

eat more chocolate

You heard that right! Here's how to reap all of its nutritional benefits—before you even get to dessert.

by *Marygrace Taylor*

By now, you've heard the news: Chocolate (especially the dark variety) is bursting with good-for-you antioxidants, the tiny nutritional powerhouses that are thought to combat inflammation and protect against everything from heart disease to cancer. What you might not know yet? Chocolate's rich in plenty of important vitamins and minerals, too, including iron, calcium, potassium, magnesium, and vitamins C, D, and E. "An ounce of dark chocolate contains 19 percent of your daily iron needs, and cocoa is one of the best sources of magnesium, which is essential for calcium absorption," says Sharon Richter, R.D., a certified dietetic nutritionist in New York City. Sounds great, right?

Of course, there's a catch: Most of the chocolate we love to eat—bars, truffles, cookies, cake, frosting, chocolate-covered peanuts, the list goes on and on—is also full of stuff that's not so healthy. "Unless it's cocoa powder that is completely unsweetened, chocolate will always have a lot of added fat (from milk and butter) and sugar," Richter says. But since



choking down the bitter powder on its own seems more torturous than tasty, you can try adding cocoa powder to your everyday food. You'll not only get the health benefits without the junk, but pairing cocoa with other good-for-you foods will actually enhance your absorption of all those vitamins and minerals that chocolate contains, too. Believe it or not, chocolate can pair well with vitamin C-rich foods like tomatoes, peppers, and raspberries, and those fruits and veggies will help your body make the most out of cocoa's high iron content. The vitamin D in milk and the magnesium in almonds aid your bones' efforts to take in more of cocoa's calcium.

Picking the right cocoa can even help people and the planet. If you buy choco-

late that's Fair Trade Certified, you can be sure that the cocoa beans are ethically sourced: Farmers work in safe conditions for a fair wage, and sellers receive a fair price for their goods. Certified products are guaranteed to meet high quality standards, and are grown or crafted sustainably, according to the Fair Trade Federation, a trade association promoting fair trade in North America.

The two recipes on these pages will take you beyond brownies to a whole new level of cooking with nutrient-rich cocoa. Tell your kids: We're having chocolate for breakfast—and dinner!

Looking for more chocolate recipes?

We have some delicious better-for-you desserts at kiwimagonline.com/chocolate.

Butternut Squash and Chard Tacos with Chocolate Mole Sauce

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 35 minutes

“Mole” means “sauce” or “concoction” in Spanish, and typically features a laundry list of ingredients. This version retains the principle players—chocolate, ground almonds, tomato, and cinnamon—but is much quicker to make.

Mole sauce:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 jalapeño pepper, minced (optional)
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1¼ cup water or vegetable stock
- 1 16-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 3 tablespoons cocoa powder, sifted
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- ¾ cup almonds, ground finely

in a food processor
Salt and pepper, to taste

Taco filling:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - 1 medium red onion, sliced
 - 1 medium butternut squash (about 2½ pounds), peeled, seeded, and chopped into ½-inch cubes
 - ¼ cup water or vegetable stock
 - 1 bunch Swiss chard, stems removed and leaves sliced thinly
- Salt and pepper, to taste

To make the mole sauce:

1. In a large saucepot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté 5 to 7 minutes, until soft and translucent. Add the garlic, jalapeño pepper, cumin, and cinnamon, and sauté 1 minute more, until fragrant.
2. Pour in the water or stock and diced tomatoes, then add the cocoa powder and sugar, whisking to dissolve. Cover and bring to a boil, then simmer 20 to 25 minutes to allow flavors to blend.

3. Before serving, stir in the ground almonds.

To make the taco filling:

1. In a wide skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the onion and sauté 5 to 7 minutes, until soft and translucent.

Add the butternut squash and cook 8 to 10 minutes, stirring every couple of minutes to ensure most sides of the squash are browned.

2. Add the water or stock, stirring for a minute to let some of the liquid cook off. Add the Swiss chard and cook 5 to 10 minutes more, until chard is wilted and squash is tender.

To serve, scoop a few spoonfuls of the squash filling into a tortilla (store-bought or made from our recipe on page 50). Repeat and drizzle each taco with mole sauce.

Makes 10 tacos

Per taco: calories 215, protein 6 g, fat 8 g, carbohydrates 37 g, dietary fiber 8 g

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ingredients

Whole Wheat Chocolate Pancakes with Raspberry Sauce

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 15 to 20 minutes

When added to pancakes made with whole grains and drizzled with a just-sweet-enough fruit sauce, chocolate makes this a morning meal you can feel good about. Plus, the vitamin C from the raspberries and vitamin D in the eggs and buttermilk will help your family get more iron from the cocoa powder.

- 16 ounces frozen raspberries
- 2½ tablespoons raw cane sugar
- 1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
- ¼ cup cocoa powder, sifted
- ¼ cup raw cane sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons low-fat buttermilk
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled, plus extra for the pan
- 1 tablespoon brewed coffee (leftover from your morning pot is fine)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Powdered sugar for sprinkling (optional)

1. In a small saucepot, combine the raspberries and 2½ tablespoons sugar. Bring to high heat until raspberries begin to release their juices, then turn heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally, while you make the pancakes.

2. In a large bowl, combine the flour, cocoa powder, ¼ cup sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.

3. In a medium bowl, combine the egg, butter-



milk, melted butter, coffee, and vanilla. Add to the flour mixture and fold in with a spatula until just combined. Allow the pancake batter to sit while you heat your pan.

4. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Melt about a teaspoon of the extra butter in the pan.

5. For each pancake, ladle ¼ cup of batter into the pan. Cook 2 to 3 minutes on one side, or until small bubbles begin to form on the sur-

face, then flip and cook 1 to 2 minutes more. Transfer to a serving plate and cover, then repeat for the remaining batter.

6. Remove raspberry sauce from heat. Spoon over pancakes. Sprinkle with powdered sugar, if desired.

Makes 6 servings

Per serving: calories 240, fat 7 g, protein 6 g, carbohydrates 41 g, dietary fiber 9 g

Fair Trade Cocoa

Bake with chocolate that's Fair Trade Certified by TransFair USA:

- Equal Exchange Organic Baking Cocoa \$7.75 for 8 ounces, shop.equalexchange.com
- Dagoba Organic Chocolate Baking Cacao Powder (\$10 for 8 ounces, dagoba-chocolate.com)
- Divine Cocoa \$5 for 4.4 ounces, buydivine.com