

# *A Holiday Baking* EXPERIMENT









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## A HOLIDAY MESSAGE FROM JOHN BERARDI, PHD

*The perfect holiday gift for Precision Nutrition's readers and clients?*

*Delicious desserts to share and savor with friends and family.*

*I recruited two of PN's amazing food experts and, just for fun, we engineered a head-to-head bake-off:*

*Jason Greci is our food photographer and an incredible recipe developer who loves rich, premium ingredients.*

*Mariane Héroux-Potter, PhD is a holistic nutritionist, researcher, and recipe developer with expertise in less processed, whole-food substitutes for traditional baking components.*

*Tarts? Yes.  
Cakes? You got it.  
Chocolate? Of course.*

*The result: five pairs of the most amazing (and lovingly created) desserts I've ever laid eyes on. Jay's using classic staples like all-purpose flour and white sugar; Mariane's using less customary ingredients like almond flour and dates. Both creating combos that blew our minds.*

*Who wins the bake off? You do!*

*Happy Holidays!*

*John Berardi, PhD*

*Co-founder, Precision Nutrition*

JASON'S

# *Banana Chocolate* **BREAD PUDDING**

*with* **CASHEW  
CUSTARD**



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## INGREDIENTS

### **Bread pudding**

*2 cups whipping cream*

*5 large extremely ripe bananas (almost brown)*

*splash of vanilla extract*

*1 tsp cinnamon*

*1½ loaves panettone (Italian sweet bread), ripped into chunks and dried for a few days*

### **Custard**

*6 egg yolks*

*1 cup white sugar*

*1 heaping tbsp cornstarch*

*3 heaping tbsp cashew butter*

*3 cups whole milk*

### **Garnish**

*1 handful of chocolate chunks or chips*

*dark chocolate bar,*

*broken up into pieces*

*(optional but delicious)*

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## DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 325°F.

Set aside a 12" x 12" baking dish.

### **Bread pudding**

In a stand mixer or a food processor, blend whipping cream, bananas, vanilla extract, and cinnamon into a loose liquid.

Arrange the panettone in the baking dish. Pour the banana cream mixture on top, pressing with your hands to help the bread soak up all the liquid. Place the baking dish in refrigerator.

### **Custard**

Combine egg yolks, sugar, and cornstarch in a saucepan and whisk slowly. Add the milk and stir until well combined. Place over medium-low heat and whisk slowly and continuously for at least 5 minutes, until the mixture begins to thicken.

Once the custard thickens slightly, mix in the cashew butter. Whisk for about 30 seconds more and remove from heat.

### **Assembly**

Remove the baking dish from the refrigerator. Pour about half of the cashew custard over the panettone, letting it settle between the bread pieces. Place the remaining custard in the refrigerator and allow it to cool completely.

Sprinkle the chocolate chunks evenly over the bread pudding and bake in the preheated oven for about 45 minutes. Allow the dish to cool slightly, until warm to the touch.

To serve: Using a large spoon, scoop out a portion of the pudding and place it on a plate. Serve alongside a big scoop of cooled custard.

*Note: If you're making the pudding in advance, simply reheat the whole baking dish in the oven at 175°F until warm to the touch.*





MARIANE'S

# BANANA CHOCOLATE

— BREAD PUDDING —



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## DIRECTIONS

### **Banana Bread**

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 9"x5" rectangular loaf pan with coconut oil.

Put the bananas, rice flour, maple syrup, cinnamon, and applesauce into a food processor or high-power blender. Blend until very smooth. Add the eggs. Blend until the batter expands or fluffs (1-2 minutes).

Pour the batter in the prepared pan. Bake in the preheated oven for 1 hour 25 minutes or until the top is lightly browned and toothpick comes out clean.

Let cool in refrigerator for 3-4 hours. Once cool, remove the bread from the pan, slice, and cut into 1-2" squares. Place back in refrigerator until ready to assemble.

### **Pudding**

Put the bananas, cashew butter, eggs, maple syrup, cashew milk, cornstarch, and cocoa powder in a food processor or blender. Blend until very smooth and fluffy.

### **Assembly**

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Grease a 9"x14" rectangular baking dish with coconut oil. Transfer the bread cubes to the baking dish, spreading them out evenly.

Pour the pudding over the bread cubes, distributing evenly. Sprinkle dark chocolate pieces over the batter.

Bake in preheated oven for 40 minutes. Let cool slightly before serving.

Store leftovers in refrigerator.

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## INGREDIENTS

### **Banana Bread**

*7 ripe bananas*

*2 cups rice flour*

*½ cup maple syrup*

*½ tbsp cinnamon*

*1 cup unsweetened applesauce*

*4 eggs*

### **Pudding**

*5 bananas*

*1 cup cashew butter*

*4 eggs*

*1 cup maple syrup*

*1 cup cashew milk*

*2 tbsp cornstarch*

*¼ cup cocoa powder*

### **Garnish**

*½ cup high-quality 70% dark chocolate, broken into pieces (optional but delicious)*



JASON'S



PEAR WALNUT MAPLE  
*Custard Tart*





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## DIRECTIONS

### **Crust**

Put flour, salt, semolina, icing sugar, and butter in a food processor and pulse quickly until the mixture resembles medium-sized breadcrumbs. Add egg and milk or water. Pulse until a dough forms.

On a large sheet of parchment paper, form the dough into a ball. Flatten slightly and wrap in plastic. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter and flour two 8" tart pans with removable bottoms, tapping out excess flour.

Lay out a large piece of parchment paper and dust it with flour. Remove dough from the refrigerator, cut in half, and roll one piece to about 9 inches in diameter. Carefully flip the dough into the first prepared tart pan, pressing it tightly around the pan's bottom and sides and removing any excess dough.

Repeat for the second tart.

Cover the dough in the bottom of the tart pans with dried beans. Bake for 15 minutes.

Remove the crusts from the oven and allow to cool. Remove beans.

### **Filling**

Place pears in a mixing bowl and toss with lemon juice. Set aside.

In a bowl, whisk ½ cup of the maple syrup, the whole egg, and the egg yolks. Set maple syrup mixture aside.

Combine whipping cream and milk in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Immediately remove from heat. Allow the cream mixture to cool for a minute.

Add a large splash of the cream mixture to the maple syrup mixture and whisk quickly to temper. Repeat until the two mixtures are completely combined.

Place the mixture in a saucepan over medium-low heat. Whisk until it begins to thicken into a custard. Immediately remove and strain the custard through a mesh sieve into a large mixing bowl.

In a clean saucepan, combine the remaining ¾ cup of maple syrup, pear slices (lemon juice discarded), and walnuts over medium heat, bringing it to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes, flipping the pears once.

### **Assembly**

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Coat the bottom of each tart crust with custard, then assemble pear slices in a single layer. Sprinkle the maple syrup and walnuts on top.

Place the tarts on a cookie sheet and bake for 15-20 minutes, or until the walnuts begin to brown. Remove and let cool.

Once cooled, place in the refrigerator overnight.

Serve chilled.

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## INGREDIENTS

### **Crust**

*1½ cups all-purpose flour,  
plus more for dusting*

*pinch of salt*

*¼ cup semolina*

*½ cup icing sugar*

*½ cup butter (cold)*

*1 egg*

*splash of cold water  
or milk*

### **Filling**

*2 ripe pears,  
sliced into 1" pieces*

*juice from ½ lemon*

*¼ cups pure maple  
syrup, divided*

*1 whole egg*

*3 egg yolks*

*½ cups whipping cream*

*½ cup whole milk*

*¼ cups walnut pieces*



MARIANE'S

*Pear*  
**WALNUT**  
**PIE**





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## INGREDIENTS

### **Crust**

*1 cup walnuts*

*1 egg*

*2 cups oat flour*

*½ cup maple syrup*

*½ tsp cinnamon*

### **Filling**

*7 Bosc pears, cored and  
diced into 2-3" pieces  
(including skin)*

*1 cup walnuts*

*½ cup maple syrup*

*2 tsp cinnamon*

*5 tbsp cornstarch*

*½ cup coconut sugar*

### **Garnish**

*½ cup walnut halves  
(optional)*

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## DIRECTIONS

### **Crust**

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9" pie dish with coconut oil.

Put walnuts, egg, oat flour, maple syrup, and cinnamon in a food processor or high-power blender and blend until smooth. The product should resemble cookie dough (softer than your average pie dough).

Transfer the dough to the pie dish and use your fingers or the back of the spoon to spread it evenly along the bottom and up the sides of the dish.

Bake in the preheated oven for 15-20 minutes, until lightly browned.

Set aside.

### **Filling**

Put the pear pieces in a large microwave-safe bowl and microwave on high for 10-12 minutes or until pears are soft when poked with fork.

Meanwhile, put the walnuts, maple syrup, and cinnamon in a food processor or high-power blender and blend until smooth. Set the walnut mixture aside.

Put the cornstarch in a mug and slowly drizzle cold water on top until the cornstarch is just covered. Stir until the cornstarch is completely dissolved.

Put the walnut mixture, pears, coconut sugar, and cornstarch mixture in a large pot over medium-high heat, stirring continuously for about 10 minutes until the mixture begins to boil. Keep boiling and stirring for another 1-2 minutes until the mixture darkens and thickens. Pour the mixture over the pie crust, smoothing it out evenly with the back of a spoon.

Garnish the top of the pie with walnut halves if desired.

Refrigerate overnight to allow the pie to set and the flavors to intensify.

Store leftovers in the refrigerator.



PANETTONE  
*Coconut Raspberry*  
TRIFLE



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## INGREDIENTS

### **Custard**

8 egg yolks

1½ cups sugar

¼ cup white all purpose flour

1 vanilla bean, seeds scraped

3 13.5 oz cans of coconut milk

1 cap full of coconut extract

### **Jam**

6 cups frozen raspberries

2 cups of honey

zest from 1 orange

### **Cake**

1 loaf panettone bread, ripped into chunks and divided

large handful unsweetened coconut flake

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## DIRECTIONS

### **Custard**

In a saucepan, mix the egg yolks, sugar, and flour until well combined. The texture should be thick and clumpy. Add the vanilla bean seeds and pod and the coconut milk, and whisk the mixture to combine. Place saucepan over medium heat and continue whisking until a thick custard forms. Continuous whisking is very important to prevent the mixture from burning. Add the coconut extract and whisk again until completely combined.

Discard the vanilla bean pod and pour the custard into a large bowl. Allow it to cool to just warm, then cover with plastic wrap and put the bowl in the refrigerator.

### **Jam**

Put the frozen raspberries and honey in a large pot over medium heat and bring them to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and skim off any foam from the top. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until the jam thickens (45-60 minutes). Mix in the orange zest and remove from heat. Using a rubber spatula, transfer the jam to a bowl and allow it to cool to room temperature. Place it in the refrigerator to allow the jam to set.

### **Assembly**

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Arrange about a quarter of the panettone chunks and the coconut flakes on a baking sheet and toast in the oven until just slightly brown. Don't burn them! Set them aside to cool.

Arrange a portion of the remaining panettone in a layer on the bottom of the trifle dish. Add a layer of custard, followed by a layer of jam. Repeat the layers until dish is filled to the top, reserving a small amount of custard.

Cover the top layer of the trifle with toasted Panettone and coconut. Fill any spaces with more custard.

Cool in the refrigerator. Before serving, let the trifle sit at room temperature for about 20 minutes.



MARIANE'S



*Coconut*  
**CUSTARD**  
**RASPBERRY TRIFLE**





## DIRECTIONS

### Cake

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 9"x5" loaf pan with coconut oil.

Put the butter beans, almond meal, oat flour, vanilla extract, maple syrup, banana, water, and desiccated coconut in a food processor or high-power blender and blend until smooth. Add the eggs and blend until smooth and fluffy. Transfer the batter to the loaf pan, using the back of a spoon to distribute it evenly.

Bake for 1 hour 15 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Place cake in the refrigerator and let cool for about an hour, then gently pass a knife between the cake and the pan to unstick. Turn the cake onto a cutting board in one piece.

Cut the cake into 1" squares. Put the squares in a large bowl and place in the refrigerator overnight.

### Custard

Put the mango, bananas, coconut milk, coconut sugar, desiccated coconut, and nut butter in a food processor or high-power blender and blend until very smooth.

Put the cornstarch in a mug and slowly drizzle cold water on top until the cornstarch is just covered. Stir until the cornstarch is completely dissolved.

Put the contents of food processor and mug in a large saucepan, stirring continuously until the mixture starts to boil, darken, and thicken, about 1 minute. Set the pot aside.

### Jam

Put the cornstarch in a mug and slowly drizzle cold water on top until the cornstarch is just covered. Stir until the cornstarch is completely dissolved.

Put the raspberries, coconut sugar, applesauce, orange juice, and cornstarch mixture in a large saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring continuously for about 10 minutes until the mixture begins to boil. Keep boiling and stirring for another 1-2 minutes until the mixture darkens and thickens. Set the pot aside.

### Assembly

Take out 4-5 glass bowls, 6-8 clear glasses, or 1 large clear bowl.

Place a layer of bread squares in the bottom of each bowl. Ladle a layer of custard over the bread squares, evenly distributing it with the back of spoon.

Ladle a layer of jam over the custard, evenly distributing it with the back of spoon. Repeat the layers until all the ingredients are used up.

Cool in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours, then serve.

## INGREDIENTS

### Cake

1 14 oz can butter  
beans, rinsed well

2 cups almond meal

1 cup oat flour

½ tsp vanilla extract

1 cup maple syrup

1 banana

½ cup water

⅔ cup unsweetened  
desiccated coconut

4 eggs

### Custard

1 mango, peeled and  
pitted

2 bananas

1 13.5 oz can full-fat  
coconut milk

1 cup coconut sugar

1 cup unsweetened  
desiccated coconut

1 cup Nuts to You  
Rainforest Nut Butter  
with Coconut or  
cashew butter

5 tbsp cornstarch

### Jam

4 tbsp cornstarch

6 cups fresh raspberries  
(or frozen, thawed)

1 cup coconut sugar

1½ cups unsweetened  
applesauce

juice of 1 orange

JASON'S

ALMOND  
RICOTTA  
*Cheesecake*

*with*

ORANGE  
SOUR  
CHERRY  
TOPPING





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## DIRECTIONS

### **Crust**

Preheat oven to 325°F. Position the rack in the middle of the oven.

Lightly grease a 9" springform pan with butter. Lightly dust with flour.

Put the almonds, flour, sugar and salt in a food processor and pulse until the mixture becomes gritty.

Melt the butter and vanilla in the microwave; let cool.

In a small bowl, whisk the butter mixture and egg yolk. Add it to the food processor and pulse until a moist dough forms.

Press the dough into the bottom and sides of the prepared springform pan. Refrigerate for 15 minutes.

Bake for about 15 minutes, until golden brown. Cool completely.

### **Filling**

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Using a hand mixer or stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, mix the cream cheese, sugar, and salt for 1 minute. Add the honey and mix for 30 seconds. Add the ricotta and mix until well combined. Add the cornstarch and mix.

Beat in the eggs one at a time, followed by the vanilla seeds. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl and refrigerate.

Using a hand mixer or stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, whip the whipping cream until fluffy. Using a rubber spatula, fold the whipped cream into the ricotta mixture to create the filling.

Pour the filling into the cooled crust and spread evenly.

Bake for 1 hour 15 minutes (the cake will not look completely set -- that's ok). Cool to room temperature on a wire rack, then refrigerate overnight.

### **Topping**

Put the cherry juice and 1 cup of honey in a saucepan over high heat and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until the mixture thickens slightly, about 30 minutes, skimming and discarding any foam that forms.

Add the cherries, ¼ cup of honey, and orange zest, and simmer for about 10 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and cool, then refrigerate until ready to serve.

### **Assembly**

Gently run a thin knife between the cake and the side of the springform pan, then remove the pan's siding. Move the cake to a cake stand and top with the cherry topping.

Store leftovers in the refrigerator.

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## INGREDIENTS

### **Crust**

*¾ cup whole almonds, roasted at 350°F for 15 minutes*

*¼ cup all-purpose flour*

*2 tbsp white sugar*

*pinch of salt*

*3 tbsp butter, plus more for greasing*

*splash of vanilla extract*

*1 egg yolk*

### **Cheesecake**

*1 block regular cream cheese*

*½ cup white sugar  
pinch of salt*

*½ cup honey*

*4 cups full-fat ricotta cheese*

*1 heaping tbsp cornstarch*

*3 eggs*

*seeds from 1 vanilla bean (pod discarded)*

*1 cup whipping cream*

### **Topping**

*2 cups juice from jars of sour cherries in light syrup*

*4 cups jarred pitted sour*

*cherries in light syrup, (strained)*

*¼ cup honey, divided*

*zest of ½ an orange*

MARIANE'S

*Orange Cake*  
*with*  
**ALMOND CRUST**  
*and* **CHERRY TOPPING**





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## INGREDIENTS

### **Crust**

*2 cups almonds*

*20 medjool dates, pitted*

*½ cup oat flour*

*½ cup water*

*1 egg*

### **Cake**

*1 orange*

*1⅔ cups cashew butter*

*⅔ cup maple syrup*

*juice of 1 lemon*

*4 eggs*

### **Topping**

*2 tbsp cornstarch*

*2¾ cups fresh pitted  
cherry halves  
(or frozen, thawed)*

*½ cup applesauce*

*½ cup maple syrup*

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## DIRECTIONS

### **Crust**

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9" springform pan with coconut oil.

Put the almonds, dates, oat flour, water, and egg in a food processor or high-power blender and blend until almost smooth. Transfer the dough to the prepared pan and distribute it on the bottom evenly. Set aside.

### **Cake**

Fill a large saucepan with water and place over high heat. Put the orange in the water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat slightly and boil for 20 minutes. Remove the orange and allow to cool for 10 minutes.

Cut the orange in quarters, disposing the hard stem. Put the orange quarters in a food processor or high-power blender (peel and all). Add the cashew butter, maple syrup, and lemon juice, and blend for 2-3 minutes until smooth. Add the eggs and blend for another 1-2 minutes. Pour the mixture over the crust and smooth it out evenly.

Bake for 50-55 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. While the cake is baking, prepare the topping.

### **Topping**

Put the cornstarch in a mug and slowly drizzle cold water on top until the cornstarch is just covered. Stir until the cornstarch is completely dissolved.

Put the cherries, applesauce, maple syrup, and cornstarch mixture in a large saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring continuously for 5-8 minutes until the mixture begins to boil. Keep boiling and stirring for another 2-3 minutes until the mixture darkens and thickens.

Remove from heat and set aside.

### **Assembly**

Once the cake is done baking, pour the cherry topping on it and spread it evenly. Place the cake in the refrigerator overnight.

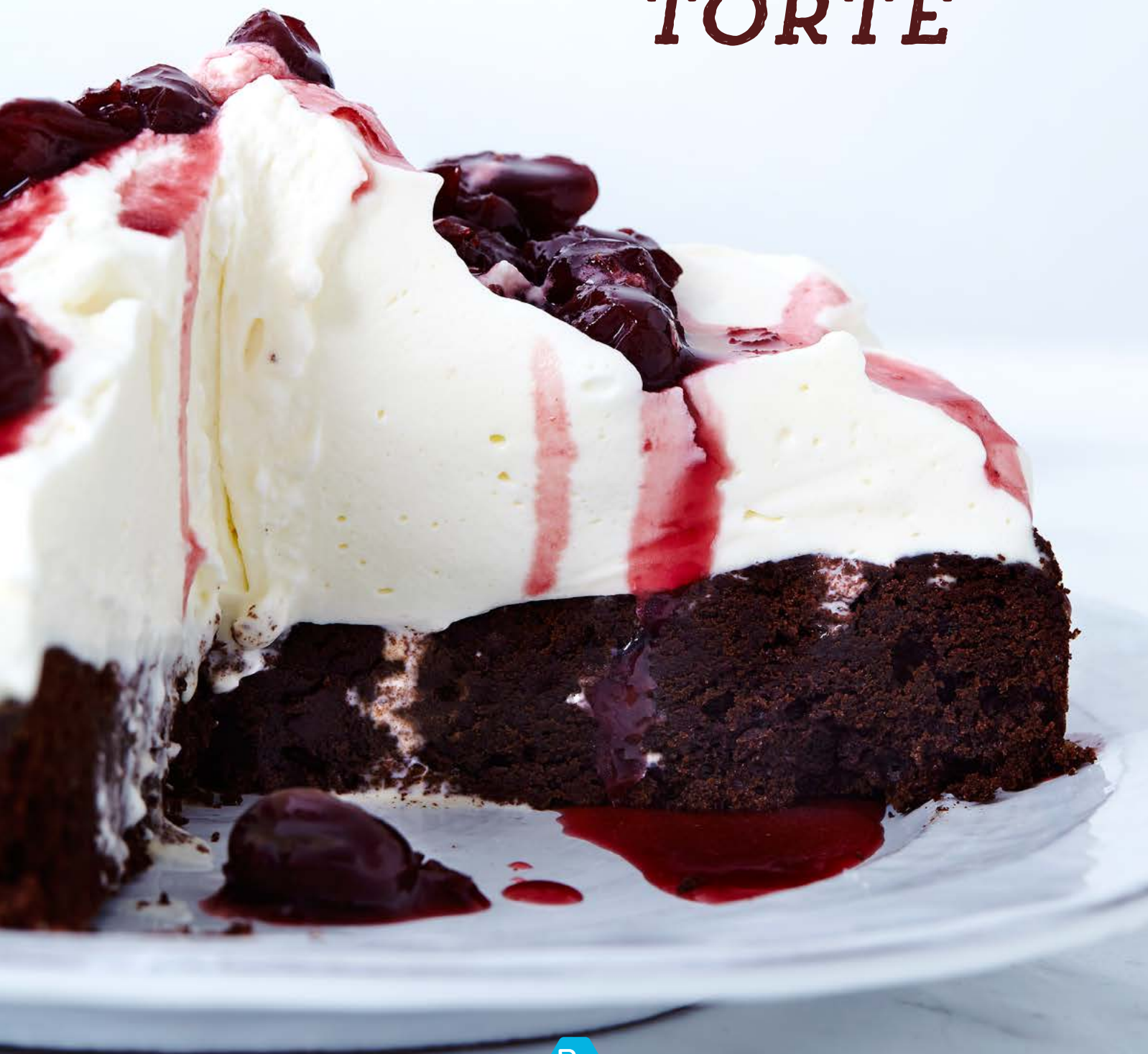
Remove the sides of the springform pan and serve.

Store leftovers in refrigerator.



JASON'S

# *Flourless* **CHOCOLATE** **TORTE**





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## INGREDIENTS

### **Cake**

*¾ cup butter*

*4 oz unsweetened  
dark chocolate*

*4 oz bittersweet chocolate*

*6 eggs, separated*

*1 cup old fashioned  
brown sugar*

*1 oz amaretto*

*3 egg whites at  
room temperature*

*pinch of salt*

*6 cups whipping cream*

*2 tbsp white sugar*

### **Topping (optional but delicious)**

*1 cup jarred pitted  
sour cherries*

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## DIRECTIONS

### **Cake**

Preheat the oven to 350°F and place a rack in the center of the oven.

Grease and flour a 9" springform pan, tapping out the excess flour.

Fill a large pot with a few inches of water and bring to a simmer.

Put the butter, dark chocolate, and bittersweet chocolate in a large mixing bowl, then place the bowl on the pot on the stove.

Continuously stir the mixture to prevent from burning. When completely melted, remove the bowl from heat. Allow the chocolate mixture to cool slightly.

In a stand mixer, beat the egg yolks and brown sugar until thick and pale yellow. Beat in the amaretto. Then, fold the egg mixture into the cooled chocolate and butter mixture. Set aside.

Put the egg whites and salt in a clean, dry stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment and whisk on high speed until the mixture forms soft peaks.

Fold the egg whites into the chocolate mixture, and pour into the prepared pan. Bake for 45 minutes or until the top is puffed, raised, and cracked. Remove from the oven and allow to cool.

Run a sharp paring knife along the perimeter of the pan to loosen the cake. Carefully remove the springform sides and the bottom of the pan, placing the cake on a serving plate. Allow the cake to cool completely. Note: this cake will sink a little and crack; this is normal.

Put the whipping cream and sugar in a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment and whisk on medium-high until fluffy. Distribute evenly on top of the cake and top with the sour cherries. Serve.

Store leftovers in refrigerator.

MARIANE'S



FLOURLESS  
*Chocolate*  
CAKE





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## INGREDIENTS

### **Cake**

*1 19 oz can chickpeas,  
rinsed well*

*1 cup herbal chocolate  
mint tea, brewed with 3  
tea bags for duration  
indicated on box*

*20 medjool dates, pitted*

*2 cups almond meal*

*½ cup cocoa powder*

*½ cup maple syrup*

*¼ cup almond butter*

*¼ cup cashew butter*

*4 eggs*

### **Icing**

*1 cup herbal chocolate  
mint tea brewed with  
3 tea bags for duration  
indicated on box*

*24 medjool dates, pitted*

*½ cup almond butter*

*½ cup cashew butter*

*½ cup cocoa powder*

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## DIRECTIONS

### **Cake**

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease two round 8" cake pans with coconut oil.

Put the chickpeas, tea, dates, almond meal, cocoa powder, maple syrup, almond butter, and cashew butter in a large food processor or high-power blender and blend until very smooth. Add eggs. Blend again until smooth and fluffy.

Divide the batter between the two prepared pans, smoothing it evenly with the back of spoon. Bake for 45 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean.

### **Icing**

Put the tea, dates, almond butter, cashew butter, and cocoa powder in a food processor or high-power blender and blend until very smooth. Transfer to a bowl and let it sit until cake is ready to ice.

### **Assembly**

Once the cake is baked, let it cool for 10-15 minutes. Gently remove one cake from its pan and place it on a large plate or cake platter. Spread a thin layer of icing evenly on top. Gently remove the second cake from its pan and place on top of the first cake. Spread the remaining icing on the top and sides of the layer cake.

Cool the cake in the refrigerator for 2-3 hours before serving.

Store leftovers in the refrigerator.

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## ABOUT US

Precision Nutrition is the largest private nutrition coaching company in the world. Over the last 12 years, through our [Men's](#) and [Women's](#) programs, our elite coaches have helped 35,000 men and women lose over 450,000 pounds of body fat and lead healthier lives.

We coach by listening to our clients' needs and what they want to accomplish, learning how they live, discovering what's really important to them, and working together to create the right nutrition and exercise approach based on their goals and lifestyle.

Then we guide them through the process, helping with the inevitable roadblocks along the way to success.

Read [Precision Nutrition's story](#) to learn more.

For more Precision Nutrition recipes, check out [Gourmet Nutrition: The Cookbook for the Fit Food Lover](#).



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