

Fran Costigan
Recipe for December 6, 2022 Essential Vegan Desserts Live Event
Holiday Desserts
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Buche de Noel is traditionally a cake is finished to look like a log. Confectionary mushrooms, typically made from meringue, cake or cocoa powder 'dirt,' confectioners' sugar snow, rosemary pine needles, the look of the final dessert is entirely customizable.

Often the cakes are rolled cakes, but you'll find some that are baked in shaped pans, and some wide and short cakes finished to look like tree stumps. The one I like best was developed for my cookbook, *Vegan Chocolate: Unapologetically Luscious and Decadent Dairy-free Desserts*.

The cake is baked in a quarter sheet pan (9"x13") and the slices are graduated.

I find the cake to frosting more to my taste this way and the cake is more customizable. Glutenfree, oil-free, your favorite cake, will do. Waterproof the layers with a thin coat of ganache, jam, fill with whipped ganache, chocolate pudding, whipped cream, your choice.

Then ice the log with ganache and use a fork to make 'bark'. It is quite simple and fun.

The mushrooms shown are homemade marzipan and delectable. This was pre- aquafaba days. Now I have a choice and sometimes do make aquafaba meringue mushroom.

Decorate your log with confectioners' sugar snow, cocoa powder and / or cake crumb 'dirt', rosemary pine needles, candied cranberries or pomegranate arils.

The ingredients *almond paste* and *marzipan* are frequently used interchangeably but there are differences. The main ingredient is almond.

Almond Paste, which is considered a baking ingredient, usually has a coarser texture and is softer than *Marzipan*, so it can be spread or used as a filing. Marzipan is stiff and used to make confections.

The following recipe is a straight adaptation from King Arthurs Baking DIY Almond Paste. Mine replaces the egg white with aquafaba and is made stiff enough to shape. So let's say it is Marzipan.

Use more almond flour if your paste isn't thick enough and add ¼ tsp additional almond extract for a stronger flavor.

Note that I have a recipe in my cookbook, *Vegan Chocolate: Unapologetically Luscious and Decadent Dairy-Free Desserts* that is made with a small amount, 2Tbsp of confectioners' sugar and an equal amount of rice syrup. Blanched almonds are used to make that lower sugar version.

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DIY Marzipan adapted from King Arthur Baking recipe for Almond Paste

Yield: 334g /about 11.8oz

Ingredients

160g /5.8 oz blanched almond flour
165g / 5.6 oz confectioners' sugar, vegan
1/8 tsp salt
2T/23g aquafaba: mine was reduced as usual
1 ¼ tsp almond extract

Method

Add the almond flour and confectioners' sugar and salt to the bowl of a food processor and process 30 seconds.

Add the aquafaba, and almond extract and process until the mixture forms a smooth ball of dough. Stop the machine and scrape down the sides of the bowl a few times. The amount of time needed will depending on the size and power of your processor.

Remove the paste from the bowl and divide it in half. Shape each half into a log. Wrap each tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerate until it is firmer.

Store the almond paste, tightly wrapped for up to 2 weeks in the refrigerator, or up to 4 months in the freezer.

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