



## **Zany Zucchini Apricot Oatmeal Sandwich Cookies + Cream Cheese Filling + Vanilla Honey Soda**

By Erin Fletter

**Prep Time 20 / Cook Time 12 / Serves 4 - 6**

### **Shopping List**

- FRESH
- 1/2 zucchini
- DAIRY AND EGGS
- 1 egg **\*\* (see allergy subs below) \*\***
- 1/4 C or 1/2 stick butter **\*\* (see allergy subs below) \*\***
- 1/4 C or 2 oz cream cheese **\*\* (see allergy subs below) \*\***
- PANTRY
- 1/4 C dried apricots
- 3/4 C all-purpose flour **\*\* (see allergy subs below) \*\***
- 1/2 C quick-cooking oats **\*\* (see allergy subs below) \*\***
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/3 C brown sugar
- 2 1/4 tsp pure vanilla extract **\*\* (see allergy subs below) \*\***
- 3 T honey

3 C sparkling water

HAVE ON HAND

2 C ice

## Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

**bake:** to cook food with dry heat, as in an oven.

**chop:** to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

**grate:** to reduce food, like a carrot, to very small shreds or pieces of the same size by rubbing it on a tool with an outside surface that has holes with cutting edges (a grater).

**whisk:** to beat or stir ingredients vigorously with a fork or whisk to mix, blend, or incorporate air.

**spread:** to apply a food, like butter, soft cheese, nut butter, jam, or frosting to another food, such as a cracker, bread, or cake using a butter knife or spatula; or to spread batter in a skillet when making a thin crepe or pancake.

**pour:** to cause liquid, granules, or powder to stream from one container into another.

**whisk:** to beat or stir ingredients vigorously with a fork or whisk to mix, blend, or incorporate air.

## Equipment

Oven

Cookie or baking sheet

Mixing bowls

Grater

Clean dish towel or paper towels

Cutting board

Kid-safe knife

Dry measuring cups

Measuring spoons

Whisk

Metal fork

Wooden spoon

Pitcher

- Liquid measuring

## Ingredients

### Zany Zucchini Apricot Oatmeal Sandwich Cookies with Cool Cream Cheese Filling

#### Cookie:

- 1/2 zucchini, grated with moisture squeezed out
- 1/4 C dried apricots, chopped
- 3/4 C all-purpose flour **\*\* (for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub 3/4 C gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour)\*\***
- 1/2 C quick-cooking oats **\*\* (for CELIAC sub 1/2 C certified gluten-free quick-cooking oats)\*\***
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1/4 C or 1/2 stick butter, softened **\*\* (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub 1/4 C dairy-free/nut-free butter)\*\***
- 1/3 C brown sugar
- 1 egg **\*\* (for EGG ALLERGY sub 1/4 C applesauce or mashed banana)\*\***
- 1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract **\*\* (for GLUTEN ALLERGY use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor—check label)\*\***

#### Filling:

- 1/4 C or 2 oz cream cheese, softened **\*\* (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub 1/4 C or 2 oz dairy-free/nut-free cream cheese)\*\***
- 1 T honey
- 1/4 tsp pure vanilla extract **\*\* (for GLUTEN ALLERGY use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor—check label)\*\***

### Very Vanilla Honey Soda

- 3 C sparkling water
- 1 1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract **\*\* (for GLUTEN ALLERGY use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor—check label)\*\***
- 2 T honey
- 2 C ice

## Food Allergen Substitutions

### Zany Zucchini Apricot Oatmeal Sandwich Cookies with Cool Cream Cheese Filling

**Celiac/Gluten/Wheat:** For 3/4 C all-purpose flour, substitute 3/4 C gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour. For 1/2 C quick-cooking oats, substitute 1/2 C certified gluten-free quick-cooking oats. Use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor.

**Dairy:** For 1/4 C or 1/2 stick butter, substitute 1/4 C dairy-free/nut-free butter. For 1/4 C or 2 oz cream cheese, substitute 1/4 C or 2 oz dairy-free/nut-free cream cheese.

**Egg:** For 1 egg, substitute 1/4 C applesauce or mashed banana.

### Very Vanilla Honey Soda

**Gluten/Wheat:** Use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor.

## Instructions

### Zany Zucchini Apricot Oatmeal Sandwich Cookies with Cool Cream Cheese Filling

#### preheat + grate + chop

Preheat your oven to 375 F while we start with the cookie dough. Have your kids grate **1/2 zucchini** and use a clean dish towel or paper towels to squeeze out the excess liquid. Set zucchini aside and discard the liquid. Dip a kid-safe knife in water, chop **1/4 cup of apricots**, and set aside.

#### combine + whisk

In a small mixing bowl, combine **3/4 cup flour**, **1/2 cup oats**, **1/4 teaspoon baking soda**, **1/8 teaspoon salt**, **1/4 teaspoon cinnamon**, and **1/4 teaspoon nutmeg**. Whisk together your dry ingredients.

#### crack + measure + mix

Crack **1 egg** into a large mixing bowl. Then, measure and add **1/4 cup softened butter**, **1/3 cup brown sugar**, and **1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**. Mix until all the ingredients come together.

#### combine + press + bake

Pour the dry ingredients bit-by-bit into the wet ingredients, stirring after each addition until all traces of flour disappear. Add the **grated zucchini** and **chopped apricots**. Mix well. Scoop rounded half tablespoons of cookie dough onto a cookie sheet and flatten them with the palm of your clean hands. Bake for 12 minutes or until the edges of the cookies are golden brown. While they bake, prepare the filling. Carefully remove the cookie sheet from the oven and let the cookies cool before adding the filling.

### soften + mix

To make the Cool Cream Cheese Filling, add **1/4 cup softened cream cheese**, **1 tablespoon honey**, and **1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract** to a small bowl. Mix well until all the ingredients are combined and smooth.

### spread + top + press

Spread a small dollop of filling onto half of the cookies. Top with another cookie and press down gently to make your cookie sandwiches. Enjoy!

## Very Vanilla Honey Soda

### pour + whisk + serve

In a large pitcher, pour **3 cups of sparkling water**. Measure and add **1 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract** and **2 tablespoons honey**. Whisk gently to combine. Pour over **ice** served in glasses. Cheers!

## Featured Ingredient: Honey!

Hi! I'm Honey!

"I'm a golden, thick, naturally sweet liquid made by honeybees! My flavor varies depending on the particular flower nectar that bees carry home to their hive. Did you know I can last indefinitely? That's forever! Try squeezing or dribbling me into tea, on biscuits, toast, or fruit, and add me to desserts."

Honeybees make honey—they are one of the world's insects that makes food people can eat. An average bee makes about one-twelfth of a teaspoon of honey during its whole life.

In Spain, an 8,000-year-old cave painting in the Cuevas de la Araña (Spider Caves) depicts a person gathering honey from a beehive.

Egyptian hieroglyphs record the practice of beekeeping in ancient Egypt and honey's use as a sweetener and as a soothing ointment for wounds. Egyptians also buried their dead with honey or used it in mummification.

Ancient Greece had its beekeepers, and references to honey also appear in ancient Indian and Israelite texts.

Honey has an indefinite shelf life—it can last forever if well stored because it has natural preservatives. It may crystallize eventually, but the crystals will melt if you warm it by putting the jar in a bowl or pot of hot water or in the microwave on low power.

People initially used honey as a culinary sweetener but now recognize it as a healing ingredient in medicinal treatment. For example, honey can help soothe a cough or sore throat and heal burns or cuts on your skin.

Eating local honey, made from bees living in the same area where you live, may help you build up a resistance to pollen, thereby reducing your allergies. However, there is not sufficient evidence for this. Infants do not yet have any resistance to the bacteria in honey, so keep it out of their diet until they are

over one year old.

Honey consists primarily of fructose and other natural sugars and has insignificant amounts of vitamins and minerals, so it is wise to limit your honey intake as you do with other sugars.

Honey soaks up moisture rapidly. To make cake and cookies last longer and retain their moistness, substitute half of the sugar in a recipe with honey.