

# BEST vineyards

winery & distillery

## Chocolate Lover's Weekend

### Candied Orange Peel

- 6 thick-skinned Valencia or Navel Oranges
- 4 ½ cups Sugar, plus extra for rolling
- 1 ½ cups Water

Score oranges into quarters, cutting only into the peel (not the fruit). Peel the skin and pith into large pieces reserving the orange for another recipe. Cut the peel into ¼" wide strips. Place the orange peels in a large saucepan with cold water to cover & bring to a boil (blanching). Pour off water. Repeat the blanching process a second time. Drain peels and set aside. In a separate pan (at least 6 qt), whisk the sugar with 1½ cups of water. Bring to a simmer and cook for 8 to 9 minutes (230 to 234°F on candy thermometer). Add the hot peels and simmer, gently reducing heat to retain a simmer. Cook until the peels get translucent, about 45 minutes. Resist the urge to stir the peels or you may introduce sugar crystals into the syrup. If necessary, swirl the pan to move the peels around. Drain the peels. Reserve the syrup for iced teas or other recipes needing a simple syrup. Roll the peels in sugar and dry on a rack for 4 to 5 hours. (Or skip rolling in sugar and dry peels on a rack. Once dry, dip in your favorite chocolate.) Store in an airtight container. Yields about 2 cups of peels.



### Peanut Butter Cookies (GF/Keto)

- 1 ½ cup peanut butter (smooth, no-stir)
- 4 TBLS unsalted butter, chopped
- 1 ½ cup Almond Flour
- ½ tsp Xanthan Gum (omit if flour blend already contains it)
- 1 tsp Baking Soda
- ¼ tsp kosher salt
- ½ cup Monk Fruit white sugar
- 2 large Eggs
- ½ cup packed Monk Fruit brown sugar
- 1 tsp Vanilla extract
- Melted Chocolate (milk, dark, semi-sweet) for dipping, if desired

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a microwave safe bowl, combine peanut butter and chopped butter. Microwave at 30 second intervals and stir until melted & smooth. In a large bowl, combine GF flour, xanthan gum, baking soda, salt, Monk Fruit white sugar & brown sugar. Whisk well to work out any lumps. Create well in center and pour melted peanut butter mixture. Add eggs & vanilla. Mix to combine. Dough will be soft & sticky. Chill for up to 10 minutes for easier handling. Using a small ice cream scoop, scoop out dough and place on cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. With wet tines on a fork, make crisscross pattern on top of each cookie. Cookies should be about ¼" thick. Bake 15-18 minutes. Allow to cool on baking sheet until set before transferring to wire rack. Cookies will be very fragile when they first come out of the oven. After cookies have cooled, dip bottoms of each cookie into the melted chocolate (remove excess, if desired) and set on parchment paper to set.



### Flourless Brownies (GF)

- 1 (15 oz) can "no salt added" black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1/3 cup butter
- 2 tsp vanilla
- ¼ cup cocoa powder
- ½ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1/8 tsp salt
- ½ cup + 2 tbsp sugar
- 3 eggs
- ½ cup chopped walnuts

Preheat oven to 350 F. Melt butter in 8-inch square baking pan. In food processor blend beans, eggs, cocoa powder, salt, vanilla, sugar and butter. Blend until smooth. Transfer to a bowl. Stir in chocolate chips and nuts; spread in prepared butter pan. Bake at 350 F for 35 minutes.

### Red Velvet Cupcakes

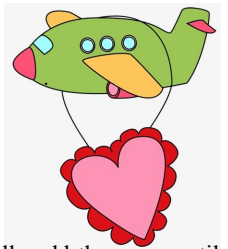
- 2 cups All Purpose Flour
- 1 teaspoon Baking Soda
- 1 teaspoon Baking Powder
- 2 cups Sugar
- 2 Eggs
- 1 cup Buttermilk
- 2 teaspoons Vanilla Extract
- 1 teaspoon White Distilled Vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Salt
- 1 tablespoon Cocoa Powder
- ½ cup plain hot coffee
- ½ cup Vegetable Oil
- ½ cup Butter
- 3 tbs Chocolate Flavoring
- 1 ½ tbs. Red Food Coloring

Preheat oven to 325°F. Line a standard cupcake pan with 24 cupcake liners. In a bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, baking powder, cocoa powder and salt; set aside. In a large bowl, combine the sugar, butter and oil. Mix in the eggs, buttermilk, vanilla and red food coloring (amount depend on depth of color desired) until combined. Stir in the coffee, chocolate flavoring and white vinegar. Combine the wet ingredients with the dry ingredients a little at a time just until combined. Fill the cupcake liners 2/3 full. Bake 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Do not over bake. Remove from pan and let cool on wire rack. Frost with cream cheese icing when cooled.

### Cream Cheese Icing

- 1 pound Cream Cheese, softened
- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 4 cups sifted Confectioner's Sugar
- 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract

Beat the cream cheese and butter together. Gradually add the sugar until incorporated. Increase the speed to high and mix until light and fluffy (about 5 minutes). Add the vanilla and mix. Store in the refrigerator until somewhat stiff, before using.



### Chocolate Snowballs (GF/Vegan)

- 1 cup butter flavored Crisco (or other butter flavored vegetable shortening)
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 cup potato starch (or arrowroot starch)
- 1 cup cornstarch
- 1 tsp xanthan gum
- ¾ cup chopped walnuts or pecans (optional)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/3 cup cocoa powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- Confectioners' sugar (powdered sugar)

In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy, 5-7 minutes. Beat in vanilla. Combine the potato starch, cornstarch, xanthan gum, cocoa and salt. Gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in walnuts, if desired. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until dough is easy to handle.

Shape into 1-in. balls; place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. (Or use small ice cream scoop.) Bake at 400° for 9-11 minutes or until set. Cool on pans for 2 minutes before removing to wire racks. Roll warm cookies in confectioners' sugar. Cool completely on wire racks. Reroll in confectioners' sugar.

### Divinity (GF)

- 2 lb granulated sugar
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar
- 4 egg whites
- 1 cup water
- a pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla



Cook sugar, syrup, water, vinegar and salt to 262 F (stir only until mixture begins to boil). Beat egg whites until stiff peaks form. Pour mixture slowly into egg whites and continue beating constantly at high speed until mixture begins to lose its gloss and is stiff enough to hold its' shape when dropped. Quickly blend in vanilla (or other flavoring). Drop by teaspoon onto wax paper. Cool completely and store in a covered container.

## Buttery Coconut Bars

### SHORTBREAD CRUST:

2 cups all-purpose flour  
½ tsp salt



1 cup packed brown sugar  
1 cup butter, melted

### FILLING:

3 large eggs, room temperature  
½ cup all-purpose flour  
¼ cup butter, melted  
1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk  
4 cups sweetened shredded coconut, divided

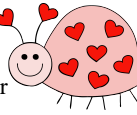
½ tsp salt  
¼ cup packed brown sugar  
3 tsp vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350°. Line a 13x9-in. baking pan with parchment, letting ends extend up sides. In a large bowl, mix flour, brown sugar and salt; stir in 1 cup melted butter. Press onto bottom of prepared pan. Bake until light brown, 12-15 minutes. Cool 10 minutes on a wire rack. Reduce oven to 325°. For filling, whisk the first seven filling ingredients until blended; stir in 3 cups coconut. Pour over crust and sprinkle with remaining coconut. Bake until light golden brown, 25-30 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Lifting with parchment, remove from pan. Cut into bars.

## German Chocolate Brownies

2 (4 oz.) bars German's Sweet Chocolate, chopped  
1 ¼ cup Butter  
½ cup firmly packed Brown Sugar  
1 tbs. Vanilla Extract  
½ teaspoon baking soda

1 cup granulated Sugar  
6 large eggs  
3 ½ cups All Purpose Flour  
¼ cup Buttermilk



Preheat oven to 350°F. Line the bottom and sides of a 13x9-inch pan with aluminum foil; lightly grease & set aside. In a medium microwave bowl, combine butter and chocolate. Microwave on high, in 30 second intervals, stirring between each until melted. In a large bowl, beat sugars, eggs, vanilla, and buttermilk till creamy. In another bowl, combine flour and baking soda. Gradually add to sugar mixture, beating until combined. Stir in chocolate mixture till combined. Spoon into prepared pan. Bake 35-40 minutes or until a toothpick comes out with a few moist crumbs. Do not over bake. Remove from pan and let cool on wire rack. Frost with Coconut Pecan Frosting when cooled completely.

## Coconut Pecan Frosting

1 cup Sugar  
3 Egg Yolks  
1 ½ cup Sweetened Flaked Coconut

1 cup Heavy Whipping Cream  
¼ cup Butter  
1 cup chopped Pecans

In a medium saucepan, whisk together sugar, cream and egg yolks. Cook over medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring frequently until mixture coats the back of a spoon. Remove from heat and whisk in butter until melted. Stir in coconut and pecans. Spread on cooled German Chocolate Brownies.

## Blk Raspberry White Chocolate Shortbread Bars

2 ¼ cup all purpose flour  
½ teaspoon salt  
1 cup unsalted butter (softened to room temperature)  
½ teaspoon almond extract  
½ cup white chocolate chips (or chopped chocolate)

1 cup sugar  
1 large egg  
¾ cup black raspberry jam  
(seedless preferred)

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line a 9 x 9 dish with aluminum foil and butter the foil. In a medium bowl, combine the flour, sugar and salt. Add the softened butter, egg, and almond extract. Combine by cutting the ingredients with a pastry blender, until crumbly. Divide the dough in half. Press half of the dough evenly into the bottom of the pan. Spread the black raspberry jam evenly over the shortbread, leaving a small boarder. Sprinkle with white chocolate chips/pieces and then crumble the remaining shortbread over the top. Bake at 350 for 35-40 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to a wire rack to cool completely before cutting.

## Strawberry Marshmallows (GF/Vegan)

### For dusting the pan:

½ cup powdered sugar (2 oz/60 grams) ½ cup cornstarch (1.75 oz/50 grams)

½ cup aquafaba, chilled (118 grams) ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar (1 gram)  
2 ½ teaspoons strawberry extract (8 grams) (or flavor of your choice)

### For syrup:

1 cup granulated sugar (7 oz/200 grams) ½ cup water (80 grams)

### For agar mixture:

4 teaspoons agar-agar powder (10 grams) ¾ cup water (180 grams)  
¼ cup granulated sugar (50 grams)

Measure all ingredients before starting. Line a 9-inch pan with parchment paper & dust it with a mixture of powdered sugar & cornstarch.

In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk the aquafaba at medium speed and add the cream of tartar until it begins to form soft peaks. (Whisking will go quicker if the aquafaba is chilled.) (about 10 minutes)

In a saucepan, combine 1 cup of granulated sugar and ½ cup of water over medium-high heat and let the mixture come to a simmer without stirring until a candy thermometer reaches 240°F (115°C). (about 10 minutes) Once the sugar syrup reaches the desired temperature, slowly drizzle it into the whipped aquafaba while continuing to whisk. Keep whisking for an additional 5-8 minutes until the aquafaba becomes glossy and stiff peaks form. Add the strawberry extract during this process.

In another saucepan, combine ¼ cup of granulated sugar, ¾ cup of water, and the agar-agar powder. Mix thoroughly. Place over medium-high heat and bring it to a boil whisking continuously for 2-3 minutes while the mixture simmers. Slowly pour the agar mixture into the whipped aquafaba, whisking constantly until the mixture is fully incorporated. Continue to whisk until the agar mixture is incorporated into the aquafaba mixture. Using a spatula, transfer the marshmallow mixture to the prepared pan, spreading it evenly. You won't get everything out, closer to about 90% out, and don't try to get it all out because it'll start to set as it hits the pan and you want to focus on smoothing that part down. If you're having difficulty spreading the marshmallow fluff into an even texture, slightly wet your hands to help you pat it down. Loosely cover the pan with a towel, allowing the marshmallow to set at room temperature for 4-6 hours. Once the marshmallow has set, dust the top with the remaining powdered sugar and cornstarch mixture, ensuring a light coating. Loosen up the edges with a dinner knife, then dust a sharp knife with your cornstarch powdered sugar mixture. Cut out 36 square marshmallows (6 rows, 6 columns) or carefully cut the marshmallow into desired shapes. If desired, roll the cut marshmallows in the sugar-cornstarch mixture, ensuring all sides are coated. Gently tap off any excess mixture. Enjoy!

Note: These are delicious and do not seem as sickly sweet as store bought marshmallows. However, these do not melt like regular "gelatin" type marshmallows.

