

Baked Chocolate Chai Donuts with Tahini Glaze



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So you might be thinking to yourself, “Dude, Whit, it’s Chanukah time! Why aren’t you frying those donuts!?!” Well

friends, because I'd rather fry my latkes and bake my donuts than do both so my first recipe of the season is a baked recipe. Also, it's been seeming like every. single. person I work with is on a specialty diet and since every time I bake for a post, I take the extras into work, I figured baked donuts would have a better chance of actually being eaten than fried donuts. Even my beloved co-worker, Julee, who is like my appetite-twin, is on a specialty diet. She told me about how she made fried onions out of buckwheat flour and coconut oil and a little part of me died inside. No. No, no no. Sigh. So, therefore, I give you baked donuts.

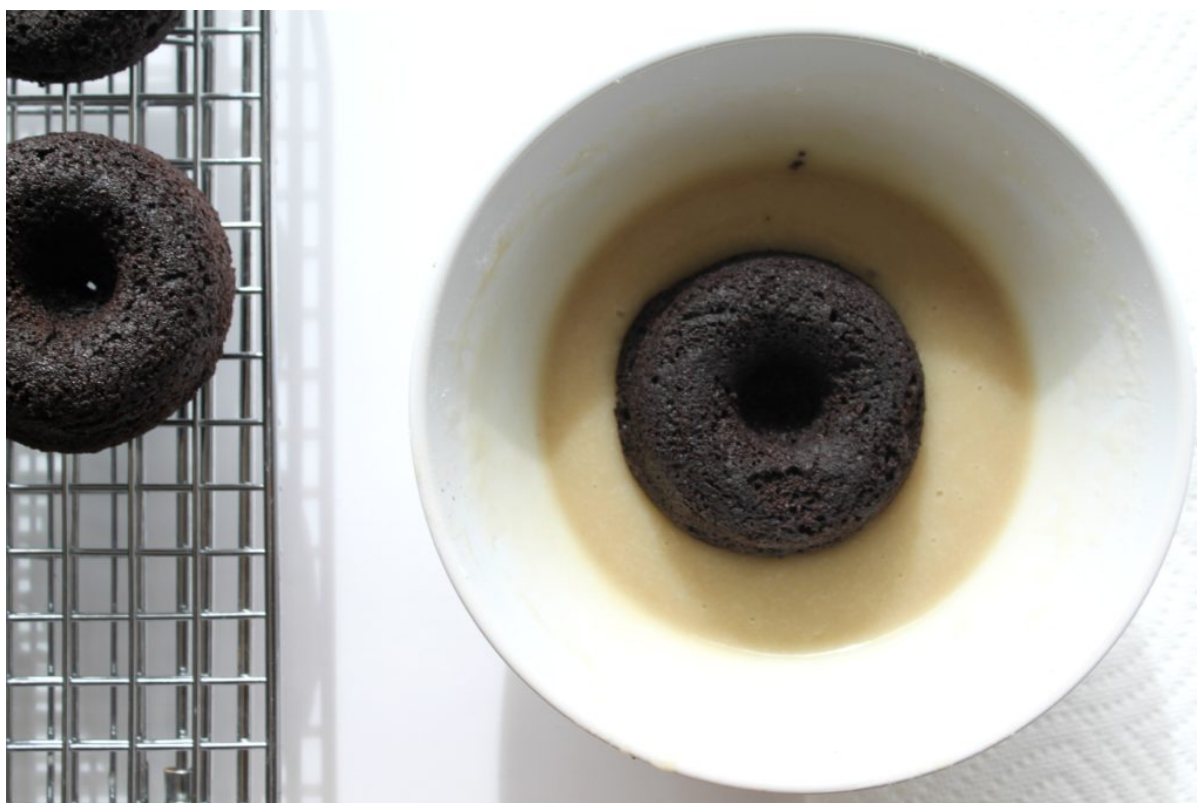
So, with that out of the way . . . how are you? How was your Thanksgiving? I tend to think of Thanksgiving as my holiday 'off'. After the intensity (and expense) of the high holidays I want nothing to do on Thanksgiving but drink coffee, watch the Macy's Day Parade, maybe make a pie or two and then head to someone else's house for dinner, which is exactly what we did. Thank you, friends.

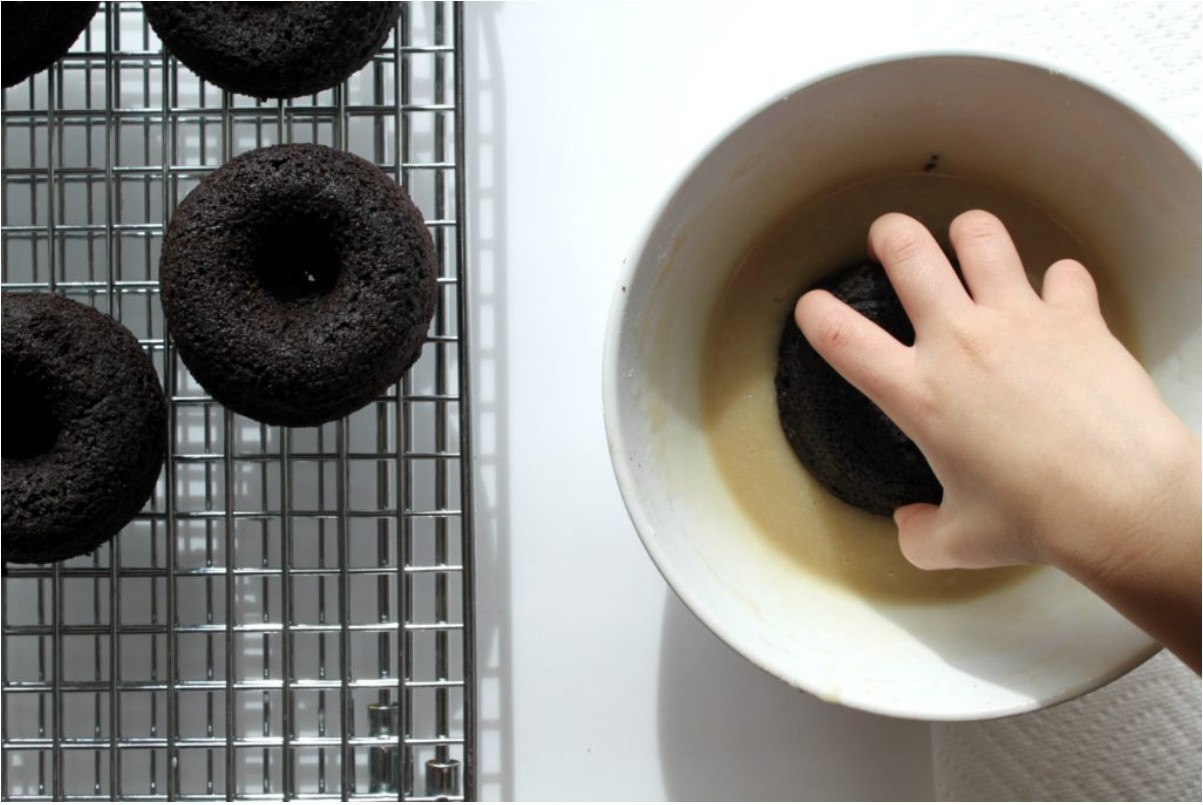




Donuts have become one of my new LA delights (along with ramen, tacos and specialty ice cream parlors). They aren't a foodie treat I really enjoyed until moving here. What's ridiculous is that apparently about a year ago, a Dunkin' Donuts opened in Downtown L.A. and folks were lined up around the block for it. There were articles written about it and people missed work just to get their hands on it. I personally do not get the obsession with the Dunkin'. Maybe it's because I grew up with Dunkin' Donuts but also cause it's a donut and as much as I love yummy treats, I don't love waiting in line for well, anything. That said, now that I've dabbled in baked donuts and realize how easy they are to make, I don't foresee heading to a lot of donut places anymore. Once you've got the foundation of the mixture for your donut down, you can mix in other spices or toppings as you see fit. Since I'm a MAJOR tahini fan, I, of course, needed to make something that paired nicely with tahini and so a nice moist chocolate donut spiced with chai flavors won out. I originally had no plans to top these bad boys with sprinkles but then my sous chef, Siona,

had to help me with this recipe, which meant that there would be sprinkles involved. And, to be honest, it totally elevated the donut. That Siona . . . I tell ya.











Ingredients

- 1/3 c. + 1 tbsp. milk
- 1 tsp. vinegar
- 3 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1/2 c. unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1/4 c. white whole wheat flour
- 1/4 c. unsweetened cocoa powder (I like Hershey's Special Dark)
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/8 tsp. nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 c. sugar
- 3 tbsp. cold brew coffee or cold espresso

- 2 tbsp. honey
- 1 large egg

Tahini Glaze

- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 3 tbsp. tahini
- 3 tbsp. milk
- dash of kosher salt
- sprinkles (optional)

Just a note – I use piping bags for getting the dough into the donut pan. I used to use a small spoon until reading about this little piping bag tip from an old issue Bon Appetit and haven't looked back. Also, when storing leftovers store uncovered, otherwise, donuts will get goopy.

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. In a small bowl, mix together milk and vinegar (Mazal! You've just made buttermilk!). Allow to sit for about 5 minutes to curdle. Melt butter in a small bowl and set aside to cool.
3. Meanwhile, sift together flours, cocoa, baking soda, sea salt, and chai spices in a large bowl. Set aside.
4. Into the cooled butter, whisk in sugar, honey, coffee, and egg until evenly combined. Add in buttermilk.
5. Whisk together wet and dry ingredients until just combined. Over-mixing will create a dense donut.
6. Spray donut pan. Add batter to a piping bag and pipe evenly into the pan (about 2/3 full). You will have a little extra batter. Make a couple donut holes or mini donuts.
7. Bake for 7 minutes. Allow to cool 1 minute before turning pan over to remove donuts onto a cooling rack.
8. Meanwhile, make glaze. In a flat-bottomed bowl, whisk together half and half and powdered sugar until smooth.
9. Once donuts have cooled completely, about 15-20 minutes,

dunk in glaze, flipping to cover the entire donut as expertly demonstrated by Siona in the pictures above. Place on cooling rack and allow to dry for a few minutes. If going for sprinkles, dump a bunch of them in another small bowl and dunk the glazed donut in just as you did into the tahini glaze.