

A close-up photograph of several round, powdered Mexican sweets, possibly alfajores, arranged on a light-colored ceramic plate. To the left, a portion of a dark brown, thick sauce in a rustic ceramic cup is visible. The background is softly blurred, showing more sweets and a textured purple fabric with small green and yellow flowers.

# Mexican-Inspired

DESSERTS & DRINKS

7 Recipes  
for Making  
Dinner Special

by  
Kate Ramos

¡Hola!  
Jalapeño

Bonus ebook with *Plant Powered Mexican*  
from ¡Hola! Jalapeño x CA Grown



# ¡Hola!

My name is Kate Ramos and I'm the recipe developer, Mexican food lover, and photographer behind **¡Hola! Jalapeño**. I'm obsessed with the beauty and magnitude of Mexican cuisine and create recipes that reflect that passion.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for preordering my new cookbook, *Plant Powered Mexican*.

I wrote this eBook as a companion to give you lots of inspiration for rounding out your meal. Once you get your copy of the cookbook you can dive right into over 70 main course vegetarian dinner recipes, pick which one you'd like and compliment it with a drink and/or dessert from this book!

While you wait for your book to arrive, don't forget to check out [www.holajalapeno.com](http://www.holajalapeno.com) where you'll find hundreds more recipes to choose from.

Come for the enchiladas, stay for the wedding cookies!

## Kate

My friends at **CA GROWN** are partnering with me to bring you this ebook, just like they bring produce to the whole nation! Did you know that California grows 50% of the produce in the United States?

A top-down view of two white ceramic cups with blue accents, filled with a thick, dark brown oat milk hot chocolate. Each cup contains a cinnamon stick. The cups are placed on a white tablecloth with a pattern of purple and red leaves. In the bottom right corner, a white plate holds several pieces of dark chocolate and a pile of cocoa powder. A cinnamon stick is also visible in the bottom left corner.

OAT MILK  
*Hot Chocolate*



# OAT MILK Hot Chocolate

Makes: 4 servings

This recipe combines two of my favorite Mexican drinks: Oat Horchata and Mexican-style hot chocolate with its rich bittersweet chocolate, cinnamon, and piloncillo—a form of raw cane sugar.

The beauty of the times we're living in is that all the ingredients to make this are readily available. Oat milk and Mexican chocolate disks (like the Abuelita brand, which is already flavored with cinnamon and sugar), can be found in almost any grocery store.

This silky version of rich, cozy hot chocolate has one more reason you must make it immediately: it's vegan!

Garnish with a stick of *canela* or Ceylon cinnamon, the leathery soft and ultra-fragrant cinnamon commonly used in Mexican cooking. Bundles of *canela* can be found in the bulk section of your local Latin market or substitute Cassia cinnamon sticks (which can be found in the spice aisle of almost any grocery store).

## INGREDIENTS

- 3 ounces Mexican chocolate, such as Abuelita brand
- 3 cups oat milk
- Sticks of *canela* cinnamon, for serving

## INSTRUCTIONS

Combine chocolate and milk in a small saucepan. Heat mixture over medium heat, whisking constantly until chocolate is melted and hot chocolate is steaming. If you have a molinillo you could also use that to whip the hot chocolate and get it nice and frothy.

Divide hot chocolate between cups and add a stick of *canela* for stirring.

The image features two glasses of strawberry-jamaica iced tea. The glasses are filled with a vibrant pink liquid, topped with ice cubes, fresh strawberries, and a sprig of mint. The glasses are set on a white marble surface, with several slices of lime arranged in the foreground. A decorative banner with a black and white geometric pattern is positioned across the middle of the image, containing the text 'STRAWBERRY-JAMAICA Iced Tea'.

STRAWBERRY-JAMAICA

*Iced Tea*



# STRAWBERRY-JAMAICA *Iced Tea*

Makes: 4 servings

This drink is summer. That's all there is to it. It is sweet tea meets juicy, ripe strawberries. It's more than hot tea made cold, it is a special occasion going on a picnic to celebrate the warm sun on our faces type of drink.

Dried *jamaica* flowers, also known as hibiscus, are steeped until cool and the resulting tea is then blended with ruby red strawberries, fresh-squeezed lime juice, and sweetened with agave syrup. Don't worry if the fruit clumps together after you blend it, just give it a shake and it will disperse itself again.

Served over ice it is just lovely on a summer afternoon and even better on a warm summer evening with a shot or two of tequila.

California strawberries are available year-round! In winter, strawberries ship from Southern California; production moves north with the warming spring temperatures.

## INGREDIENTS

- 8 cups water
- 1 cup dried *jamaica* flowers, rinsed
- 2 cups chopped strawberries, plus a handful more, sliced for garnish\*
- ½ cup agave syrup
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice\*
- 1 lime cut into wheels, for garnish\*
- Mint leaves, for garnish\*

*\*this comes from California*

## INSTRUCTIONS

Bring water to a boil. Add *jamaica* flowers and remove from heat. Let steep until mixture is cooled to room temperature.

Strain liquid into a blender. Add strawberries, agave, and lime juice. Blend until pureed.

Strain into a pitcher. Serve over ice, with fresh mint leaves, sliced lime wheels, and sliced strawberries to garnish, if you'd like.



MEZCAL  
*Negroni*





# MEZCAL Negroni

Makes: 1 drink

A Negroni is one of my favorite aperitifs — aggressive and brash and perfect for wiping away a bad day. Even the gorgeous orange-red color instantly makes you feel better. A few other lovely things about a Negroni are 1: You can stir all the ingredients together in whatever vessel you may own (no shaker necessary) and 2: It's a simple mixture of a few liquors. No limes to squeeze, no syrups to make. In other words, it's as easy to make as it is to drink.

Using mezcal instead of the traditional gin adds a nice smoky sweetness that balances out the bitter nature of Campari.

Vermouth isn't a distilled spirit, it's actually a fortified wine infused with herbs and spices. Winemakers throughout the Golden State have put their own spin on the traditional blend, with delicious results. Since vermouth was originally sold for medical purposes, you could call finding new ones to try an "exploration in wellness."

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ ounces mezcal
- ½ ounce sweet vermouth\*
- ½ ounce dry vermouth\*
- ½ ounce Campari
- Orange peel, for garnish\*

*\*this comes from California*

## INSTRUCTIONS

Stir all ingredients together in a Boston shaker with ice until very cold. Strain into a cocktail glass and garnish with an orange peel.





MELON POPS  
WITH  
*Chile + Lime*





# MELON POPS WITH *Chile + Lime*

Makes: 4 servings

Somewhere along the way, some brilliant mom discovered that kids eat a lot more fruits and vegetables if they are served on sticks like popsicles.

Yes, it is definitely easier to cut the melon into cubes and sprinkle it with lime juice and Tajin like they do at fruit stands all over Mexico and the United States, but turning them into melon pops with a simple wooden stick is a magic trick no child (or adult) can resist.

Watermelons, honeydew and cantaloupes are roughly 90% water. That makes these tasty treats thirst-quenchers too.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ baby watermelon\*
- ½ small cantaloupe\*
- ½ small honeydew melon\*
- 2 limes\*
- 1 teaspoon Tajín or more depending on your tastes
- Popsicle sticks, for serving

*\*this comes from California*

## INSTRUCTIONS

Cut melon into ½-inch thick wedges. Make a small slit in the middle of the rind of each wedge and insert the popsicle stick.

Arrange melon pops on a platter and top with crushed ice. Cut one lime in half and squeeze lime juice all over the melon pops. Sprinkle with Tajín. Cut remaining lime into wedges and arrange around the melon pops for people to squeeze if they'd like more lime.

A close-up photograph of several round, white, powdered-sugar-coated cookies with golden-brown speckles, arranged on a light-colored ceramic plate. In the background, a rustic, textured ceramic mug is filled with a dark liquid, likely coffee, topped with a dusting of brown powder. The scene is set against a dark, moody background with soft lighting. A decorative banner with a black and white geometric pattern is positioned below the text.

PUMPKIN SPICE  
*Wedding Cookies*



# PUMPKIN SPICE *Wedding Cookies*

Makes: 3 dozen cookies

Crumbly, nutty Mexican wedding cookies go by many, many names but what they're best known for is their irresistible melt-in-your-mouth powdered sugar-covered crumb.

This fall-inspired version takes all that we love about this iconic cookie and gussies them up for the Thanksgiving table with pumpkin puree and lots of warm spices like cinnamon, ginger, and cloves.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup pecan halves\*
- 1 stick unsalted butter, room temperature\*
- 1 ½ cups powdered sugar, divided
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup pumpkin puree\*
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves

*\*this comes from California*

California is one of the top growers of pumpkins in the U.S. Pumpkins love California sunshine and grow abundantly, especially in the San Joaquin Valley. If you're interested in using fresh pumpkins to make your own puree from scratch, be sure to seek out pie pumpkins, which are a small, sweet variety and perfect for baked goods!

## INSTRUCTIONS

Heat oven to 350°F and arrange a rack in the middle. Place pecans on a baking sheet and while the oven heats, toast the pecans until they are fragrant, about 7-10 minutes. Let cool, then in a food processor fitted with the blade attachment, grind until finely minced but not so much they turn into a paste.

Combine butter and ½ cup of the powdered sugar in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Beat for 3 minutes or until light and fluffy. Add ground pecans and remaining ingredients and mix on low until well combined.

Line the baking sheet you used to toast the pecans with parchment paper. Scoop dough into 2 tablespoon-sized balls and place an inch apart of the parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake until golden on the outside, about 15 minutes. Repeat with remaining dough.

Place remaining cup of powdered sugar in a bowl. Toss warm cookies in the sugar until well coated. Let cool on a rack.

Cookie will keep covered at room temperature for up to 5 days or in the freezer for up to 3 months.



SWEET CORN + ALMOND

*Ice Cream*

## SWEET CORN + ALMOND

# Ice Cream

Makes: 1 quart

California not only grows 100% of the almonds in the United States, it's home to 80% of the almonds in the whole world.

You want to know the wonderful thing about homemade ice cream? You can make it any crazy flavor you choose!

I don't know where the idea for sweet corn and almond ice cream came from, but these two unlikely flavors make excellent ice cream cousins. The milky, grassy sweet corn supports the fruity almond flavors. Use the freshest summer sweet corn you can find. You know the kind with kernels that literally pop when you poke them with your fingernail?

If you don't have an ice cream maker, don't worry, there are plenty of egg yolks in this ice cream to keep it from getting icy. I don't have an ice cream maker, so instead I whip the partially frozen custard in my stand mixer with the whisk attachment (like you use for whipped cream) to get it nice and fluffy.

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups sweet corn kernels, ideally fresh but frozen will work\*
- 2 cups heavy cream\*
- 1 cup whole milk\*
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 6 egg yolks\*
- 1 (7-ounce) tube almond paste\*

*\*this comes from California*

### INSTRUCTIONS

Prepare an ice bath by filling a large bowl halfway with ice then adding enough water to make ice float. Set a slightly smaller bowl in the bath and set aside.

Combine corn, cream, milk, sugar, and salt in a blender. Blend on high until very smooth. Set a fine mesh sieve over a large saucepan and strain mixture through the sieve into the pan. Bring mixture to a simmer over medium heat.

Meanwhile, combine egg yolks and almond paste in a stand mixer and beat on medium speed until smooth. This will take 3–4 minutes. Stop the mixer occasionally and scrape down the sides of the bowl.

Once the corn mixture has started to simmer, remove from the heat. Turn the stand mixer on low and add half of the hot corn liquid into the egg mixture in a slow, steady stream.

Return everything to the saucepan and cook over medium–low heat, whisking constantly until mixture is slightly thickened, about 10 minutes. Don't let it boil.

Strain mixture into the prepared bowl sitting in the ice bath. Let custard completely cool, stirring occasionally. Cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours, preferably overnight.

Freeze in your ice cream maker according to the manufacturer's instructions. If you don't have an ice cream maker, pour the mixture into a 9x5-inch loaf pan, cover and place in the freezer for 1–2 hours or until the edges have just become frozen. Scrape into the bowl of a stand mixer and whip using the whisk attachment until fluffy (about a minute or two). Return to the loaf pan and repeat this process 3–4 times then let freeze completely.



CHOCOLATE  
TIRAMISU  
WITH  
*Tequila*  
*Mascarpone* *Cream*



Did you know California farmers can grow coffee? Growers in Southern California are beginning to produce coffee plants, and they use large avocado trees to shield the coffee flowers from the wind!



# CHOCOLATE TIRAMISU WITH Mascarpone Cream

*Tequila Cream*

Makes: 6 servings

This is the super fancy dessert to make when you need to impress but don't actually like baking. This layered Italian-meets-Mexican incarnation requires zero baking but looks (and tastes) very sophisticated.

We're replacing the traditional (but in my opinion, flavorless) ladyfingers with buttery Nilla wafers which get soaked in espresso then topped with cinnamon whipped mascarpone, grated Mexican chocolate and tequila whipped cream.

Although there is no oven time required, you do need to let it sit in the fridge at least 6 hours but preferably overnight before you serve it, so plan ahead.

## INGREDIENTS

- 64 Nilla wafer cookies (about 1/2 a box)
- 1/4 cup espresso
- 8 ounces mascarpone cheese\*
- 1 cup heavy cream\*
- 1/3 cup powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup tequila
- 1/2 cup grated Mexican chocolate, such as Abuelita brand
- 1-2 tablespoons cocoa powder, for garnish

*\*this comes from California*

## INSTRUCTIONS

Line the bottom of an 8 x 8-inch pan with 1/2 of the Nilla wafers. You will line them up in 4 rows of 8 wafers, overlapping slightly. Drizzle with 1/2 of the espresso.

Combine mascarpone, cream, powdered sugar, vanilla, cinnamon, and salt in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Start the mixer on low then increase the speed gradually until the mixture is thick and fluffy. Add tequila and whip until combined.

Spoon 1/2 of the mascarpone mixture over the wafers, spread evenly. Sprinkle grated chocolate evenly over the mascarpone.

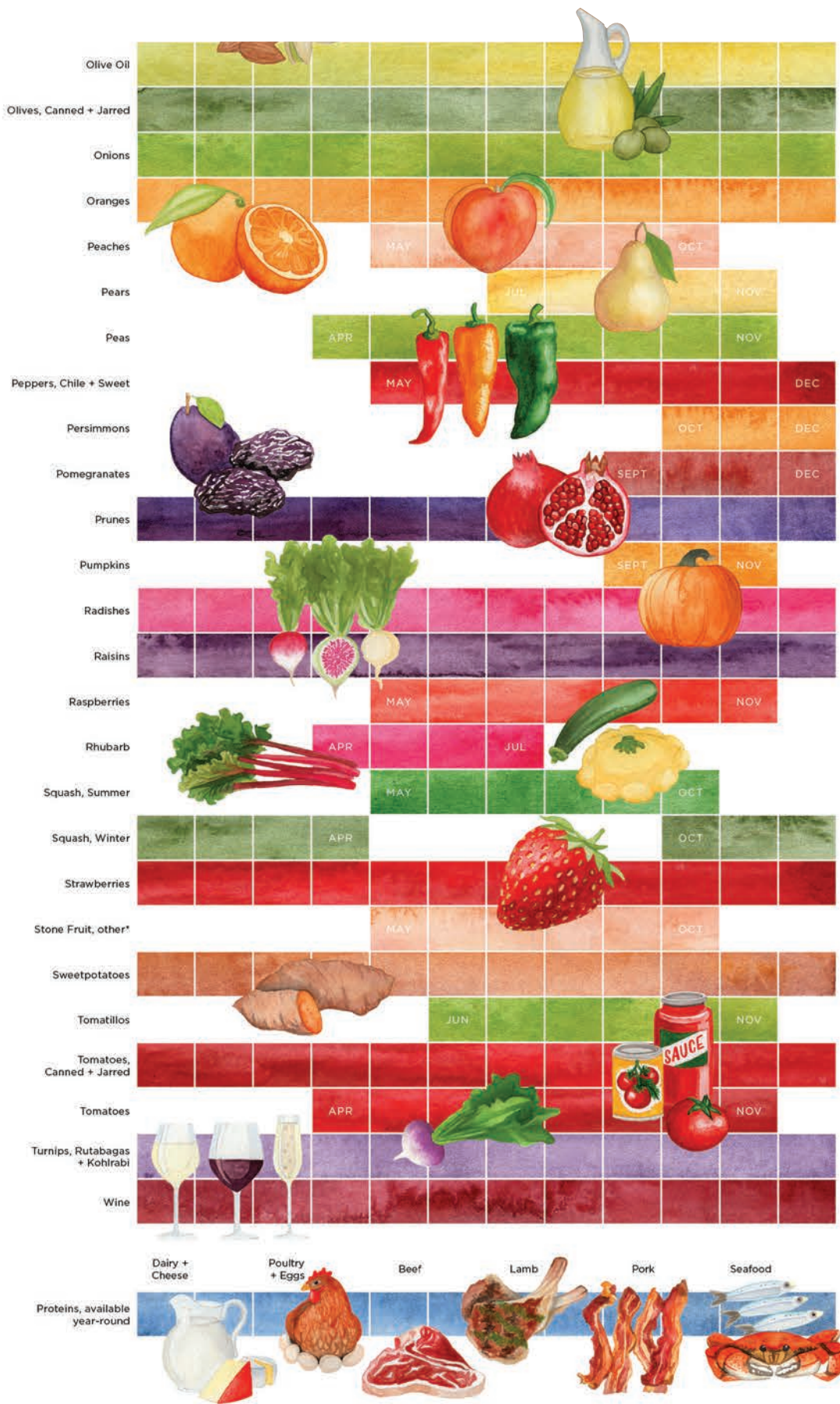
Top with remaining Nilla wafers, layering them in 4 rows of 8 like you did before. Drizzle remaining espresso over the wafers then top with remaining mascarpone mixture, spreading in an even layer to the edges.

Cover and refrigerate for at least 6 hours and up to 24. Sift cocoa powder in a light layer over the top and serve.









\*Some varieties listed individually.  
Seasons may vary slightly due to weather & growing conditions in the Golden State.  
californiagrown.org

