

Common Sweeteners & Suggested Uses

1 of 5

ESSENTIAL VEGAN DESSERTS COURSE

With many natural sweeteners on the market, it can be difficult to determine which to use and how they will behave in your dessert. Here is an overview of the varieties, descriptions and suggested uses of some of the most common sweeteners on the market.

Please note that this list does not include fresh fruits, purées and juices, which are excellent ingredients to provide natural sweetness in some recipes. They should not be used in cakes and baked goods.

Key to Chart:  Description  Pastry uses

Whole-Food Sweeteners

Dried Whole Fruits

 Dried fruits, such as dried berries, dates, raisins, apricots, figs, pineapples, mangoes and more, are great ways to add natural sweetness to a dish.

 Dried fruits are a great addition to fruit-based salads. They can also be softened in water and added to smoothies. Do not use to sweeten cakes. They are okay as a mix in.

Fruit Pastes

 Fruit pastes are made from soaking dried fruit in water, often flavored with spices or citrus and then blended into a paste. Commonly made from dried apricots, dates, figs, mangoes or raisins, fruit pastes are staple ingredients for a plant-based diet.

 From sweet to savory, pastes can be used on your morning grains, in smoothies, in snack or granola bars and as endless options within baked goods. Pastes add moisture and are natural sweeteners.

Granulated & Powdered Sweeteners

Date Sugar

 This concentrated fruit sugar is derived from dried and granulated dates, and some consider it a whole-food sweetener. It is dark in color with a coarse to fine consistency, the flavor of dates and a high sweetness level.

 Good for beverages and creams that are cooked. It can be used as you would a brown sugar. Do not use in cakes as it does not dissolve. It will burn on cobblers and crisps. Sprinkle on desserts after baking.



Common Sweeteners & Suggested Uses

2 of 5

ESSENTIAL VEGAN DESSERTS COURSE

Granulated & Powdered Sweeteners (cont.)

Maple Sugar

D Maple sugar is created when the sap of the sugar maple is boiled for longer than is needed to create maple syrup. Once almost all the water has been boiled off, all that is left is a solid sugar. It is then granulated. It is more concentrated than the syrup but surprisingly, it is less sweet.

PU Use 1:1 for cane sugar. Best used when the flavor of maple is desirable. It will darken light-colored baked goods. It is a good alternative to cane sugar, though not as sweet.

Coconut Sugar, also known as Coconut Palm Sugar

D A less common sweetener that is growing in popularity, coconut sugar is derived from the juices of coconut palm sugar blossoms. It is commonly harvested on small farms. Coconut sugar is light brown in color with a coarse consistency that will require further grinding or powdering in a blender or spice grinder before use in batter-based desserts. It tastes similar to light brown sugar with caramel overtones and has a medium sweetness level.

PU Suitable for all desserts. It will darken light-colored baked goods. Make sure to buy palm sugar from a reputable supplier or you may get a blend of fillers such as white cane sugar.

Whole Cane Sugar, also known as dehydrated cane and evaporated cane juice

D Cane sugar with all of the molasses of the cane intact. It is dark brown in color but varies by brand. Its consistency is coarse and it has a strong taste of molasses. It has a sweetness level of medium. The best-known brand names are Sucanat and Rapunzel in North America and Rapunzel's Rapadura in the UK and Europe.

PU It is good as a brown sugar replacement. You can replace some organic cane with whole cane when cake color is not issue. Especially good in spice cakes, coffeecakes and chocolate cakes. Its coarse consistency means that it must be ground before use in batter-based desserts.

Cane Sugar

D Sugar cane, not filtered through bone char and not bleached, retains some of the cane molasses. This gives it its pale blonde to darker blonde color. It has a fine or very fine crystal size, but its granules are always larger than refined white sugar. It is closest in flavor to refined white sugar and has a high sweetness level. Organic and fair trade cane sugar are always vegan.

PU 1:1 for refined white sugar. Lightly grind in food processor before using if the crystal is too large. Grind to consistency of super fine or caster sugar in blender as needed. White icings made with this sugar are never pure white, due to its small amount of molasses. Cane sugar is also made into confectioner's sugar or icing sugar, which is cane sugar pulverized into a very fine powder. Do not substitute confectioner's sugar for regular or superfine sugar.



vegandesserts.rouxbe.com

ROUXBE
THE WORLD'S LEADING ONLINE CULINARY SCHOOL

Common Sweeteners & Suggested Uses

3 of 5

ESSENTIAL VEGAN DESSERTS COURSE

Granulated & Powdered Sweeteners (cont.)

Stevia

D Stevia is derived from the stevia leaf and is 30 times sweeter than sugar. Many consider this the most concentrated sweetener by volume. Interestingly, the FDA has only approved stevia as a dietary supplement, not yet as a sweetener. It is a light green or white powder, depending on its processing. It has a distinct flavor that some people find unpleasant.

PU Stevia is best in hot or cold beverages and on cereals for that added sweetness. Try using the fresh leaf in teas. Do not use for batter-based desserts.

Liquid Sweeteners

Agave Syrup

D This is derived from the same succulent plant from which we get tequila. It is a sweet, viscous but thin syrup. It ranges in color from light, which is the most processed, to dark, which is raw. Light-colored agave is mild flavored while dark agave has a stronger flavor. Its sweetness level is high.

PU Use to sweeten creams, mousse, puddings, smoothies, beverages and sauces. Do not use for cakes as agave syrup tends to produce gummy baked goods. Oven temperature and ingredients will need to be adjusted and tested when substituting agave syrup for another sweetener. Watch out for agave syrup that has been adulterated with corn syrup.

Barley Malt Syrup

D Derived from malted barley sprout, this is a popular sweetener in the macrobiotic community. It is dark brown in color with a thick consistency. It has a definite strong malty flavor, but it is not as strong as molasses. It has a low sweetness level.

PU Use sparingly, a tablespoon or two in cool weather recipes with warming spices, pumpkins, squashes or ginger. Use interchangeably with molasses, sorghum syrup and coconut nectar.

Brown Rice Syrup

D Derived from the sugars from brown rice starch, this traditional Asian sweetener is a popular sweetener in the macrobiotic diet. It is golden in color with a very thick and sticky consistency. It has a flavor similar to caramel and a mild sweetness level.

PU Adds crispness to cookies. Use in combination with maple syrup and to make vegan honey and caramel. Thin the consistency by heating before using. Do not use in cakes as it produces gummy baked goods and is not sweet enough.



vegandesserts.rouxbe.com

ROUXBE
THE WORLD'S LEADING ONLINE CULINARY SCHOOL

Common Sweeteners & Suggested Uses

4 of 5

ESSENTIAL VEGAN DESSERTS COURSE

Liquid Sweeteners (cont.)

Coconut Nectar

D Derived from the coconut palm, it is said to be sustainable. It is medium brown in color, but depending on the brand it may be lighter or darker. It is viscous, thicker than maple or agave, but thinner than barley malt. It has a distinctive flavor that some find pleasant, but the flavor varies by brand. Its sweetness level is low.

PU Use in place of molasses or barley malt. Do not use to make cakes.

Date Syrup

D See also whole-food sweeteners and fruit pastes.

PU Best for sweetening beverages, fruit desserts, puddings and sauces. Do not use for cakes.

Maple Syrup

D This much-loved sweetener is made by boiling maple sap down to a syrup, and is available in a number of grades. It takes around 40 gallons of maple sap to make 1 gallon of syrup. Light to dark brown in color, it has a thin and sticky consistency and a sweet, light and distinctive flavor. It has a medium sweetness level.

PU Besides smothering your pancakes and waffles, maple syrup is a perfect choice for baked items, puddings, creams and sweet sauces. It can also add a touch of sweetness to smoothies and beverages. Use Grade A Dark or Dark Amber (formerly Grade B) for best flavor. Maple is a top choice for all desserts, including baked goods.

Molasses

D A by-product of the refining of sugarcane, sugar beets and grapes, this is a dark, rich, earthy and sticky sweetener. It is very dark brown in color with a thick and sticky consistency. It has a distinctive strong taste with some bitterness and a low sweetness level.

PU Thin consistency by heating before using. Use in fall and winter desserts such as spice cakes, gingerbread and pumpkin desserts. Substitutes for molasses include sorghum, coconut nectar and barley malt. Look for organic molasses.



vegandesserts.rouxbe.com

ROUXBE
THE WORLD'S LEADING ONLINE CULINARY SCHOOL

Common Sweeteners & Suggested Uses

5 of 5

ESSENTIAL VEGAN DESSERTS COURSE

Liquid Sweeteners (cont.)

Sorghum Syrup

D This is derived from the cereal grain sorghum. It is brown and has a viscous consistency, thicker than maple, thinner than brown rice syrup. It has a distinctive flavor, like a less strong molasses.

PU Use sorghum as you would use a lighter molasses, barley malt, yacon or coconut nectar.

Yacon Syrup

D Derived from the yacon plant, this syrup tastes similar to molasses but has a lower glycemic index. It is dark in color and has a thick and sticky consistency. It tastes similar to molasses with a low sweetness level.

PU Use yacon syrup as you would molasses—for example, in smoothies, desserts and sauces. Not recommended for cakes.



vegandesserts.rouxbe.com