

Recipes



WHOOPIE PIES

Classic whoopie pies combine a creamy filling sandwiched between cakey chocolate cookies. Some are filled with a marshmallow cream frosting while others are filled with whipped cream. Even those of us who grew up with the former fell in love with our lighter version of the whipped cream-filled treats.

Servings: 16 whoopie pies

Total Time: 2 1/2 hours (including chilling time)

Ease of Preparation: Easy

Health: Low Sodium, Low Calorie, Low Cholesterol, Diabetes Appropriate, Healthy Weight

Ingredients:

Cookies
1/3 cup canola oil
3/4 cup packed light brown sugar
1 large egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups whole-wheat pastry flour
1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
3/4 teaspoon baking powder
3/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup nonfat milk

Filling

1/2 cup cold water
2 teaspoons unflavored gelatin
1 cup whipping cream
2/3 cup nonfat plain yogurt
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Steps:

- 1: Preheat oven to 350°F. Position racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven. Coat 2 large baking sheets with cooking spray.
- 2: To prepare cookies: Beat oil, brown sugar, egg and vanilla in a large bowl with an electric mixer on medium speed until combined. Whisk flour, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a medium bowl. Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, alternating with

milk; beat until smooth. Let the batter stand for 15 minutes.

- 3: Drop batter by the tablespoonful onto the prepared baking sheets, spreading the batter into a 2- to 3-inch circle with the back of a spoon if it doesn't spread itself. (Each large baking sheet accommodates 8 cookies—they will be close together.) Bake the cookies until firm to the touch, about 8 minutes. Let cool on the baking sheet for 2 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Wash, dry and coat the baking sheets with cooking spray again. Repeat with the remaining batter.
- 4: To prepare filling: While the cookies cool, stir water and gelatin in a small heatproof cup or bowl. Let stand 1 minute. Microwave, uncovered, on High until the gelatin has completely dissolved but the liquid is not boiling, 20 to 30 seconds. (Alternatively, bring 1/2 inch water to a gentle simmer in a small skillet. Set the bowl with the gelatin mixture in the simmering water until the gelatin has dissolved completely.) Stir the mixture until smooth. Let cool for 10 minutes.
- 5: Beat cream, yogurt, confectioners' sugar and vanilla in a medium bowl with an electric mixer on high speed until very thick, about 1 minute. With the mixer beating constantly, add the gelatin mixture in a steady stream until well combined. Cover and refrigerate until the cream filling is thickened to the consistency of pudding, about 30 minutes. Whisk again until smooth.
- 6: To assemble whoopie pies: Turn half the cookies bottom side up and top with a generous 2 tablespoons of the cream. Top with the remaining cookies. Chill in the refrigerator until the filling is set, about 30 minutes.

Nutrition: (Per serving)

Calories – 202
Carbohydrates – 24
Fat – 11
Saturated Fat – 4
Monounsaturated Fat – 5
Protein – 3
Cholesterol – 34
Dietary Fiber – 2
Potassium – 63
Sodium – 144

Press a piece of plastic wrap directly on the surface of the filling (Steps 4-5) and refrigerate for up to 1 day. Store the cookies (Step 3) in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 1 day. Refrigerate the assembled Whoopie Pies, uncovered, for up to 4 hours.

Content provided by EatinWell, Courtesy of Arcamax.com •

GRILLED SALMON SOFT TACOS

Fish tacos have become all the rage in recent years and are a specialty of the Pacific coast of Southern California and Mexico. This is a simple recipe: all the components can be made ahead of time and the fish grilled at the last moment. You can also use halibut, sea bass or tilapia in place of the salmon.

Servings: 4 servings, 2 tacos each

Total Time: 20 minutes

Ease of Preparation: Easy

Health: High Calcium, High Potassium, High Fiber

Ingredients:

Grilled Salmon Soft Tacos
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon ancho or New Mexico chile powder
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
4 4-ounce wild salmon fillets, about 1-inch thick, skin on
8 6-inch corn or flour tortillas, warmed
Cabbage Slaw (see recipe below)
Citrus Salsa (see recipe below)
Cilantro Crema (see recipe below)

Steps:

- 1: Preheat grill to medium-high.

- 2: Combine oil, chile powder, lime juice, salt and pepper in a small bowl. Rub the spice mixture liberally over salmon. Grill the salmon, skin-side down, until it is just cooked through, about 8 minutes. Cut each fillet lengthwise into 2 pieces and remove the skin.

- 3: To serve, place 2 tortillas on each plate. Evenly divide the fish, Cabbage Slaw, Citrus Salsa and Cilantro Crema among the tortillas.

Nutrition: (Per serving)

Calories – 567
Carbohydrates – 45
Fat – 30
Saturated Fat – 6
Monounsaturated Fat – 17
Protein – 32
Cholesterol – 83
Dietary Fiber – 9
Potassium – 1151
Sodium – 481
Nutrition Bonus - Vitamin C (170 daily value), Selenium (74 dv), Potassium (33 dv), Folate (23 dv), Calcium (15 dv), excellent source of omega-3s.

Recipe by Dobbs, David with recipes by Ash, John, Courtesy of Arcamax.com •

Gardening Tips



Tip: Control Mildew on Crape Myrtle

As crape myrtles bloom, check upper and lower leaf surfaces for the whitish-powder of powdery mildew fungal disease. Eventually infected leaves will yellow and die. To control this disease, spray a neem oil-based fungicide.

Tip: Feed Your Lawn

Feed lawns to promote thick and lush growth that helps resist weeds with a 3-1-2 ratio of NPK (nitrogen phosphorous potassium). Apply one pound of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of lawn.

Tip: Deadhead Spring Bloomers

As flower's fade, deadhead spring-bloomers such as iris, peony, wallflower, and dame's rocket. Deadheading keeps the plants from expending energy and making seeds. It may entice a second bloom later in the summer as well.

Tip: Succession Plant

Succession planting ensures a continuous harvest of flowers and vegetables from spring to fall. Remove cool season plants such as pansies, primrose, spinach, and lettuce and replace them with zinnias, marigolds, beans, and cucumbers.

Q&A: Fixing a Thinning Lawn

Question: I have lived at my current home for over five years and this is the first year that I've noticed that my lawn is thinning. I fertilize and mow on a regular basis so I don't believe that it's thinning from neglect. I would like to spread grass seed on the existing lawn but I have heard that this isn't very effective. How can I get a thicker lawn without tearing up the sod and starting from scratch?

Answer: First, have your soil tested. Sometimes regular fertilization without testing can cause nutrient and pH imbalances, and can lead to thatch as well. The test results will guide you in taking the right approach. Thatch is an accumulation of a thick layer of dead stems and roots. It can build up over a period of a few years and choke out a lawn. If soil is healthy and biologically active, dead grass parts will naturally decompose, and thatch won't develop. I don't recommend dethatching by hand, because it's very hard work. You can rent a power dethatcher at most equipment supply outlets. The quickest and easiest way to thicken your lawn is to overseed with a good quality grass seed mixture. The seeds will sprout in 10-14 days so you'll see almost instant results. (If your lawn has excessive thatch, you should remove it before overseeding.) Continue to water and mow on a regular basis, and apply fertilizer as recommended by your soil test results, and your lawn should grow thick and lush this season.

Q&A: Cross Pollination of Squash and Gourds

Question: I have several varieties of squash in my garden. I also have several gourds growing on the fence around the garden. Will the gourds cross pollinate with the squash and cause problems? What is the minimum distance necessary to separate each variety?

Answer: Don't worry about separating these plants. The only concern is if you plan to save seed for planting next year. Cross pollination does not affect the current year's fruits—only the seeds. (This might be a concern if, say, you were planning to harvest pumpkin seeds for roasting.) However, if you compost the plants and some of the seeds sprout, you could have some strange gourd/squash mutants growing out of the compost pile! But there's no need to worry about this year's crop.

Q&A: Cooking with Broccoli Raab and Relatives

Question: Are broccoli raab, rapini, Chinese rape, and rapeseed all the same thing? I have come across each in recipes and don't know if they are interchangeable.

Answer: There are many variations of these members of the Brassica, or cabbage, family, and various names are sometimes used interchangeably. It can get pretty confusing. The different types may or may not be interchangeable in recipes, depending upon the plant part that's called for in the recipe. You'll have to experiment by growing your own and tasting each in different stages of growth. Broccoli raab is a Brassica, but it is not a true broccoli. It is also known as rapini and rapine, and has a flavor similar to broccoli, but is usually more bitter. Rather than forming a large central head, it is grown for its leaves, shoots, and small florets. There are several different types of rape, another Brassica. Some are grown as a vegetable, including some which are similar to broccoli raab and are called flowering rape. (This may be what you are referring to by Chinese rape.) Some types are grown for their high oil content—the term canola oil is used to describe oil pressed from edible oilseed rape. I hope this helps!

Q&A: Ants on Peonies

Question: I have medium-sized black ants on my peony bushes. Are these insects beneficial, will they harm the plants, or neither?

Answer: Contrary to popular belief, ants don't actually help peony blossoms open, but they are companions of peonies because they feed on the flowers' nectar. The ants don't cause any harm, so there's no need to spray to control them. If you are cutting the blossoms to bring indoors, hold each one under water for a minute or so to dislodge any hitchhiking ants before you take the flowers indoors.

Content provided by the National Gardening Association. Courtesy arcamax.com •

