



# SWEET TREATS TOUR RECIPE BOOKLET

Recipes to celebrate plants at the  
Garfield Park Conservatory

A digital resource developed by

GARFIELD PARK  
CONSERVATORY  
ALLIANCE 

to supplement the VAMONDE Sweet Treats Tour

# Sweet Treats & the Sugar from the Sun Room

One of our most amazing rooms in the Conservatory is the Sugar from the Sun room. In this room, we set out to answer the question: how do plants make sugar? But what also makes this room special is that most of the plants make foods humans can eat. We've assembled this recipe booklet to feature several of our tastiest plants. To find out more about the plants featured in each of these recipes, you can find our digital tour here:

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# Papaya Smoothie

Recipe adapted from [Food Network Magazine](#)

On hot days few things taste better than a cool drink, and we love enjoying this delicious papaya smoothie packed with flavor and nourishing ingredients.

Time: 10 minutes

Makes 2- 3 servings

## Ingredients:

- 1 small papaya, peeled, seeded, and diced
- 1 banana, sliced
- ½ cup strawberries
- 15 ice cubes (omit if using frozen banana or strawberries)
- Water to blend (if needed)
- Pineapple wedges and/or fresh mint for garnish

## Directions:

1. Combine the papaya, banana, strawberries, and ice cubes in a blender.
2. If needed, add in water to help the blender process fruit.
3. Run the blender and puree until smooth.
4. Pour into glasses and garnish with pineapple and/or mint according to preference.

# Chocolate-Covered Strawberries

Recipe adapted from Brandon LaGrone, Nature Education Teacher at GPCA and professional chef



There's no treat that feels quite as special as chocolate-covered strawberries! We love these as a way to enjoy fresh strawberries and the extra toppings make for lots of delicious ways to personalize these.

Time: 40 minutes

Makes roughly 12-18 strawberries

## Ingredients:

- 1 pint of Strawberries
- 1 cup chocolate chips (milk, dark, white)
- 2 teaspoons butter, coconut oil (melted), or shortening
- Parchment paper or chilled aluminum pan
- Additional toppings, if desired, like chopped nuts, caramel, different type of chocolate, or fruit sauce

Note: you can also purchase chocolate melting chips, which are ready to use without any additional ingredients

## Directions:

1. Rinse and dry strawberries carefully; you do not want water to mix with your chocolate.



2. Prepare other possible toppings if desired.
3. Lay out parchment paper on pan or aluminum pan.
4. Put water into a double boiler set to simmer, do not boil water. If a double boiler is not available, put water into a sauce pan, filling  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the way. Use a heat resistant bowl to place over the sauce pan as the water heats.
5. Place chocolate and butter/coconut oil/shortening in top part of double boiler. If using melting chips, place them in the top part of double boiler without anything else.
6. As chocolate begins to melt, make sure the heat stays low and water doesn't boil. Stir chocolate constantly until fully melted and smooth.
7. Remove from heat, then dip strawberries holding at the stem and swirl until fully coated and place on parchment/pan. To achieve a swirl of chocolates, melt one type first, then a 2nd type. With both melted add one type to the other in a spiral motion starting at the center and moving out. When dipping strawberry lightly swirl as you remove from chocolate.
8. If toppings are desired, add now, then continue with each strawberry until finished.
9. Place strawberries in refrigerator for 20 minutes to let chocolate dry and toppings set. Enjoy!





# Café con Leche

Recipe adapted from [Spanish Sabores](#)

This is a classic beverage enjoyed in much of the Spanish-speaking world. Many cultures have different variations, so if you enjoy this one, try others!

Time: 10 minutes

Makes 1 serving

Ingredients:

- 1 oz (30 ml) of espresso or extra strong brewed coffee
- 1 oz (30 ml) of whole milk (can be substituted with a plant milk alternative, like oat or almond milk)
- Sugar (optional)

Directions:

1. Prepare your coffee. If you have an espresso machine, use it! Otherwise, brew a bit of very strong coffee on the stove or in a French press coffee maker.
2. Steam or heat your milk on the stove until it's as hot as possible without bringing it to a boil. If you have a cooking thermometer, shoot for 150-155°F.
3. Pour the milk over the coffee. Add sugar to taste, and grab a couple of cookies to enjoy your cafe with if you're feeling fancy.





# Vegan Banana French Toast

Recipe adapted from [Minimalist Baker](#)

Nothing makes for a better brunch than French toast. This recipe omits eggs and dairy, making it suitable for a wide variety of dietary needs.

Time: 45 minutes

Makes 2-3 servings

## Ingredients:

- 1 ripe banana (half mashed, half sliced)
- 4-5 slices hearty bread (artisan/rustic, Texas toast, whole grain)
- ½ teaspoons of cinnamon
- ½ tablespoon of Flaxseed meal (or starch i.e. corn, arrowroot or potato)
- 1 ¼ cup Almond milk (or other milk alternative)
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract (optional)
- 1 tablespoon almond meal (optional)
- 1 teaspoon vegan butter or oil
- Syrup

## Directions:

1. Mash half a banana in a large shallow bowl.

2. Add and mix other ingredients except for oil and syrup. If the mix is too thick, add more milk (or alternative) until the mix is pourable. Let mix rest for 4 - 5 minutes
3. While the mix is resting, heat griddle or skillet to medium heat. Then use butter (or oil) to coat the surface.
4. Dip bread into the mix on one side for a few seconds, then flip. Let excess mix drain back into the bowl then place on the griddle/skillet.
5. Let cook for 2-3 minutes then flip. Continue flipping frequently until cooked through and golden brown on each side. Repeat this for each slice.
6. When the french toast is done, top with the remaining sliced banana and syrup.





# Vanilla Cheesecake

Recipe adapted from [Gordon Ramsey](#) & [Bennydoro.com](#)

Cheesecake is a classic dessert for good reason! We've combined ours with a berry compote to compliment the flavors of the creamy vanilla filling.

Time: 40 minutes

Makes 6-8 servings

Ingredients:

Compote:

- 10 oz blueberries
- 10 oz Strawberries
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar

Crust & topping:

- 8 graham crackers (get gluten-free if needed)
- 6 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 3.5 oz unsalted butter or Vegan Butter

Vanilla cream cheese filling:

- 14 oz cream cheese at room temp
- 6 tablespoons powdered sugar
- ½ fresh squeezed lemon or 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 vanilla pod split and scraped or 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- Powdered sugar for dusting (sprinkling over the top when



done)

- 2 ½ cups heavy whipping cream

Directions:

1. Start by making the topping using a food processor or blender, process graham cracker until its coarsely crushed.
2. Melt sugar in a skillet on low to medium heat until it caramelizes.
3. Add butter and let it melt around the sugar then add graham cracker.
4. Mix until graham crackers are coated, then place in a dish on the side to cool.
5. To make the compote, wipe pan clean then mix sugar with fruit and put on medium-high heat. Let the mix simmer until fruit has softened, then pour to a dish and set aside to cool.
6. For vanilla bean cheese filling, use an immersion blender, or whisk (takes a while) to whip the heavy cream to soft peaks, and then set in the fridge to cool.
7. Split the vanilla bean and scrape the inside into a bowl with the cream cheese, powdered sugar, and lemon juice. Mix well, but do not over mix. Fold whipped cream into the cream cheese mix.
8. To assemble the cheesecake, spread most of the graham cracker mixture onto a dish. Put the cheesecake mixture into the center of the dish and spread it to cover the plate evenly. Sprinkle the rest of the graham cracker mixture on top. Use a fork to scoop berries out of the compote and spread them evenly onto the top of the cheesecake. Use a spoon to drizzle the liquid of the compote on top as desired.





# Ginger Granola

Recipe adapted from Jam Doughty, Nature Education  
Teacher at GPCA

Homemade granola is one of our favorite treats. Try experimenting by adding in different nuts, seeds, and dried fruits.

Time: 30 minutes

Makes 6-8 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 cup ginger (fresh and finely chopped, or candied)
- 1 tsp sugar (optional—for coating fresh ginger)
- ½ cup oil (canola, olive, or coconut)
- ½ cup honey or maple syrup
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- 3 cups rolled oats
- 1 cup sliced nuts, fruits, or seeds of choice, like almonds, pepitas, or cranberries

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 300°F. While oven is heating, combine



- oil, honey, salt, cinnamon, and vanilla in a large bowl.
2. Add in oats and nuts. stir to coat in liquid.
  3. If using fresh ginger, toss it with the sugar. Add the sugar-coated ginger to the oats and nuts mixture. (If using candied ginger, add it halfway through baking!)
  4. Spread mixture on an oiled baking pan. You can also use parchment paper for easy clean up.
  5. Bake for 20 minutes, stirring once at 10 minute mark. If you have candied ginger, add it when you stir!
  6. Let granola cool to fully set. Enjoy this granola with milk, yogurt, ice cream, or mixed with fruit. To make it last longer, store in the fridge.





# Vegan Snickerdoodles

Recipe adapted from [Simple Veganista](#)

We love cookies, but especially cookies with a good dose of cinnamon. Enjoy these with hot cocoa in the winter or in the summer with ice cream!

Time: 1 hour

Makes about 28 cookies

Ingredients:

- 2 ½ cups (350g) spelt, white whole wheat or all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- generous pinch of mineral salt
- 1 cup (225g) vegan butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup (225g) organic pure cane sugar
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon (for the dough)
- ¼ cup (56g) unsweetened applesauce (see notes)
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 3 tablespoons organic pure cane sugar
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon (for the cinnamon sugar coating)



## Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a baking sheet with silpat or parchment paper, or lightly grease with oil.
2. In a mixing bowl, combine the flour, cream of tartar, baking soda and salt. Set aside.
3. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, using a spoon, mix together the sugar and butter until creamy, about 2 minutes. This can also be done with a stand mixer or hand blender if you have them but it isn't necessary. Add the vanilla and applesauce, mix to combine.
4. Add flour mixture and stir just until flour is incorporated. The dough should be firm and thick. If the dough is too soft, chill it in the refrigerator for 15 minutes to 1 hour until it stiffens a bit. This will help keep them from spreading too much.
5. In a small bowl, combine the sugar and cinnamon for rolling. Roll dough into about 1 inch balls. To keep them uniform, you can use a tablespoon to measure out the dough.
6. Place cinnamon-sugar rolled balls on prepared baking sheet, leaving about 2 inches between balls. Bake on the middle rack of the oven for 8 – 9 minutes. For a little crispier cookie, bake for 10 minutes.
7. Let cool for a few minutes on the pan, they may be too soft just from the oven to move to a wire rack. Once cooled, enjoy!
8. Store cookies covered on the counter for up to 3 days. Keep them fresher longer by storing them in the refrigerator for up 10 days. Freeze leftovers for up to 2 months (let thaw before eating).

