

GRAIN-FREE

# Simple sweets

treats made with  
5 ingredients or less



Ashley Thomas & Vivian Cheng

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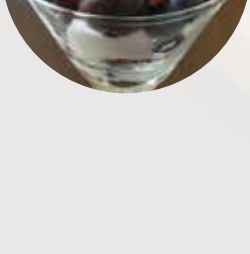
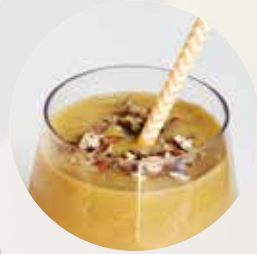
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A plate of pastries, possibly croissants or small breads, topped with chocolate chips and a drizzle of sauce. The background is blurred, showing several red apples on a surface.

**AT:** *To my Roby: you are the sweetest treat of them all!*

**VC:** *For Eric and Jack, the monkeys in the kitchen that get the things off the high shelves and help lick the spoons.*

# About the authors



**Ashley Thomas,**  
My Heart Beets

*I'm Ashley Thomas, the writer and recipe maker for [My Heart Beets](#), a real-food blog where I share grain-free and Paleo-friendly recipes.*

*Almost immediately after my transition to a real food diet, I noticed a major difference in the way I felt. I had more energy and my acid reflux issues and stomach aches disappeared. It was so life changing that it inspired me to start a blog. I figured that if I could heal my health issues simply by changing my diet, then maybe others would be able to do the same.*

*Managing my sweet tooth is one of the more difficult things about following this lifestyle. I just love having a little something sweet every now and then. When I do splurge, I try to eat treats that are sweet but also filling. It helps keep me from feeling deprived, which makes this real foods lifestyle much easier to maintain.*

*My hope is that after trying the recipes in Grain-Free Simple Sweets, your "cheats" will still be much healthier than the processed treats you may have been used to eating in the past.*

*Enjoy!*

*Ashley*

**Vivian Cheng, RHN,**  
**The Real Food Guide**



*My journey in improving my health through diet has hardly been dramatic. After all, the health issues I've had have been a little annoying, but they certainly aren't debilitating. A lot of these issues are things that many people assume are 'normal' because they're common: seasonal allergies, a chronic stuffy nose even when it's not allergy season, and worst of all, eczema that seemed to take over my arms, and often my neck and face.*

*Like many people, my journey to eating better started because I wanted to lose a little 'winter weight' — I cut out junk food, reduced my garbage carbs, lost some weight and felt better. My interest in the nutritional connection to health eventually led me to become certified as a Registered Holistic Nutritionist.*

*I now follow a grain-free diet, free of inflammatory foods that I know trigger many of my skin reactions. By avoiding common inflammatory foods, I've kept my eczema at bay and reduced my overall inflammation in my body.*

*My point is that even though I have food restrictions, there are still plenty of simple sweet treats that can still be enjoyed, without the same consequences of the old, processed "goodies." My family and I can enjoy these treats without feeling deprived, and they are simple enough that even the smallest kitchen 'helpers' can get involved!*

*I hope you enjoy them too!*

*Vivian*



# A note from the authors

## ABOUT THE PALEO DIET

The Paleo diet involves the elimination of processed and refined foods in favor of a diet rich in whole foods: plenty of vegetables, quality pasture-raised meats and some fruit for sweetness. It doesn't include any refined sugar, grains or legumes; so the commodity crops and main ingredients of the processed food industry (corn, wheat and soy) are also avoided. The foods that are avoided on the Paleo diet, namely grains and legumes, can be irritating to the gut because they are high in anti-nutrients like phytic acid and lectins. Many people find that adopting a grain-free diet can help lessen or even eliminate health issues and they may even lose weight in the process.

The one thing that many people miss when going grain-free, are the treats. After all, meals consisting of meat and vegetables aren't much different than "conventional" meals, but sweets without grains and refined sugar can seem impossible. Not only is it possible, it can also be simple, since all of the recipes in this book are made with five ingredients or less — many of which are staples of the Paleo pantry.

## ABOUT THE INGREDIENTS

Coming up with the idea for Grain-Free Simple Sweets was easy; we just listened to our readers from both *My Heart Beets* and *The Real Food Guide*.

These recipes are all made with 5 ingredients or less and are easy to prepare. It's important to choose quality ingredients, especially if you have health issues, or are sensitive to additives or preservatives. See our [Resource Page](#) for specific ingredient recommendations.

**Coconut milk:** These recipes have all been tested using full-fat, canned, organic coconut milk. When choosing canned coconut milk, ideally buy cans that are marked as BPA-free, and has an ingredient list that is free of thickeners and other additives (e.g. polysorbate, guar gum).

**Maple syrup and honey:** Make sure that your maple syrup is free of any additives or additional sweeteners. It should be "100% pure" maple syrup. If you prefer the taste of honey, you can always substitute that for the maple syrup in the recipes. Ideally, if you're using honey, you'll want raw, unpasteurized honey that is produced local to your area.

**Produce:** Some of the recipes in this book use fruit to provide the flavor and sweetness. Whenever possible, choose organic produce, especially berries as they appear on the *Environmental Working Group's "Dirty Dozen Plus"* list. When conventionally grown, these fruits have the highest levels of pesticide residue.

**Eggs:** Recipes in this book were made with large-sized eggs. If possible, choose eggs that come from free-range, organically raised chickens as these will offer the best nutrient-density.

**Gelatin:** As with any animal products, the quality of the animal it comes from matters. You want to make sure you use a good quality gelatin powder, that's made from grass-fed animals, so we highly recommend Great Lakes gelatin (see our [Resource Page](#) on where to buy). Gelatin is rich in nutrients and the protein and minerals found in gelatin can help strengthen nails and hair and possibly improve skin. Even more importantly, gelatin may help improve digestion and offer support for the joints.





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# Cookies & Baked Goods

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# Mango Gelatin

*This dessert is a summer-time favorite when mangoes are available by the case-load. Of course, the drawback to buying fruit by the case-load is that they all tend to ripen at the same time; this is one way to enjoy a glut of mangoes!*

**MAKES: 6 SERVINGS**

## INGREDIENTS

1 cup water

2 tablespoons gelatin

4 ripe mangoes (I used ataulfo mangoes), or about 1½ cups of mango purée

2 cups coconut milk, canned and full-fat

Additional diced fresh mango for garnish

*Follow this [link](#) to recommended ingredients and other resources.*

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 In a small saucepan, add a cup of cold or room temperature water. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons of gelatin over the water to allow the gelatin to bloom. Gently stir the gelatin into the water with a spoon. Heat on medium-high until simmering, but not boiling to allow the gelatin to completely dissolve.
- 2 Cube the flesh of four ripe mangoes (or add mango purée) into a blender or food processor. Add the coconut milk and blend until you get a uniform consistency.
- 3 Add the coconut milk mango mixture into your saucepan with the gelatin and stir until uniformly mixed.
- 4 Divide the mixture into 6 bowls, and place in the refrigerator for at least 1.5 hours to allow the gelatin to set.
- 5 Garnish with diced fresh mango to serve.