

KATIE WEBSTER





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A FLATLANDER'S PERSPECTIVE ON MAPLE SYRUP

I am what is known as a flatlander. That's what folks born here in Vermont refer to people who aren't originally from the Green Mountain state. Even though my great-grandparents, grandparents, and parents have all lived here at some point, and I spent my summers here from the time that I was a few weeks old, I cannot call myself a native Vermonter. I grew up in the Philadelphia area and only moved to Vermont a year out of college. As much as I would love to call myself a Vermonter, I cannot.

At the speed he drives, it only takes my dad about six hours to drive from my childhood home to where I live in Vermont today. Given the size of the earth this is a small distance, yet at the same time, it is still shocking to me the small amount of change in latitude from the Philadelphia area to here in the Green Mountains, makes in the climate and how that affects our day-to-day lives.



Take shoes for example. Here in Vermont, the weather, and messiness there-of, has such an effect on our day-to-day lives that it is engrained in us to remove our shoes when we enter a house or building. Even in the public schools, the children are provided with cubbies for their outdoor shoes and are expected to change into their indoor shoes for the day. Being the flatlander that I am, when I first moved here, I had no clue and walked straight from the snowy and muddy outdoors through folk's mud-rooms into their clean homes, outdoor elements a-blazin'. I was clueless. Heck in Philly we didn't even have mudrooms. I cringe at the thought of my blithering ignorance as I surely horrified the floor owners.

More than three years ago, I embarked on the project of writing a maple syrup cookbook, realizing that I risked sully many floors in attempting to do justice to the topic of Pure Maple Syrup. Here in Vermont, you cannot fill up with a tank of gas, pick up a dozen eggs or chat with the guy behind the reception desk without finding someone who does backyard sugaring, has THE best maple syrup cake recipe that has been passed down through the generations, or simply visits an operational sugar house during mud season. Everyone here is an expert of sorts and avidly so when it comes to maple syrup.

I cannot tell you how many people were thrilled to know I was working on a maple syrup cookbook and told me about their favorite maple syrup recipes.



Greek Yogurt Banana Maple Bread Pudding

10 SERVINGS

PREP TIME: 25 minutes

COOK TIME: 1 hour 10 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 5 hours 45 minutes

Oh yes, I did! And it has walnuts on it. It's bananas! Literally. And it's my favorite dessert.

4 ripe bananas (divided)
6 eggs
1 cup low-fat milk
1 cup low-fat vanilla Greek yogurt
¾ cup dark pure maple syrup, plus more for serving (if desired)
¼ cup half and half
1 Tbsp vanilla extract
1 lb sourdough bread, crusts removed, cubed
1 Tbsp softened unsalted butter
¼ cup chopped walnuts
1 Tbsp turbinado or coarse sanding sugar
Whipped cream and maple syrup (for serving)

1. Mash 1 banana in large bowl. Add eggs, milk, Greek yogurt, ¾ cup maple syrup, half and half, vanilla; whisk to combine.
2. Add bread; stir to combine. Cover; refrigerate 4–8 hours.
3. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Grease 10¼" cast iron skillet with butter. Stir bread mixture.
4. Spread ½ bread mixture into bottom of skillet. Slice 2 bananas, spread over bread layer. Top with remaining bread mixture. Any remaining batter from bowl can be drizzled over the top.
5. Spritz a square of parchment (roughly 10x10") with cooking spray. Lay parchment, spray side down over bread pudding. Cover tightly over edges with foil, transfer to oven.
6. Bake until steaming hot, and puffed in center, 40–50 minutes.
7. Remove foil and parchment; sprinkle with walnuts and turbinado sugar. Return to oven; bake until top is browned, 20–30 minutes.
8. Remove from oven; cool 10–30 minutes.
9. Slice remaining banana; serve on top of warm bread pudding with whipped cream and maple syrup (if desired).

So how could I, a flatlander, in any way be able to do justice to the subject that everyone knows so much about, and is also deeply embedded in the history and culture of the state of Vermont, New England, Canada, and even Midwestern states? I considered not taking the project on at all. I wondered how I could attempt to honor those recipes that have been perfected throughout maple syrup's history. Ultimately, I decided that I wouldn't even try.

In the pages of *Maple: 100 Sweet and Savory Recipes Featuring Pure Maple Syrup* I didn't even attempt to do justice to the history of maple syrup or existing recipes that have been passed down through the generations. Partly because it has been done in other maple cookbooks and done so well by other authors like Ken Hedrick, Rux Martin, and James Lawrence. Partly because people are so very passionate about their personal and family maple legacy, that I wouldn't want to leave anything out. And with a history and breadth like maple's, I surely would have.

More than that, I wanted to tell the next chapter in the story of maple syrup and to create recipes that are for the way Vermonters and flatlanders alike, people like you and me, want to cook today. Delicious, interesting, from scratch but healthier. Cooking with a focus on seasonality, whole and making healthier choices for our families and the earth.

In the three years since *Maple* came out, I have talked to so many people far and wide about what making maple syrup and cooking with maple syrup means to them. And the meaning of both has continued to grow for me as well. Now my husband and I have started our own craft-made small-batch maple syrup business, Little Hill Sugarworks. It is a labor of love, and yet we wouldn't have it any other way. I have also continued to create new recipes with my favorite ingredient. In these pages, you will find some of the recipes excerpted from *Maple* and some new. I hope you enjoy them and happy cooking!



Parsnip Maple Coffee Cake

YIELD 12

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

COOK TIME: 55 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 2 hours

FOR THE STREUSEL**¼ cup old-fashioned oats****¼ cup all-purpose flour****2 Tbsp granulated natural cane sugar
(evaporated cane juice)****2 Tbsp unsalted butter, softened****½ tsp cinnamon****FOR THE CAKE****¾ cup dark pure maple syrup****¾ cup unsweetened applesauce****½ cup organic canola or avocado oil****2 large eggs****2 tsp vanilla extract****1 cup white whole-wheat flour****2 tsp baking powder****1 tsp cinnamon****1 tsp ground ginger****½ tsp salt****2 cups shredded peeled parsnips****½ cup raisins****½ cup chopped toasted walnuts**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Grease 10" spring-form pan or mist with cooking spray.

To Make the Streusel

Rub together oats, flour, cane sugar, butter, cinnamon in small bowl with clean fingertips until crumbly; set aside.

To Make the Coffee Cake

1. Whisk maple syrup, applesauce, oil, eggs, and vanilla in large bowl.
2. Whisk flour, baking powder, cinnamon, ginger and salt in small bowl.
3. Add flour mixture to wet mixture, stir to combine with silicone spatula.
4. Add parsnips, raisins, walnuts; stir to combine. Spread batter in pan, top with streusel,

transfer to oven. Bake until cake is puffed and top is golden, about 55 minutes.

5. Let cake cool at least 1 hour. Cut into wedges; serve.

Maple, Potato and Sausage Breakfast Skillet with Kale

YIELD 4

Recipe pictured on page 111 and featured in *Maple: 100 Sweet and Savory Recipes Featuring Pure Maple Syrup*

PREP TIME: 25 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 25 minutes

This hearty breakfast is a contender for a new weekend brunch classic.

1 large Russet potato, medium, diced**½ lb pork breakfast sausage,
casings removed****1 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil****1 shallot, minced****½ tsp coarse kosher salt****3 cups finely chopped Lacinato kale
(no stems)****2 Tbsp pure maple syrup
(Dark or Amber)****1 Tbsp cider vinegar****Freshly ground pepper (to taste)**

1. Bring several inches of water to boil in large saucepan fitted with steamer basket. Add potato; cook until potato is just tender when tested with a fork, 5–7 minutes.
2. Brown sausage in large non-stick skillet over medium heat, stirring with wooden spoon, breaking into small chunks, until no pink remains, 3–4 minutes. Scrape sausage from skillet and keep warm.
3. Add oil to skillet, return to medium-high heat. Add shallot and salt, cook, stirring often until fragrant, 30–90 seconds. Add potatoes, cook, stirring occasionally until potatoes are mostly browned, 4–6 minutes.
4. Add sausage and any accumulated juices from plate, kale, maple syrup, and vinegar; cook stirring often until kale is wilted and just tender and sausage is heated through 2–3 minutes. Season with pepper.



Slow-Cooker Maple Chipotle BBQ Beef

YIELD 8 servings

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 8 hours 15 minutes

A delicious, kid-friendly weeknight dinner with only 15 minutes of prep. And it's naturally gluten-free, dairy-free and wheat-free!

3-3½ lbs beef chuck roast, preferably grass-fed

1 large sweet onion, finely diced

1 (14 oz) can crushed tomatoes, preferably fire-roasted

½ cup pure maple syrup (Dark or Amber)

¼ cup tomato paste

3 Tbsp apple cider vinegar

1 Tbsp coarse grain or brown mustard

2 tsp chili powder

1½ tsp salt

1 tsp chipotle chili powder

½ tsp freshly ground pepper

1. Place beef chuck roast in the insert of a large slow cooker. Top with onion.
2. Whisk remaining ingredients in medium bowl. Pour over the beef.
3. Cover the slow cooker, set to low heat for 8 hours.
4. When timer is up, remove beef to cutting board; remove visible pieces of fat.
5. Shred meat with forks. Skim any fat off the sauce.
6. Return meat to sauce, stir to combine. Serve with barbecue sauce.



Sesame Coleslaw

YIELD 8 cups

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 15 minutes

I promise this Sesame Coleslaw will be your go-to salad. Not to mention it is vegan, Paleo, and gluten-free!

3 Tbsp white vinegar, or cider vinegar

1 Tbsp maple syrup

1 Tbsp reduced-sodium tamari*

1 Tbsp flaxseed oil**

2 tsp avocado oil or organic canola oil

2 tsp toasted sesame oil

¼ tsp salt

¼ tsp ground black or white pepper

8 cups finely chopped cabbage

½ cup brunoise-cut carrots

¼ cup toasted sesame seeds

1. Whisk vinegar, maple syrup, tamari, flax oil, avocado oil, sesame oil, salt and pepper in a large bowl.
2. Add cabbage, carrots, sesame seeds; toss to coat.

NOTES:

*To make this Paleo, substitute coconut aminos for the tamari.

**Flaxseed oil is an excellent source of plant-based omega-3 fatty acids, super-important for combatting inflammation. It is heat sensitive, so don't cook with it and be sure to store it in the refrigerator. It has a slight nutty/fishy flavor, so it is best when paired with bold flavors like those in this dressing.

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HealthySeasonalRecipes.com

Maple: 100 Sweet and Savory Recipes

Featuring Pure Maple Syrup, released 2015