

Naturally Sassy



Healthy Raw Chocolate EBook



Hello and thank you for subscribing to Naturally Sassy. The lead up to creating this blog has been an amazing culinary adventure and a huge lifestyle change for me; I can't begin to tell you the amazing changes adapting to a vegan, sugar and gluten free diet has had on every aspect of my life. I went from being high on sugar and pretty depressed, to being utterly high on health and loving life! You can read all about why and how I changed to a Naturally Sassy diet in the about me section of the blog.

I created this mini-eBook as a starting point for all you wannabe health addicts, to start eating healthily whilst being able to enjoy the amazing, indulgent, sweet flavours you love! Before I changed my eating habits for the better, chocolate was my main food group. Literally. I could have happily eaten it for breakfast, lunch, dinner and any nibbles in-between. Hardly a balanced diet! It was also the one food that made initially transitioning into a healthy diet near to impossible for me to consider. The idea was so daunting that it took me some time to pluck up the courage. When I decided enough was enough, the first thing I promised myself was that I would learn how to cook all the foods I loved (chocolate, cheese, pizza.. chocolate!)- That they would taste delicious but be made from 100% natural whole-foods. I started experimenting and boy did I never look back! Raw chocolate cakes, mousses, truffles, ice cream sandwiches, Oreos, cupcakes, raw 'Reese's cups'... it was all possible! Delicious, even tastier than the unhealthy options and you don't have any of that post—chocolate fest guilt, plus you don't feel any dip in your energy levels. In fact you feel far *more* energised! I hope that my 'Top Ten' natural chocolate recipes, will show you that healthy eating needn't be boring. You don't need to deprive yourself of the foods you love! You just need to be open-minded, and start to enjoy the feeling of eating something that tastes wonderful and has that same effect on your body.

The main ingredients:

Here are a few of the main ingredients you'll recognize that come up regularly in the eBook and on my blog.

Raw Cacao Powder: Cacao is the raw form of Cocoa powder. They both come from the cacao bean, but cocoa is then heated and processed, losing a huge amount of its health enhancing nutrients, and gaining additives and refined sugar. Cacao powder is completely raw, full of amazing nutrients that have an incredible effect on your health. It is one of the richest sources of antioxidants in the world, protecting your body against disease and free radicals entering the body. It also increases your serotonin levels (the happy hormone) so you can eat as many raw chocolates as you want, knowing it's going to make you happier and healthier!

Coconut oil: Coconut oil is one of my favourite natural kitchen staples. It is the most amazing purchase as it has so many diverse ways you can use it: As a healthier alternative to olive oil, in raw chocolate (obviously), stirred into porridge, nut butters, and even as a moisturiser! When I first heard about the amazing effects coconut oil can have on your well-being, I was very excited to trial some. However buying a pot was a pretty painful experience as for one jar it costs nearly £15 - However, it was honestly the best £15 I have ever spent (almost). Ok, yes, it's a small fortune, but it really lasts forever! I buy one, and if I'm not doing a crazy amount of baking, it lasts a month or two! If you think about it, £15 is the same as 6 lattes, the same as three breakfast takeaways and the same as two lunches out from the M&S next to your office. So maybe instead of having a couple lattes a week, invest in your health instead.. and buy some of nature's most amazing produce.

Medjool Dates: Medjool dates, aka nature's candy, are one of my favourite ingredients to use in sweet baking. They have this amazing, sweet, caramel tone that really is an amazing alternative for refined sugar. I often get asked why I prefer Medjool dates to regular dates. First off, they are much softer, sweeter and blend far easier than normal dates. They are also loaded with dietary fibre, which is great for your digestion.

Cashews: Cashews contain a good level of plant protein and are also a great source of the minerals iron and zinc. This makes cashews an excellent part of a vegetarian and vegan diet! They are one of my favourite ingredients to use in cooking and baking, as they are just so versatile. You can make anything from raw cheese sauces and Parmesan to raw cakes, cream and milk. They really are fantastic!

Maple Syrup: Maple Syrup is my syrup of choice when it comes to baking, but I do also use raw honey, manuka honey and agave syrup. The most important thing when it comes to buying maple syrup is that you make sure it is 100% pure maple syrup and that there are no additives or refined sugars in the ingredient list. Also, try to buy organic where possible.

Almond Butter: For me, almond butter is probably the most dangerous food to buy for baking, as before I've even used a teaspoon I've already eaten half the pot! Needless to say, I'm somewhat of an addict. For sweet treats I love adding a tablespoon to a smoothie or a mousse to give it this divine creamy, caramel, nutty tone that really adds oomph.



KEEP
CALM
AND
EAT *Raw*
CHOCOLATE

Chocolate Mousse



This Raw Chocolate mousse is a chocolate lovers' heaven. It tastes so sweet, rich and creamy and like all these recipes, is just so amazing for you. This is my absolute favourite dessert to make for dinner parties, as no one ever suspects these little bowls of bliss are healthy! They're made from cashews, avocado, medjool dates and raw cacao which are all incredibly health promoting. Avocado is awesome for your skin health and full of omega-3's. Cashews are a wonderful source of nutty protein and medjool dates are a delicious natural sweetener and a great source of dietary fibre. Plus, they're all just super delicious!

The recipe:

Serves 3

1/2 Avocado

3/4 Cup Cashew Nuts (Pre-Soaked)

2 cups Oat/Almond/Brown rice milk

1/3 cup Cacao powder

4 Medjool Dates

Method: Soak the cashews in a bowl of water 2-3 hours before making. Drain the water from the cashews

Add all ingredients to your high-speed blender and blend until smooth.



Chocolate - Peanut Butter Cupcakes

Chocolate cupcakes with a peanut butter, caramel frosting.



Peanut butter and chocolate is probably my all-time favourite sweet flavour combination, it's honestly just so delicious. However... Chocolate and peanut butter from the supermarket are normally packed full of refined sugar, additives, and dairy.. basically everything you wouldn't find in a Naturally Sassy kitchen! These cupcakes are just as delicious as any sugar laden, dairy packed treat. They are as amazing for your taste buds as they are for your body! The cupcakes are made from ground almonds, brown rice flour, banana, ground flaxseeds and cacao. The icing (the best bit) is made from sugar-free peanut butter, medjool dates and a touch of cinnamon. Be warned, the icing mixture is so good it may all be gone before the cupcakes are even out of the oven!

Recipe:

Cupcakes:

- 1 Banana
- 1 cup almonds/ground almonds
- 1 cup brown rice flour
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 3 Tbsp pure maple syrup
- 1/2 cup dairy-free milk (Oat, Brown rice, Almond)
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 cup cacao powder

Flax 'Egg'

- 2 Tbsp ground flaxseeds
- 1/2 cup water

Peanut butter- Caramel Icing"

- 1/4 cup peanut butter
- 1/2 cup Medjool dates 36
- 2 Tbsp coconut oil, melted
- 1/2 cup water

Method: Preheat the oven to 180 degrees Celsius. Combine the ground flaxseed and water in a small bowl and leave on the side for 10 minutes. If you haven't already got one cup of *ground* almonds then in a food processor, whizz one cup of almonds until they are ground. Mix with the brown rice flour, cacao powder and baking powder. Add all the other ingredients, including your flax egg and fold well. Pour into 6 cupcake cases, and place in the oven to cook for roughly 25 minutes. Meanwhile make the icing by simply blending all ingredients. Leave the cupcakes to cool and then spread on a generous layer of heaven... I mean icing.

Blissful Chocolate Smoothie



This Chocolate smoothie is my go-to breakfast when I wake up with a chocolate craving! It is full of tons of delicious, natural ingredients, that whatever time of day it is will give you that energy boost your after. It tastes super naughty, but is in fact made from the most natural ingredient: avocado, frozen banana, cacao powder, medjool dates, almond butter and almond milk! This smoothie is so blissful, creamy rich, full of goodness and very, very chocolaty!

Recipe:

- 1 Banana (preferably frozen)
- 1/2 Avocado
- 3 Medjool dates
- 1 Tbsp Cacao powder
- 1 tbsp almond butter (optional)
- 1.5 cup of almond, brown rice or oat milk.

Method: Blend until smooth!



Chocolate overnight oats

These chocolaty overnight oats are the perfect breakfast on the go. You make them the night before, leave them in the fridge and the next morning your breakfast is ready, so you can quickly munch and fly out the door. It's also a great way to get your chocolate fix early in the day, so you're not craving it later.

Recipe:

- 1/2-cup oats
- 2 cups brown rice milk
- 2 heaped Tbsp ground flaxseeds
- 2 Tbsp goji berries
- 1 Tbsp cacao powder
- 1 tsp maca powder (optional)
- 1 tsp lucuma powder (optional)
- 1 banana, sliced

Method:

Add all ingredients, except the banana, to a bowl or jar and mix well. Top with banana slices, and any other berries or seeds if you wish. Place in the fridge overnight and enjoy in the morning.



Almond-butter 'Reese' Cups



Growing up, Reese's cups were my favourite snack. They could have been my breakfast, lunch and dinner and I would have still been craving more! They were also the first thing that I tried to recreate when I started a sugar and dairy free diet, and once I mastered them there was no doubt in my mind that healthy eating was anything but boring! Unlike the sugar loaded, processed cups you can buy from the chocolate aisle, my Reese cups are made with only natural ingredients: Coconut oil, coconut butter, raw cacao, agave syrup and almond butter. They take 5 minutes to make, and are the most deliciously indulgent treat, that are just incredible for you too!

Recipe:

¼ cup raw cacao powder
1/4 cup melted coconut oil
3 Tbsp agave/maple syrup
6 tsp of almond butter/ peanut butter

Method: Add the melted coconut, raw cacao powder and maple/agave syrup to a mixing bowl – mix until smooth.

Pour about 1 teaspoon of the liquid chocolate into the bottom of 6 cupcake papers/ enough to cover the bottom. Put in the freezer for 5 minutes or until the chocolate has hardened. Scoop 1 teaspoon of almond butter onto each chocolate base, then cover with the remaining liquid chocolate. Put in the fridge for 10-20 minutes or until hardened.

All I want is
Peace,
Love, and a
chocolate bar
bigger than my
head.

Natural Nutella



Nutella was a breakfast staple growing up, I used to love it spread inside a croissant and then heated up in the oven, so the buttery croissant and the sugar loaded Nutella melted into each other, forming what I can only describe as heaven. This may have had amazing effects on my happiness but had dire effects on my energy levels. Creating a healthy Nutella was one of the simplest recipes I've made, but definitely one of the best. The sweet, rich chocolate spread is just amazing on a piece of thickly sliced gluten-free bread, with lots of sweet chopped banana slices. Pure happiness!

Ingredients:

- 1 cup blanched hazelnuts
- 1 cup medjool dates
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup raw cacao powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup coconut oil, melted
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water

Method: Preheat the oven to 190 degrees Celsius. Bake the hazelnuts for 5 minutes, remove and cool. Meanwhile add all other ingredients to a food processor and blend until smooth, add the hazelnuts and blend again.

Raw Chocolate brownies



These raw chocolate brownies, are the perfect snack on the go, they take 5 minutes to make and last in the fridge forever (that's if you and your friends don't eat them all straight away!). They're made from a few simple, nutritious ingredients: Pecans, medjool dates, almond butter, raw cacao and a touch of pure maple syrup for good measure! They're bursting with delicious plant protein, super-food antioxidants from the raw cacao and of course lots of dietary fibre, which is essential in maintaining a healthy digestive system. But the best health benefit of these beautiful chocolate brownies, are their wonderful happy-enhancing effect!

Recipe:

- 1 cup pecan, Almonds or walnuts
- 1.5 cup medjool dates
- 3-4 Tbsp raw cacao powder
- 2 tsp maple syrup
- 2 Tbsp Almond butter

Method: Start by putting the pecans in your food processor, until ground. Then de-pit the medjool dates and add them to the blender with the other ingredients. Blend until everything's combined into a sticky chocolaty dough in the blender. Scoop the mix out and spread it onto a baking tray and put in the freezer to set for half an hour. Take them out and cut into brownies sized pieces. Enjoy!



Choc-anola



Choc-anola? Indeed. The offspring of granola and chocolate is something really quite special! It's funny, when I first changed my diet my idea of a healthy breakfast was a bowl of oats made into porridge with water and maybe a little oat milk. I would have never imagined I would be sitting in the sun sipping a green juice and munching on a bowl of chocolate granola, coconut yoghurt, fresh berries and banana slices! Healthy heaven!

Ingredients: 1 cup coconut pieces
1 cup oats
¼ cup cashew nuts
¼ cup chia seeds
¼ cup pumpkin seeds
¼ cup linseeds
¼ cup sultanas/goji berries/chopped dates
¼ cup coconut oil, melted
4 Tbsp maple syrup/agave syrup/honey
2-3 Tbsp cacao powder

Method:

Preheat the oven to 130 degrees Celsius. Add all ingredients to a mixing bowl and combine well. Line a tray with baking paper and cover with your granola mix. Bake in the oven for 25-30 minutes (or until crisp, but not burnt!)

I am a Chocolatarian.
I ONLY eat
Chocolate.



Love,

Spiritual Chocoholic

Naturally Chocolate!



Ingredients:

1 cup cacao
1/2 cup melted coconut oil
4 tbsp agave syrup

Method: Start by placing the cacao in a bowl with the agave syrup. Add 1/2 cup of melted coconut oil and add the bowl, stirring until the chocolate is smooth. If you are making pure chocolate you can now pour into your chocolate molds and place in the fridge to set.

This recipe for healthy chocolate uses only three, easy to find, natural ingredients: Coconut oil, raw cacao powder, and your choice of either pure maple syrup or agave syrup. You will also need a chocolate mould, but if you don't want to buy one or simply can't wait and you want to make them today, then you can set the chocolate in ice cube moulds, or a tablespoon at the bottom of a muffin case before putting them in the fridge!

This recipe honestly takes around five minutes to make and they're the perfect answer for those sweet tooth cravings!

Superfood Hot Chocolate



There's nothing more comforting than a mug of warming hot chocolate, on a chilly evening. This is no ordinary hot cocoa, this one is packed full of goodness that warms every cell of your body with nourishment. It is made with my homemade almond milk (my recipes on the blog), raw cacao, maple syrup, bee pollen and almond butter plus a little lucuma powder if you're feeling like a real super-food goddess.

Recipe:

250ml of homemade almond milk (can use oat, brown rice)

1 Tbsp cacao powder

1 Tbsp maple syrup

1 tsp bee pollen

1 tsp almond butter

1 tsp lucuma powder (optional)

Method: in a pan add the milk, cacao powder, maple syrup, almond butter and lucuma powder (if using). Just before it starts to bubble pour into your favourite mug and top with bee pollen.

NOTE TO SELF.
EAT LOTS OF
RAW
CHOCOLATE
WHEN TIMES
GET ROUGH
AND
EAT EVEN MORE
WHEN TIMES
ARE GREAT.

