

# Gluten-Free Chocolate LOVE Muffins



When I was 20 years-old, I decided to go vegetarian. I had consumed a McDonald's hamburger at a bus stop in Beer Sheva, Israel (and yes, I heard it. Gross.) that caused me deep regret several hours after consumption. I decided that this deep regret was Gd letting me know I shouldn't eat animals.

And for two weeks, I was a vegetarian. I ate a lot of beans in those two weeks and even more pasta. But then I was presented with a chicken and cheese sandwich (I didn't keep kosher at this time. That decision would take place nearly a decade later) and I decided that maybe Gd was telling me that chicken was OK and really, its red meat I should stay away from and therefore I should go ahead and enjoy my chicken sandwich with abandonment. Other than this foray into vegetarianism, I was never the type who could stick with a regimented diet of any kind. I mean, back in the modeling days, my agents tried so hard to get me to stick to really intense diets and I refused to do it. "Diet" was a 4-letter word that I was not supportive of in any capacity. I just couldn't do. That kind of self-control wasn't in my make-up.

But red meat I did stay away from for roughly 10 years until I found myself face-to-face with my first bowl of cholent and I figured, why not? If you've ever eaten cholent, you'll know that this was a very intense first step into eating meat again but eat it I did and I haven't looked back.

I'm regularly impressed by folks who adopt special diets due to their belief system. I'm not talking about folks who HAVE to go gluten-free, for example, because of Celiac Disease but those folks who go vegan because of their love for animals (Hi, Mayim. Love your work). I was talking about this recently when it occurred to me that I, in fact, keep a special diet. I keep kosher. I've been keeping kosher for 4 years now and at this point, it's so a part of our lives I don't think anything of it. And then I think about folks who keep multiple levels of adopted diets (i.e. kosher, vegan, AND gluten-free) and I wonder how they do it. How the heck do they do it?! Man, that seems like a lot of work. If you're out

there and you are reading this and you keep multiple levels of diets then I say to you, "Mazal tov on the self-control. That's crazy impressive".



goopy but good.

Oh. And, if you ARE one of those folks who has to keep certain diets due to belief systems and/or health, do I have a recipe for you! I mean, I also have a recipe for you even if you DON'T keep any certain diets. The recipe below is a new family favorite. I came across the original recipe via Pinterest about 3 weeks ago and have since made 4 batches of them. After that 4th batch, I wanted to put my own twist on it and thus, we have the recipe below. Please note that the cocoa nibs are my own 'health' addition. I've read a lot on how raw cocoa nibs have health benefits aside from being delicious. The texture is a bit hard and can be off-putting if you are unfamiliar with them but they can add depth of flavor to any baked good and/or when used as toppings for yogurt, smoothies, etc. Aside from being delicious, cocoa nibs can also be expensive (as most health foods can be, blargh!) so please feel free to either take out the nibs or put in mini dark chocolate chips instead.





pyramid formation



## **Gluten-Free Chocolate LOVE Muffins (based on Averie Cooks' AMAZING Flourless Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip Mini Muffins recipe)**

**(Makes about 12 – 15 muffins. I have never gotten more than 15 out of a batch).**

### **Ingredients:**

1 medium ripe banana, peeled  
1 large egg  
heaping 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter  
3 tablespoons honey  
1 tablespoon vanilla extract  
1/4 teaspoon baking soda  
2 tablespoons cocoa powder  
2 heaping tablespoons cocoa nibs  
pinch salt, optional and to taste (though if using organic or

natural peanut butter I advise against the salt)  
heaping 1/2 cup mini white chocolate chips

## How:

1. Preheat oven to 400F. Prepare mini muffin pans by spraying very well with floured cooking spray, or grease and flour the pans; set aside.
2. To the canister of a blender (I use the Vitamix), add first 7 ingredients, through optional salt, and blend on high speed until smoothy and creamy, about 1 minute.
3. Add nibs and chocolate chips and stir in by hand; don't use the blender because it will pulverize them.
4. Using a tablespoon or small cookie scoop that's been sprayed with cooking spray (helps batter slide off spoon or scoop easily), form rounded 1 tablespoon mounds and place mounds into prepared pans. Each cavity should be filled to a solid 3/4 full.
5. Add a few white chocolate chips to the tops of the muffins before baking.
6. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes, or until the tops are set, domed, springy to the touch, and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, or with a few moist crumbs, but no batter. Due to their small size and oven variance, make sure to watch your muffins closely, and bake until done. Allow muffins to cool in pans for about 10 minutes, or until they've firmed up and are cool enough to handle. Muffins are best fresh, but will keep airtight at room temperature for up to 5 days, or in the freezer for up to 4 months.



