



SWEET AND LOW

There's no finer way to finish a meal than with a delicious dessert. Try these recipes from Healthy Chef **Teresa Cutter** and indulge without fear of the bulge.

I love giving classic desserts healthy makeovers. It's common knowledge that cakes, puddings and so on are loaded with saturated fats, sugar and salt, all of which can wreak havoc on blood sugar levels and contribute to weight gain. But there are many ways to make satisfying sweet treats that are wholesome too.

The secret to making delicious and healthy desserts comes down to two key factors: the ingredients you choose and how you cook them.

I like to reduce saturated fats by substituting butter for anti-inflammatory oils such as macadamia or light olive oil. You can easily reduce refined sugars by halving the amount called for, or using natural sweeteners from fruit. Spices such as cinnamon, nutmeg, orange zest and vanilla bean enhance other flavours in much the same way as salt does.

When baking, be adventurous and get out of the habit of using plain or self-raising white flour. Highly refined products such as this can contribute to high insulin levels.

Swap white flour for a delicious wholegrain flour such as spelt, quinoa, oats, linseed or buckwheat. My favourite flour for baking is almond meal (ground almonds) – because it so sweet and moist, you don't need to add much sugar or fat, plus it has the added benefit of being high in protein and gluten-free. I also increase the nutrient profile by adding fruit for extra fibre, vitamins and sweetness.

Here are some of my favourite warm dessert recipes that I hope you enjoy as much as I do.



BERRY
CLAFOUTIS

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Berry clafoutis

500g frozen berries such as blueberries, raspberries or a mixture
4 free-range/organic eggs
250g thick natural yoghurt or ricotta, plus extra to serve
¼ cup honey
150g almond meal
1 tsp vanilla
Zest of 1 orange
Handful flaked almonds or chopped pistachios
Icing sugar, for dusting (optional)

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C (160°C fan).
- 2 Place berries in a 25cm tart dish or 6x oven-proof ramekins.
- 3 Combine eggs, yoghurt, honey, vanilla, almond meal and orange zest until smooth using a whisk or food processor. Pour yoghurt mixture over berries and sprinkle with nuts. Bake 30-40mins or until golden and set. Dust with icing sugar, if desired, and serve with yoghurt on the side. **Serves 6**

Roasted rhubarb with raspberry & vanilla

8 stalks rhubarb, washed, trimmed and thickly sliced
¼ cup honey
1 tsp vanilla bean paste
Juice of 1 orange
150g raspberries
Thick natural yoghurt, to serve

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C (160°C fan). Place rhubarb slices in a large oven-proof baking dish in a single layer; do not overcrowd. Add honey, vanilla and orange juice and mix through. Bake for 30-35mins or until soft.
- 2 Remove rhubarb from oven and gently mix raspberries through. Allow to cool slightly then serve with yoghurt. **Serves 4**

Tarte tatin

8 small sweet apples such as golden delicious, peeled, quartered and cored
Juice of ½ lemon
2 tsp macadamia nut oil
¼ cup honey
1 tsp vanilla extract
Thick natural yoghurt, to serve
Pastry
200g almond meal

50g walnuts, chopped
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 free-range/organic egg
1½ tbsp honey
30ml macadamia oil

- 1 To make pastry, place all ingredients in a bowl. Using your hands, mix to combine, then knead lightly until a soft dough forms. Shape into a disc, wrap with plastic wrap and chill for at least 1hr.
- 2 Preheat oven to 180°C (160°C fan). Place apple quarters in a bowl and toss with lemon juice. Set aside.

- 3 Gently heat oil and honey together in a large heavy-based frypan for 2-3mins. Add vanilla; arrange apple in frypan, rounded side down, packing tightly. Cook over medium heat for 20mins without disturbing.
- 4 Meanwhile, roll pastry between 2 sheets of baking paper into a 5mm-thick circle slightly larger than frypan. Lay dough over apples, tucking in edges, then bake 30mins or until golden. Allow to stand 5mins before inverting onto a plate. Serve warm with a dollop of thick natural yoghurt. **Serves 6-8**

Banana & coconut loaf

300g (about 3) bananas, smashed
¼ cup honey
50ml macadamia oil, plus extra for greasing
½ tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp gluten-free baking powder
150g almond meal, plus extra for coating
150g desiccated coconut
Ricotta, thick natural yoghurt or coconut cream, to serve

- 1 Preheat to 160°C (140°C fan). Grease a loaf tin with a little oil and coat liberally with extra almond meal, making sure there is a good layer on base of tin.
- 2 In a bowl, combine banana, honey, oil, cinnamon and baking powder. Add almond meal and coconut and mix well. Spoon batter into tin and smooth top. Bake for 45mins-1hr (a skewer inserted in centre should come out clean; top should be dry, firm and golden). Remove from oven and allow to cool for 10mins before turning out.
- 3 Serve warm or toasted with ricotta, yoghurt or coconut cream. Store in fridge for up to 1 week. **Makes 1 loaf**

H&G



Baked chocolate custard

4 free-range/organic eggs
60g honey or raw sugar
2 cups (500ml) milk
1 tsp vanilla bean paste
100g dark chocolate, chopped finely, plus extra to serve (optional)
Pinch nutmeg (optional)
Crème fraîche, to serve (optional)

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C (160°C fan).
- 2 In a bowl, whisk eggs and sugar until creamy. Set aside.
- 3 In a small saucepan, heat milk and vanilla until scalded but not boiling; remove from heat. Add chocolate and stir until melted and smooth.
- 4 Pour chocolate mixture into egg mixture and stir to combine. Add nutmeg if desired.
- 5 Pour into oven-proof ramekins and place ramekins in a baking dish. Fill baking dish with water to halfway up sides of ramekins. Bake for 20mins or until set. Serve warm or cold. **Serves 4**

Photography by Ian Hofstetter/acpsyndication.com (this page), Rob Shaw/acpsyndication.com (opposite). All recipes have been double-tested to ensure success.