

## 3 desserts you should have on your table this Passover

By [Kristen Rogers](#), CNN

🕒 6 minute read · Updated 1:16 PM EDT, Mon April 22, 2024

💬 3 comments



Micah Siva's pecan pie matzo crunch is an indulgent yet light Passover dessert. Micah Siva

*[Sign up for CNN's Eat, But Better: Mediterranean Style. Our eight-part guide shows you a delicious expert-backed eating lifestyle that will boost your health for life.](#)*

**(CNN)** — If you're looking for something to sweeten your dinner table this Passover, Jewish dietitian and chef Micah Siva has a few ideas for you.

“Passover has always been the favorite food-based holiday in our family because it’s always been a time of experimentation and thinking outside of the box,” Siva said. “We always were the family who invited everyone and anyone to our Passover Seder.”





Siva became a vegetarian at age 12 and now creates many plant-based recipes. Hannah Lozano

---

Now based in Northern California with her husband and baby, Siva doesn't have extended family in the area but continues the tradition by welcoming as many people as she can — and by serving desserts that are plant forward and Passover-friendly. Passover excludes grains, which means no wheat, spelt, barley, oats and rye or products derived from them, such as beer. Ashkenazi Jews also prohibit kitniyot, which is Hebrew for legumes including beans, corn, rice, peanuts and more.

Those include her version of matzo crunch, without which “no Passover seder is complete,” she said. Her spin on the classic brittle is low-effort, customizable and light enough to enjoy after consuming all the other celebratory seder foods.



**RELATED ARTICLE**

The Passover seder meal: horseradish, wine, and unleavened bread

---

“It also has a little cinnamon in it so that you get that warmth as well. That’s more reminiscent of a pecan pie,” Siva said.

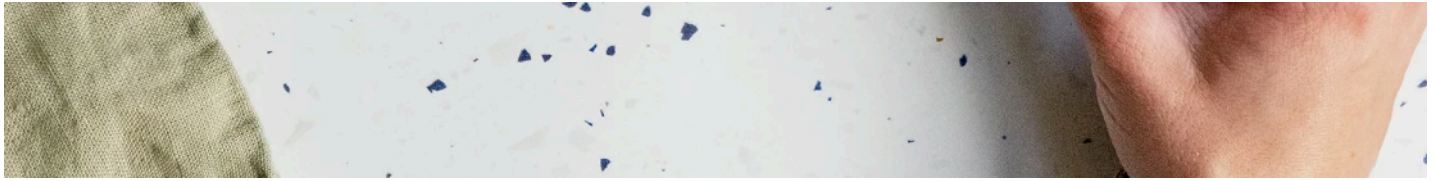
Then there are her Passover-friendly black-and-white cookies, inspired by her late father-in-law’s love of the dessert.

“He was a Bronx boy through and through, and so many food memories that my husband especially has are centered around visits to a deli with his father,” Siva said. She wanted a black-and-white cookie they could eat year-round, so her version is made with almond flour — a choice that’s a bit unconventional but provides more moisture and health benefits, Siva said.

And her gluten-free halvah brownies are chewy, chocolaty and earthy thanks to the nutty flavor of halvah, which is made from ground sesame seeds and honey.


Here’s how to make all three recipes for your loved ones this Passover or anytime.





Siva's take on matzo crunch is a sweet and salty snack. Micah Siva

---

 **What do you think?**

Join 3 others in the comments

[View Comments](#)

For this recipe, you'll need a candy thermometer, which you can buy at some grocery stores, kitchen stores or online.

Serves: A crowd

Total time: 1 hour | Cook time: 20 minutes

### **Ingredients**

- 4 to 6 unsalted matzos
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter or margarine
- 1 cup lightly packed dark brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 ½ cups pecans, finely chopped
- Flaky sea salt, to taste

### **Instructions**

---



By subscribing you agree to our [privacy policy](#).

---

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit, then use aluminum foil and/or parchment paper to line a large rimmed baking sheet. (For easy cleanup, Siva recommends lining the sheet first with foil and then parchment.
2. Set the matzos on the sheet in one layer, breaking pieces to fit the sheet.
3. In a medium-size saucepan over medium heat, mix the butter, sugar and cinnamon. Let the mixture come to a boil until it reaches 270 F to 280 F on the candy thermometer. This process can take around 10 minutes. Once the mixture begins boiling, reaching what's known as the "soft-crack stage" of 270 F to 280 F when the texture becomes firm but pliable should take around 3 minutes.
4. Pour the mixture onto the matzo, then top with pecans. Quickly use a spatula to spread everything in an even layer. Tapping the tray on the counter a few times can help the nuts settle.
5. Bake the dish in the oven until the toffee mixture bubbles, 4 to 5 minutes.
6. Remove the matzo crunch from the oven and top with salt. Once the dessert completely cools, break it into small pieces using your hands.
7. Store the matzo crunch in an airtight container at room temperature for up to two weeks, or freeze for up to 2 months.



#### RELATED ARTICLE

3 questions you need to ask yourself about your diet

---

## Passover-Friendly Black-and-white Cookies





Siva's black-and-white cookies aren't overly sweet, she said. Micah Siva

---

Makes 8 cookies

Total time: 2 hours 30 minutes, including 1 hour of resting time | Cook time: 11 to 13 minutes

### Ingredients

- 1½ cups almond flour, sifted
- ¼ cup arrowroot starch
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- 1 tablespoon melted coconut oil
- ¼ cup maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon lemon zest
- 1½ teaspoons lemon juice

### For frosting:

- 1 ½ cups confectioners' sugar (can use kosher version if needed)
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

- 1 tablespoon light agave syrup or corn syrup
- 2 to 3 tablespoons cocoa powder

### **Instructions for cookies**

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together the almond flour, arrowroot starch, baking powder and salt. Then mix in coconut oil, maple syrup, vanilla, lemon zest and lemon juice until combined. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or up to overnight.
2. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 350 F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. Divide the dough into 8 equal pieces and roll them into balls. Transfer them to the pan and press each into ½-inch-thick circles. (The cookies will not spread.)
4. Bake until golden, 11 to 13 minutes. Let the cookies cool completely on the sheet, about 20 minutes. Icing warm cookies can prevent the icing from setting, resulting in a messy look.

### **Instructions for frosting**

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together the sugar, vanilla, lemon juice and water — 1 tablespoon at a time. “The frosting should be quite thick and run off the spoon in thick ribbons, holding its shape for 2 to 3 seconds before settling back into the bowl,” Siva said. Then whisk in the agave.
2. Equally divide the frosting between two bowls. Add the cocoa powder to one bowl. If it appears too thick, add 1 to 2 teaspoons more water.
3. With an offset spatula, spread the vanilla frosting on one-half of the bottom side of each cookie. Place cookies on a rimmed baking sheet, then in the fridge for 20 minutes, until the frosting is set.
4. On the other half of each cookie, spread the chocolate frosting. Put the sheet of cookies in the fridge to set, about 20 minutes.
5. To store long-term, place the cookies on a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet in one layer, frosting side up, and freeze. Once those are frozen, transfer them to an airtight container and freeze for up to three months.



#### **RELATED ARTICLE**

Ditch your air fryer and replace it with this magic multitasker





In this recipe, coconut flour and eggs help create a dense, fudgy brownie. Micah Siva

Total time: 25 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes

## Ingredients

- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup coconut sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup coconut flour
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup cocoa powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon sea salt
- 4 large eggs
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup melted dark chocolate (70% cacao or higher; melt  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup dark chocolate chips in the microwave in 30-second increments)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup halvah, crumbled (if you don't eat kitniyot during Passover, remove or substitute with almond butter)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chocolate chips

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Line an 8x8 baking dish with parchment paper.
2. In a medium bowl, mix the sugar, flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and sea salt.
3. Stir in the eggs and melted chocolate until combined.
4. Fold in the halvah and chocolate chips.
5. Bake until brownies are set and no longer jiggly, 15 to 17 minutes.
6. Store for up to 10 days in an airtight container in the fridge.