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COOKING INGREDIENT IS... CANNABIS

by Michelle Stansbury

Cannabis is the latest culinary ingredient that's having its day in the sun. Nearly a dozen states have legalized it for recreational use, chefs around the country are experimenting with it in their mise en place, and even fancy cooking magazines have recipes featuring the herb. Want to add more green to your diet? Here are four ways to do it.

1. Pack a power lunch Give your work lunch a cannabis makeover by adding CBD oil to your salad dressing. Mix your greens and protein with a dressing made from a dropper of Lemongrass Ginger Releaf from Papa & Barkley, olive oil, and rice vinegar for a healthy and calming lunch break. Just make sure to check your employer's policy before chowing down: Even though recreational cannabis is legal and hemp-derived CBD can't get you high*, both can still show up on drug tests.

2. Get your coffee fix A dropper of CBD in your favorite brew gets you your caffeine fix with less jitters. CBD oil won't fully infuse into the coffee, though, so pick a complementary flavor, like Café Mocha from +PlusCBD Oil. If you start your morning with a frustrating stop-and-go commute, this combo will be your new rush hour must-have.

3. Host a cocktail hour

Impressing your friends at a home happy hour is easy when you mix up cannabis cocktails. For an extra buzz, try a cannabis-infused mixer from a company like Cann Social Tonics. Their lemon lavender (pair it with gin), blood orange cardamom (bourbon), and grapefruit rosemary (vodka) flavors are all low dose, each containing 2 mg THC and 4 mg CBD for a subtle high without feeling out of control.

4. Get baked from baking

Bake some weed cookies to nosh on while binge watching your favorite shows. March & Ash recommends a hybrid strain for baking, like Heady by Leef Organics, but for your first cannabaking project, you'll have an easier time controlling the dosage if you start with premade cannabis butter. Not all dispensaries carry it, so be sure to call ahead. Whether homemade or premade, using cannabutter is as simple as swapping it in for regular butter in your favorite recipe. Prefer brownies? Dark chocolate is great at hiding the taste of cannabis, so if you're new to edibles, brownies are a great way to start.

RECIPE

Brown Butter Hazelnut Chocolate Cannabis Cookies

MAKES 32 LARGE COOKIES

16 oz. (450g) cannabutter, browned and chilled

2 1/4 cups (535g) brown sugar

3/4 cup (175g) white sugar

4 eggs

4 tsp. (20g) vanilla paste

3 2/3 cups (860g) all-purpose flour

1 tbsp. (14g) baking soda

2 tsp. (8g) salt

1/4 cup (60g) hazelnuts, roasted & chopped

7 oz. (200g) dark chocolate, chopped

3 1/2 oz. (100g) white chocolate, chopped

5 oz. (150g) dulcify chocolate, chopped

1. In a mixer, cream brown butter and sugars with paddle attachments until light and fluffy.

2. Add eggs one by one, then vanilla. Mix until completely combined.

3. Divide flour, baking soda, and salt into two equal portions each. Add one portion at a time while mixing on low speed. Mix until the second portion is barely incorporated.

4. Add hazelnuts and chocolates, and continue mixing until fully combined.

5. Portion for individual cookies and freeze until ready to bake. (These bake best from chilled.)

6. Sprinkle with some extra hazelnuts and salt. Bake at 325 degrees for seven minutes, turn and bake for seven more. Cook time depends on oven. Best baked a few hours ahead of serving.

Make sure you and your guests know the approximate THC dosage in each cookie, and what dosage works best for them. If they don't know, advise them to start with just half a cookie and wait 40-60 minutes before eating the other half.

*Hemp-derived CBD products are required to have less than 0.3 percent THC, which is why they can't get you high. But other than that limit, they aren't highly regulated, so pick a brand you trust. Stop by a licensed dispensary for more info.

Recipe courtesy of Rachel King, chef for edibles company Kaneh, former pastry chef of Searsucker and Herringbone

PRO TIP

Weigh everything on a digital scale in grams, if available. This ensures accuracy in consistency and dosing. For example, if the concentrate you use tests at 90 percent, one gram will equal 900 milligrams. So if you use half a gram of it in this recipe (450 mg) and portion the dough into 32 cookies, each cookie will have about 14 mg THC.