

Chocolate & Hazelnut Recipe Handbook



Vegan, refined sugar-free, wholefood chocolate
hazelnut dessert recipes from **Hazel & Cacao**



What to expect from this eBook...

58 amazing, healthy recipes using hazelnuts and cacao.

About Hazel & Cacao

Hazel & Cacao is about whole foods, plant-based and eating for hormone health, providing information and solutions for natural hormone balancing.

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*“It’s been a
‘eat Nutella with a spoon’
kind of day”*



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About the Author

Hi, my name is Talida, plant-based food and health blogger with a particular passion for women's hormone health. After coming off hormonal birth control many years ago, I turned to a plant-based diet to help me recover from the very severe and almost life-threatening hormonal imbalance caused by my birth control. In my health journey, I learned the importance of a nutrient-dense diet that was also calorie sufficient for my hormonal needs. When I was struggling with my hormones, my biggest craving at "that time of the month" was Nutella. Even though I struggled with food anxiety for many years and a very low appetite, I could always muster up the ability to down an average of 7 TBSP of Nutella every night, and sometimes I could finish the entire jar.

As I slowly moved towards a more plant-based diet, I learned the importance of cutting out refined sugars. I was able to cut out most refined sugars with ease, but my Nutella habit remained for many years. It wasn't until I learned how to make desserts in a healthy and nutritious way that I was able to kick my Nutella habit because I had learned to get what I needed from more wholesome and nutritious sources. Healthy, raw, vegan, and plant-based desserts, in general, became a huge passion of mine because they truly were instrumental in helping me regain my health and rebalancing my hormones. Plant-based desserts are loaded with nutrient-dense calories, lots of plant-based fats and proteins, as well as healthier sugars and lots of vitamins and minerals. They helped my body get the calories and nutrients it needed to recover in the most delicious way possible.

I became so passionate about healthy dessert making that I started a plant-based food blog with a strong emphasis on healthy desserts. My blog is called "Hazel & Cacao" which stands for "hazelnuts and chocolate". These are the two main ingredients in Nutella (my biggest addiction). One of the first goals I had when I first started my blog was to eventually create an e-book full of delicious and healthy plant-based Nutella recipes. As I have learned from many of my friends and followers online, I was definitely not alone in my Nutella addiction at that "time of the month". This e-book is something that I wish I had to help me move towards a healthier lifestyle while still keeping my hormones and cravings happy. I hope you enjoy all the recipes in this e-book.



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Chocolate

It's hard to find a woman that does not enjoy chocolate. Good quality chocolate with a high cacao content is delicious and has many health benefits. It is loaded with lots of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. It is one of the highest known sources of magnesium, which is arguably the most crucial mineral for the body. Magnesium serves as the basis of healthy hormones for women and is one of the reasons many people argue that women crave chocolate at that "time of the month". It's also loaded with mood-boosting properties and high in other essential minerals like iron. The chocolate we are most used to today is unfortunately stripped of its health benefits because it is highly refined, full of refined sugar and dairy and often loaded with lots of artificial preservatives and chemicals as well. Sugar and chemical additives are inflammatory and dairy is known to interfere with the absorption of nutrients from chocolate. Thankfully there are many other healthier chocolate alternatives. Healthy chocolate and healthy chocolate desserts do take a little bit of getting used to. It usually means getting used to the dark chocolate flavour as opposed to the highly sweet milk chocolate flavour. It also means getting used to desserts and treats that are "less sweet". For many women (including myself) switching to healthier dark chocolate varieties can be a little stimulating for the digestive system. Although I probably eat more chocolate than I should, it is best to keep healthy chocolate consumption to a minimum when starting out as not to irritate the digestion (especially if you have a sensitive gut). Ideally, we are looking for a chocolate that is naturally sweetened and dairy-free. If this is not possible, opting for dark chocolate that is 70% and above will still offer many health benefits as the cacao content is quite high. When making our own chocolate, it is important to opt for cacao powder over cocoa powder. Cacao powder is mostly raw, not roasted, which means it retains more of its nutrients. It is the cacao component of chocolate that makes it so healthy.



Hazelnuts

If I could give any advice to women struggling with their hormones, it would be to eat more nuts and seeds. You do not need to eat a lot of nuts to get the amazing health benefits they contain. Nuts, in general, are a powerhouse of plant-based nutrition. They contain a good amount of protein and healthy fats as well as a concentrated amount of vitamins and minerals. Hazelnuts are the nuts that give Nutella its distinctive flavour, and they are my favourite! Nutritionally hazelnuts, are quite similar to almonds. They are high in folate, magnesium, calcium, vitamin E, and B vitamins. They also contain some iron and zinc. They provide nearly all the nutrients needed to support healthy progesterone production at that time of the month. Inadequate progesterone is one of the main reasons that so many women struggle with debilitating PMS. In fact, studies have shown that folate (very high in hazelnuts) can boost progesterone and regulate cycles. Keeping all that in mind, it is easy to see why the combination of hazelnuts and chocolate in Nutella is such a hit for so many women at that time of the month.





Recipes

58 plant-based chocolate & hazelnut recipes.

All recipes in this book are dairy-free, egg-free and refined sugar-free. Most are also gluten-free or low gluten with gluten-free alternatives provided. There are also a selection of oil-free recipes. Each recipe has a good combination of protein, carbohydrates and healthy fats for stable blood sugar levels and good mood as well as hormone balancing nutrients.



Homemade Hazelnut & Chocolate “H&C” Spread

Gluten-free

Ingredients

1 x 250g jar hazelnut butter or about a cup homemade hazelnut butter
2 TBSP cacao powder
3 TBSP maple syrup
⅓ cup almond milk or plant milk of choice
1 tsp vanilla extract

Method

Process all ingredients in a food processor until smooth and creamy.
Transfer to glass jar and store in the fridge for about 2 weeks. Makes approx 1 cup.



Hazelnut Milk

Gluten-free

Ingredients

1 cup raw hazelnuts
2 cups water (plus more for soaking)
1 pitted date

Method

Place hazelnuts in a bowl, cover with water and allow to sit overnight to soak.

Drain hazelnuts and add to a high-speed blender with 2 cups fresh water and 1 date.

Using a muslin cloth or nut bag, pour the mixture into the bag over a bowl or a bottle (you may want to use a funnel for a bottle) and squeeze out the liquid as best as you can.

Transfer the milk to a bottle.

Will last one week in the fridge. Can be used in any of my recipes that calls for any other plant milk. Makes about 2 cups

Tip: Keep leftover pulp to use as hazelnut meal if desired (dry in the oven on 90°C for about an hour or until dry).



Hazelnut Butter

Gluten-free

Ingredients

4 cups hazelnuts

Method

Place hazelnuts on a baking tray and roast for 10-12 minutes at 170°C or until the skins have started to crack.

Remove from oven, allow to cool slightly and gently rub the hazelnuts with your hands or in a tea towel until the skins are mostly removed (this won't be perfect, not all skins will be removed, and that's ok).

Place hazelnuts in a food processor and process until a hazelnut butter forms, stopping to scrape down the sides from time to time. Hazelnuts are fairly dry nuts and don't give off oil too easily so it will take a while, at least 5 minutes in a powerful food processor and possibly longer in a less powerful food processor.

You can add a little coconut oil to help it blend if you are having trouble.

Tip: You can find pre-roasted and skinned hazelnuts to purchase to make the process easier. Can also be made with raw hazelnuts but the taste is not as good.



Choc Hazelnut Smoothie

Gluten-free

Ingredients

1 banana
1 TBSP cacao powder
1 TBSP flax seeds
1 heaped TBSP hazelnut butter
1 TBSP rolled oats
1 pitted Medjool date
1 cup non-dairy milk

Method

Add all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth.

Top with desired toppings (bananas, hazelnuts, puffed grains, granola berries, etc.).

Serves 1.



Choc Hazelnut Acai Bowl

Gluten-free

Ingredients

1 frozen banana
1 frozen acai packet
1 heaped TBSP H&C spread, plus extra to drizzle on top
A splash of non-dairy milk

Method

Add all ingredients to a blender and blend until smooth. Be careful not to add too much milk as the acai bowl will turn out too runny. If your blender is strong enough, you can omit the milk.

Top with desired toppings. I used chia seeds, raspberries, desiccated coconut and an extra drizzle of H&C spread. Serves 1.

Tip: I used Heavenly Hazel spread for this recipe (see page 13) but any chocolate and hazelnut spread will work.



Fluffy Choc Hazelnut Stuffed Pancakes

Low Gluten

Ingredients

- ½ cup buckwheat flour
- ½ cup wholemeal spelt flour (or more buckwheat flour for completely gluten-free)
- 1 TBSP baking powder
- 1 banana mashed (or sub 1/3 cup unsweetened applesauce)
- ½ cup vegan yogurt (I used cashew yogurt)
- ½ cup almond milk
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 6 TBSP H&C spread

Method

In a bowl, combine the flours and baking powder.

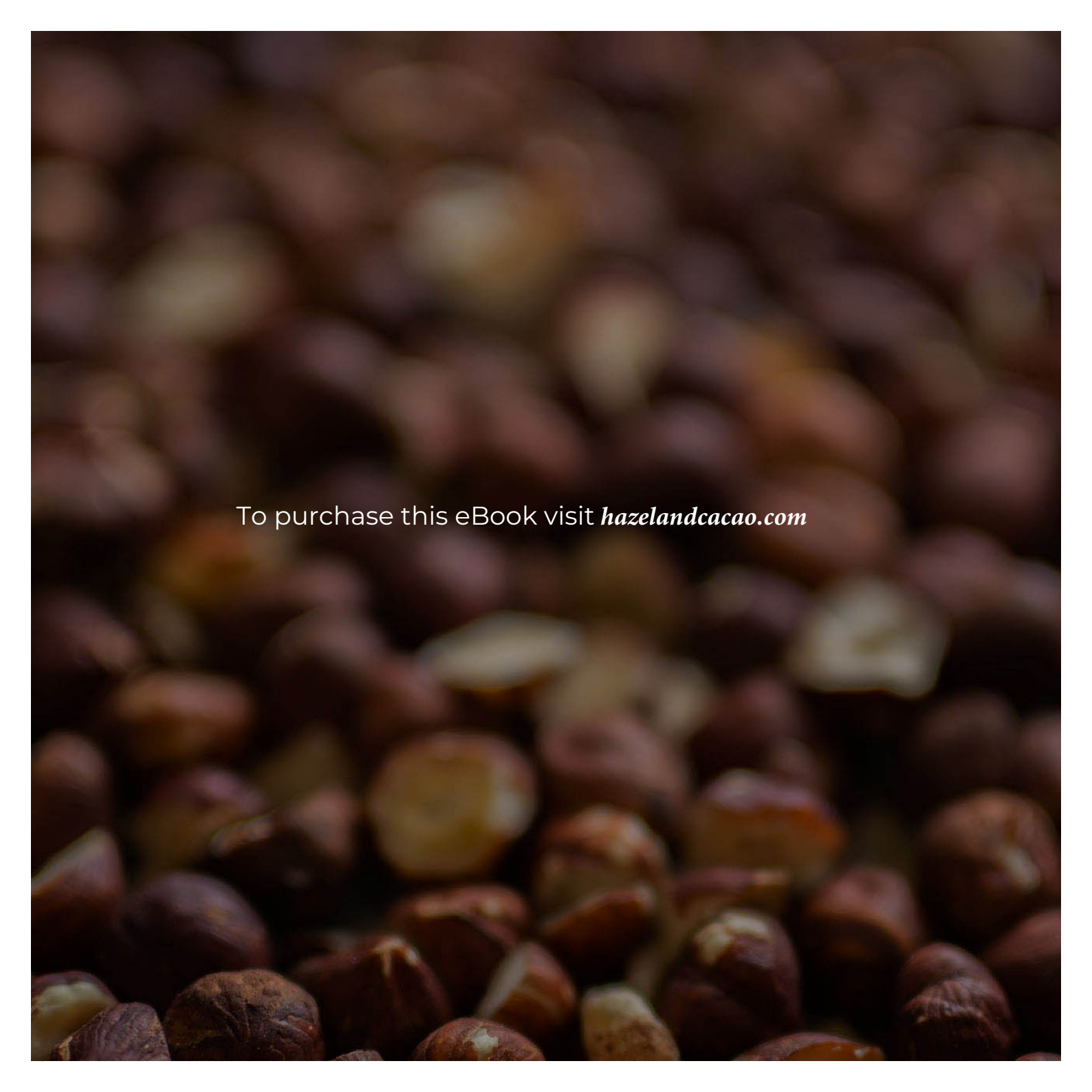
In a separate bowl, mash the banana (or add applesauce) and combine with yogurt, vanilla and almond milk. Mix and pour over the flour mixture. Mix until a pancake batter forms.

Heat a frypan over low-medium heat with a little oil or oil spray.

Scoop ¼ cup of batter into the frypan then add 1 TBSP of H&C spread on top of the batter. Top with another 2 TBSP of batter and even out to form pancake shape.

Fry on one side for about 2 minutes until some bubbles begin to form on the surface and the edges turn golden. Flip and cook the other side for a few more seconds (remember the first pancake always turns out the worst).

Continue until the batter is all used up. It should make about 6 pancakes. Serve with extra H&C spread, maple syrup and berries.



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