

Flourless Almond Torte With Balsamic Glazed Strawberries and Honey-Mascarpone

This recipe, adapted from Laura Rosenberg at www.greennpakinnutrition.com, is the perfect Valentine's Day indulgence!

For torte:

1½ cups raw almonds, blanched and skinned
¼ cup maple syrup
3 large organic eggs
1 teaspoon almond extract
¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon sea salt

Pre-heat oven to 375°F. Line an 8-inch spring form pan or cake pan with a parchment paper circle cut to fit the bottom.

In a food processor fitted with a metal blade or a Vitamix (preferred), grind the almonds until flourlike, about 3 minutes. If the oil from the nuts causes the mixture to stick to the sides, run a spatula around the edge to loosen the mixture. Continue to process another 1 minute.

Measure the maple syrup, eggs, extracts, and salt into a measuring cup, mixing well to break up the eggs. While the food processor is running, pour the maple syrup mixture through the feed tube and process until smooth.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 25-30 minutes. The torte is ready when the top is lightly golden brown and the center is firm. If the top browns too quickly, tent with foil and continue baking.

For balsamic glazed strawberries:

6 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely ground maple crystals
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 cups fresh strawberries, quartered

Combine vinegar and maple crystals in a small bowl. Stir until maple crystals dissolve. Add a pinch of salt and pepper; stir to mix well. Let sit for 15 minutes.

In a bowl, pour marinate over the strawberries. Gently toss to coat.

For honey mascarpone:

2 teaspoons honey
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mascarpone

Mix honey with mascarpone until well blended.

Serve the torte in wedges, covered with honey mascarpone and topped with balsamic glazed strawberries.