remaining crumbs in a 9x13-inch baking dish; spreading out evenly. Pour the melted butter all over the crumbs. Mix together and then press this down into the bottom of the pan to create the crust.
* In a medium bowl, mix together both lemon pudding mixes and the milk. Whisk well to combine. Cover bowl and place in the fridge for 5 minutes to thicken.
* In a separate bowl, place the cream cheese inside. Blend the cream cheese until smooth. Then blend in the powdered sugar until combined. Fold in **one** container of cool whip. Spread this mixture very gently and evenly all over the Oreo crust.
* Spread the lemon pudding evenly over the cream cheese layer. Then spread the remaining container of cool whip over the top.

Sprinkle the remaining crushed Oreos all over the top.

Cover and chill in fridge for 2 hours before serving. Cut into squares and enjoy!

**Italian Sausage Tortellini – kevinandamanda.com**

**Ingredients**

* 1 tablespoon olive oil
* 2 cups diced onions
* 1 lb mild Italian sausage
* 2–3 cloves garlic, minced
* 3/4 cup chicken broth
* 1 (14.5 ounce) can petite diced tomatoes
* 1/2 cup regular or heavy cream
* 9 ounces tortellini (fresh or frozen)
* salt and pepper to taste
* 2 cups fresh baby spinach, loosely packed

**Instructions**

1. Heat olive oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium heat. When the oil is very hot, add the onions. Squeeze the sausage from the end of the link to remove it from its casing and add directly into the pan. Use a spatula to break up the sausage into bite-sized pieces. Increase heat to medium-high and cook, stirring occasionally, until the sausage is browned. Reduce heat to low, then add the garlic and stir until fragrant, about 30 seconds.
2. Add broth, tomatoes, cream, and tortellini to the skillet. Stir to combine. Increase heat and bring to a boil.
3. Cover, then reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes until tortellini are tender and heated through. Taste the sauce and add plenty of salt and pepper to taste. I used 1 teaspoon of salt and 1/2 teaspoon of pepper. Add spinach and stir until softened and wilted. Remove from heat and serve

**Lisa's Bavarian Apple Torte** – noshingwiththenolands.com

**Ingredients:**

For the Crust:

1/2 cup butter, softened

1/3 cup sugar

1/4 tsp. vanilla

1 cup flour

For the Filling:

8 oz. cream cheese, softened

1/4 cup sugar

1 large egg

1/2 tsp. vanilla

For the Topping:

1/3 cup sugar

1/2 tsp. cinnamon

4 apples peeled, cored and thinly sliced

1/4 cup sliced almonds

1. Preheat your oven to 450 degrees F.

2. For the crust, cream together the butter, sugar, and vanilla. Add the flour and beat until just combined. (do not overwork the dough or it will turn out very hard).

3. Gently press the dough into the bottom and up the side slightly of a 9” springform pan.

4. For the filling, mix the cream cheese with the sugar, then add the egg and the vanilla.  Mix to combine.

5. Evenly spread the cream cheese mixture over the crust.

6. For the topping, in a large bowl combine the apple slices with the sugar and cinnamon and toss to coat all the slices.

7. Spread the apple slices in a pretty pattern on top of the cream cheese layer.

8. Place the springform pan on a cookie sheet and bake at 450 degrees for 10 minutes.

9. Reduce the heat to 400 degrees and bake for 35-45 minutes more, or until the apples are soft. Add the sliced almonds in the last 15 minutes of baking.

10. Loosen the rim and allow the torte to cool in the pan before removing the ring. Use a knife to loosen the torte from the side of the ring.  Enjoy!!!

**Loaf Pan Buckeye Brownies – marthastewart.com**

## **Ingredients**

* 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
* 1/3 cup creamy or crunchy peanut butter, such as Jif
* 5 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided, plus more for pan
* 2 tablespoons whole milk
* 1/2 teaspoon plus a pinch of kosher salt (we use Diamond Crystal)
* 1 cup bittersweet chocolate chips, divided
* 1/2 cup granulated sugar
* 1 large egg
* 1 tablespoon Dutch-process cocoa powder
* 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
* 1/2 cup unbleached all-purpose flour

## **Directions**

* **Step 1**

Preheat oven to 350°F. Sift confectioners' sugar into a bowl. In a small, heavy saucepan, heat peanut butter, 1 tablespoon butter, milk, and pinch of salt over medium-low, stirring often, until just melted and combined. Pour over confectioners' sugar and stir to combine.

* **Step 2**

Butter a standard (8 1/2-by-4 1/2-inch) loaf pan and line with parchment, leaving a slight overhang on long sides. Melt remaining 4 tablespoons butter and 2/3 cup chocolate chips in a heat-proof bowl set over (but not in) a pot of simmering water, stirring until smooth, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from heat and add granulated sugar; whisk vigorously 1 minute. Whisk in egg vigorously until mixture is glossy, another 1 minute.

* **Step 3**

Whisk in cocoa, vanilla, and remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt. Fold in flour and remaining 1/3 cup chocolate chips. Dollop half of brownie batter into prepared pan and spread with a spoon or offset spatula to reach edges. Dollop peanut-butter mixture over top and spread in an even layer. Top with remaining brownie batter and spread to reach edges.

* **Step 4**

Bake until center is set and edges pull away from pan, about 30 minutes. Let cool completely, about 1 hour, before lifting out of pan and slicing. Brownies can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature or refrigerated up to 3 days.

## Cook's Notes

To ensure that coveted crackly top, mix the batter until it's glossy.

**Roasted cherry Tomato Crostini with White Bean Pesto** – cookieandkate.com

**Ingredients:**

For Toasts and Roasted Tomatoes:

1 whole grain baguette cut into ½ inch slices

3 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil

1 pint (2 cups) cherry/grape tomatoes

Fine sea salt/black pepper

For White Bean Pesto:

1 can cannellini beans, rinsed/drained

1 cup lightly packed fresh basil leaves

½ cup raw almonds

1 Tbsp lemon juice/maybe more

1 clove garlic-rough chopped

½ tsp sea salt

Pinch of red pepper flakes

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

¾ cup finely grated parmesan cheese

Black pepper

**Instructions:**

* 1. ***To make the toasts and roasted tomatoes:*** Preheat oven to 400 with racks in the middle and upper third of the oven. Line one large rimmed baking sheet and one small rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper for easy clean up.
  2. On the large baking sheet, brush both sides of the bread slices with olive oil. On the small baking sheet, toss the tomatoes with the remaining Tbsp olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
  3. Place the pan of toasts on the middle rack and the pan of tomatoes on the upper rack. Remove the toasts once they are nice and golden on top, 9-10 minutes. Continue roasting the tomatoes until they are juicy, tender, and collapsing on themselves, 8-9 minutes longer.
  4. ***To make the White Bean Pesto:*** In a food processor, combine the beans, basil, almonds, lemon juice, garlic, salt and pepper flakes. While running the food processor, drizzle in the olive oil and process until the mixture is smooth, pausing to scrape down the sides as necessary. Add the Parmesan and process again to blend. Taste and add more lemon juice or alt if necessary. If the mixture seems dry, add a splash of olive oil and blend again.
  5. To assemble the crostini, top each slice of toast with a generous spred of pesto and several roasted tomatoes. Sprinkle with black pepper and garnish each toast with a small basil leaf or some torn fresh basil. Crostini are best served immediately. You’ll have around 1 cup of pesto leftover, which makes a great sandwich spread or dip with pita chips.