

Sweet Sundays: Raspberry-Ginger Parfait with Dairy-Free Coconut Whipped Crème

Technically, this recipe should be called "Raspberry-Ginger Pudding Parfait with a Dark Chocolate Crunch and Silky Dairy-Free Coconut Whipped Crème," But we couldn't fit that whole thing in the title bar. Who would dream up such a fantastic trio of dairy-free and vegan recipes that could be enjoyed individually or altogether in this harmonious parfait? Why, Hannah Kaminsky of Bittersweet and author of My Sweet Vegan of course!

She elaborates on this creative and creamy dessert, "Chilled and refreshing, pureed raspberries cooked with a touch of agave conceal a handful of diced crystallized ginger at the very bottom, making for a spicy surprise. Crunchy, chocolate-coated rice cereal is sprinkled on top, lending a crispy contrast to the previous smooth layer. Finally, my standard coconut whipped cream tops things off, and a few shreds of lightly toasted, fancy flaked coconut crown the whole piece. In short, it's delicious, easy to eat and enjoy, but complicated to explain."

Hannah has also been nominated for 3 different categories of the 2009 Veggie Awards. She is vying for the title of Favorite Blog, Favorite Cookbook Author, and Favorite VegNews Column, Make sure you head over and vote in these fun reader's choice awards (there are prizes for participation!), then come back and make this delicious recipe ...

Raspberry-Ginger Parfait

Recipe by Hannah Kaminsky of Bittersweet and My Sweet Vegan

Raspberry Pudding:

- 4 Cups Raspberries, Fresh or Frozen
- 1/3 Cup Light Agave Nectar
- 1/4 Cup Orange Juice
- 1 Tablespoon Cornstarch
- 1 1/2 Teaspoon Agar Powder
- 1/2 Cup Finely Diced Crystallized Ginger

Chocolate Crunch:

- 3 Ounces Bittersweet Chocolate, coarsely chopped
- 2 Tablespoons Canola Oil
- 2 1/2 Cups Crispy Brown Rice Cereal
- 1/2 Teaspoon Instant Coffee Powder
- 1/4 Teaspoon Salt

Coconut Whipped Creme:

- 1 25.5-Ounce Can Coconut Milk, Chilled
- 1/4 Cup Confectioner's Sugar
- 1 Teaspoon Vanilla Extract

Using a blender or food processor, thoroughly puree the raspberries so that the mixture is as smooth as possible. Pass it through a fine mesh strainer, and discard the solids. You should be left with about 2 2/3 cup of seedless raspberry puree; if you end up with less, add apple juice until you reach that amount.

In a medium sauce pan, whisk together the seedless puree, agave, orange juice, cornstarch, and agar vigorously to prevent any of the dry ingredients from clumping. Once homogeneous, set the sauce pan over medium heat, and stir occasionally. Meanwhile, distribute about 1 tablespoon of the diced ginger into the bottom of each of your (8 – 12) parfait glasses.

When the mixture just begins to boil, quickly turn off the heat, and pour an equal amount into each glass. Allow the raspberry layer to cool at room temperature until solidified (about 1 hour) before transferring all of the glasses into the refrigerator to chill.

To make the chocolate crunch, place the chocolate and oil in a microwave-safe dish, and heat them for about 1 minute, checking at 30 seconds to ensure that the mixture doesn't burn. Stir well until completely smooth and all the pieces of chocolate have melted.

In a large bowl, combine the brown rice cereal, coffee powder, and salt. Pour the chocolate mixture in, and mix well with a large spatula, being careful not to crush the cereal. Once well coated, pour the cereal out onto a silpat, and spread it out into as thin a layer as possible. Place this in the refrigerator to solidify (about 30 minutes.)

For the coconut whipped cream, do NOT shake the can of coconut milk. Simply open the can and use a large spoon to skim off all of the thick cream on top. You will be left with some thin coconut milk in the bottom of the can, but you can use that in another recipe. Place the coconut cream, confectioner's sugar, and vanilla in your stand mixer, and whip on high for about 5 minutes, until thick and fluffy like whipped cream.

To assemble your parfaits, crumble pieces of the chocolate crunch into each glass to form an even layer. Spoon the coconut whipped creme on top, and garnish with lightly toasted coconut flakes and/or additional fresh raspberries if desired.

Serves 8 – 12