

Chewy Chocolate Chip Cookies *Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, and Naturally Sweetened*

What if rollercoasters were all downhill with none of the uphill? Would we react the same way? Sometimes anticipation is necessary to building excitement. Waiting for these cookies to bake and smelling their heavenly aroma makes that first bite—of warm chocolate mixed with crunchy nuts and chewy oats—even more decadent.

Ever since going gluten free, I've been craving a cookie with a cookie-like texture. Many GF cookies are crumbly or overly soft, but these (in my opinion) are perfect. Plus, they have lots of good things in them. Coconut flour is full of fiber and almond meal is packed with protein. I've actually seen people elbow each other to get to a plate of these cookies. They are that good! Even those who don't eat gluten-free or dairy-free love these.

Before starting, make sure all ingredients are at room temperature.

Makes about 2 dozen

1¼ cup almond meal
½ cup coconut flour
½ tsp. baking soda
½ tsp. salt
2/3 cup melted coconut oil
¾ cup maple syrup
3 lg. eggs + 1 yolk
1½ tsp. vanilla extract
¼ cup unsweetened shredded coconut
¼ cup rolled oats
½ cup chopped walnuts
1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Melt coconut oil over low heat on the stove.

In a medium bowl combine the almond meal, coconut flour, baking soda, and salt. Set aside. In the bowl of a standing mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, blend the melted coconut oil and maple syrup on medium until an emulsion begins to form (I usually have to stick my finger in it to taste it at this point!). Slowly add the eggs and vanilla until fully combined. With the mixer on medium-low, mix in the flour blend. If the dough feels too moist, no fear, coconut flour soaks up lots of liquid. In a few minutes it will begin to firm up. Stir in the shredded coconut, oats, walnuts, and chocolate chips by hand. Use a soup spoon to scoop balls of dough the size of a large ping-pong ball. Roll the dough in your palms and then gently flatten on the baking sheet into a round disc. These cookies will not spread much in the oven, so form them to your liking before baking them. Bake approximately 18 minutes, or until golden. Remove and cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

