

Float Away with One of the 10 Best Vegan Recipes of the Year

Alisa Fleming, www.GoDairyFree.org ~ When Vegan.com selected Hannah Kaminsky's first cookbook, *My Sweet Vegan*, as one of the ten best vegan cookbooks, the talented young author was flabbergasted. Joining the ranks of seasoned authors such as Isa Moskowitz and Dreena Burton was something she had dreamed of, but never expected so early in her career. So when asked to choose her favorite recipe from *My Sweet Vegan*, it seemed only fitting to pick the very recipe that began it all, her Root Beer Float Cupcakes …

Hannah said, “I love every single recipe, otherwise they wouldn't be in my cookbook, but this one has become a classic. People usually try it out of curiosity, wondering if the cupcakes will actually taste like a root beer float … but once they take that first bite, their hooked!” Her selection comes not a moment too soon for the swarms of birthday parties and barbecues that lie ahead in the summer season. Each bite is egg-free, dairy-free, and nut-free, plus you can see below for recommendations to make these little cakes soy-free and wheat-free.

Recipe from *My Sweet Vegan*, by Hannah Kaminsky

Root Beer Cupcakes:
 1 Cup Root Beer Soda
 1 Teaspoon Apple Cider Vinegar
 ¾ Cup Granulated Sugar
 1/3 Cup Canola or Vegetable Oil
 ½ Teaspoon Vanilla Extract
 2 Teaspoons Root Beer Extract
 1 1/3 Cups All-Purpose Flour
 ½ Teaspoon Baking Powder
 ¾ Teaspoon Baking Soda
 Pinch of Salt
 Chocolate Ganache:
 5 Ounces Dark Chocolate, Chopped
 ¼ Cup Plain Soymilk
 1 Tablespoon Maple Syrup
 Vanilla Frosting:
 1 Cup Vegetable Shortening
 3 Cups Confectioner's Sugar
 2 Tablespoons Plain Soymilk
 2 Teaspoons Vanilla Extract

Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C) and line a dozen muffin tins with cupcake papers.

In a large bowl, combine the soda and vinegar and let stand for a few minutes. Add in the sugar and oil, whisking vigorously until slightly frothy. Integrate your extracts. In a small bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Gently introduce this dry mixture into your large bowl, being careful not to over mix.

Distribute the batter evenly between the prepared tins, filling the cupcake liners approximately ¾ of the way to the top. Bake for 18 to 22 minutes, until evenly browned, and a toothpick inserted into the center of a cupcake comes out clean. After letting the cupcakes cool in the pans for about 10 minutes, remove them to a wire rack and allow them to cool completely before preparing the ganache.

When the cupcakes are ready, combine all of the ingredients for the ganache in a microwave-safe container and microwave for about 60 seconds. Stir thoroughly to help incorporate the melting chocolate. If the chocolate is not yet entirely smooth, return the sauce to the microwave for 15 to 30 second intervals, stirring between each heating and watching carefully to ensure that it doesn't burn. Drizzle the ganache in squiggles over the tops of the cupcakes. You will probably have plenty of leftover ganache, but I don't see that as a particularly bad thing. Allow the ganache squiggles to fully cool and dry before preparing the frosting.

With your stand mixer, beat the shortening thoroughly, until creamed. Add in the confectioner's sugar, and beat on a low speed, so as not to spray powder everywhere. Incorporate the soymilk and vanilla, and combine thoroughly, until the frosting is thick and creamy. Apply to your cupcakes and enjoy.

Makes 12 Cupcakes

Soy-Free: Use your favorite soy-free milk alternative in place of the soymilk in both the frosting and ganache, and select Spectrum Brand for the shortening.

Wheat-Free: Hannah has created a wheat-free version of her root beer float cupcakes. It is viewable on her popular blog, [Bittersweet](#).