

# A Few Desserts, Done Well

Some desserts earn their place by showing up year after year. Not because they follow trends, but because they work. This small collection is built around that idea. Each recipe reflects a season and a way of baking that values restraint.

These are not showpieces. They are desserts meant to be made, shared, and returned to. The methods are straightforward, the ingredients simple, and the results familiar, the way good desserts always are.

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## A Fall Classic

Before flour was milled by the sack, desserts were created from what a kitchen already had: fruit, eggs, milk, and honey. Custards belonged to everyday cooking—seasonal and reliable. This pumpkin custard stems from that tradition.

# Pumpkin Custard

1 ½ cup pumpkin puree  
1 ½ tsp cinnamon  
¼ tsp nutmeg  
1/4 tsp salt

3 eggs  
⅓ cup pure maple syrup

¾ cup whole milk

Halve a pie pumpkin, scrape out the seeds, and place cut-side down in a baking dish with a small amount of water. Roast until a fork pierces the flesh easily. Allow to cool, then peel and mash or purée until smooth. This is where the custard gets its body, so take the time here.

In a large bowl, combine the pumpkin with the spices and salt.

In a small bowl, whisk the eggs with the maple syrup until smooth and lightly thickened.

Add the egg mixture to the spiced pumpkin and whisk until fully combined.

Slowly incorporate the milk, mixing gently until fully blended.

Pour into a buttered baking dish.

Bake on 325°F until the edges are set and the center jiggles like gelatin.

Allow to cool completely; the custard finishes as it rests.

## Granny's Notes

Custard should set with a smooth, light surface.

Browning or puffing means the heat is too high.

Cracking indicates the custard has baked too long.

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## A Cottage Staple

Long before uniform cookies, coconut macaroons were mixed and shaped by hand. Sweetened simply and baked just until set, these macaroons follow that tradition, softly domed, with tender centers.

# Coconut Macaroons

4 egg whites  
1/8 tsp cream of tartar

1/3 cup raw honey  
1/4 tsp salt

1/2 tsp vanilla extract

3 cups coconut flakes

Whisk the egg whites with the cream of tartar in a small saucepan until loosened and lightly opaque. Add the honey and salt and warm gently over low heat, stirring until the honey thins and the mixture is just warm to the touch. Remove from the heat and stir in the vanilla.

Fold the warm mixture into the coconut until evenly moistened. Cover and let rest for 10 minutes to allow the coconut to absorb and settle.

Shape by hand into softly domed mounds and place on a lined baking sheet.

Bake until the tops are set and lightly golden.

Allow to cool on the pan.

Dip in chocolate once fully cooled, if desired.

## Granny's Notes

These macaroons are chewy, with long strands of flaked coconut.

Do not remove too early—the tops must turn golden or the centers will not set.

Pan choice and parchment determine how much browning occurs on the bottom.

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## A Late-Summer Bake

This is a cake for warm weather, rooted in everyday baking, fruit forward, lightly sweet, and finished without frosting. The peaches bake into the top, the crumb stays tender, and the cake is served just as it is.

# Peach Upside-Down Cake

⅓ cup apricot preserves  
2-3 peaches, sliced

4 eggs  
⅓ cup honey  
1 tsp vanilla extract

½ cup coconut flour  
½ tsp baking soda  
½ tsp cinnamon

⅓ cup butter, melted

Butter an 8" round baking pan, line the bottom with parchment cut to fit. Lightly dust the sides of the pan with coconut flour, tapping out any excess.

Spread the apricot preserves evenly over the parchment. Arrange the peach slices in a single circular layer, fully covering the preserves. Set aside.

In a large bowl, beat the eggs, then mix in the honey and vanilla until smooth. Sift the dry ingredients over the bowl and stir just until incorporated. Add the melted butter and mix gently until cohesive.

Spread the batter evenly over the peaches without disturbing the fruit. Let the pan rest for 10 minutes.

Bake at 350°F until the cake is set through the center and lightly golden, about 30 minutes.

Let the cake cool in the pan. The crumb settles as it rests.

## Granny's Notes

Preparation matters more than precision.

Lining the pan keeps the fruit intact when inverting.

Once turned out, the crumb benefits from time to settle.

# A Way of Baking

At Grain-free Granny's baking starts with what the kitchen already has. Eggs are beaten, fruit is cooked down, and honey is warmed just enough to do its job. Across custards, cakes, and simple cookies, the work stays the same.

Heat is kept steady. Mixtures are handled carefully. The dessert is allowed to set before it is served.

This is a way of baking built on trust; trust in method, in ingredients, and in the quiet confidence that comes from making the same good things well.