

EAT HEALTHY WITH SUN-MAID + ORCHARD CHOICE CALIFORNIA FIGS

Recipes by *Cook's Country* from
America's Test Kitchen and Valley Fig Growers



Cook's Country



DISCOVER PREMIUM SUN-MAID + ORCHARD CHOICE CALIFORNIA DRIED FIGS

At *Cook's Country from America's Test Kitchen*, discoveries are at the heart of our mission to inspire confidence, community, and creativity in the kitchen. From cooking tips to secret ingredients that make your dishes shine, we love them all. That's why we're excited to share these recipes featuring Orchard Choice® and Sun-Maid® California Dried Figs from our kitchen to yours.

Orchard Choice® and Sun-Maid® California Dried Figs from Valley Fig Growers suit any occasion, from a quick weekday meal to a weekend baking project. Valley Fig Growers and *Cook's Country from America's Test Kitchen* partnered to bring you recipes that allow the subtle sweetness of California Dried Figs to shine through. We know this new collection of recipes will inspire your next dinner party and encourage you to discover the joys of California Dried Figs. The recipes include Plant-Based Chocolate Espresso Tart, Paleo All-Morning Energy Bars, Spiced Fish with Couscous Packets and Brussels Sprouts Salad with Smoked Gouda, Pecans and Figs.

As you discover how versatile California Dried Figs are in these recipes, we hope you take inspiration for future dishes you make. As always, you can count on California Dried Figs to take recipes from ordinary to extraordinary. Look for Orchard Choice® and Sun-Maid® California Dried Figs at your favorite grocery store or **buy figs online**. Find more delicious dried fig recipes from *Cook's Country from America's Test Kitchen* to cook, bake, or share with friends and family at **valleyfig.com**.

Join the Valley Fig Growers community of fig lovers online: Save cooking with dried fig ideas on **pinterest.com/valleyfig**. Find fresh ideas for dinner tonight or what to bake next on **instagram.com/valleyfig**, join the conversation on **facebook.com/valleyfig**, and watch recipe videos on **youtube.com/user/valleyfig1**.

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ORCHARD CHOICE AND SUN-MAID FIGS
ARE MORE THAN JUST A TASTY FRUIT.
FIGS ARE:

- Gluten-free
- High in fiber
- Cholesterol-free
- Sodium-free
- Non-GMO
- Vegetarian
- Nut & allergen-free
- Kosher

Brussels Sprouts Salad with Smoked Gouda, Pecans, and Figs

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS: Instead of roasted Brussels sprouts, we wanted a light, bright, raw preparation that was just as delicious. Shredding the Brussels sprouts super-thin is key, and letting them sit in the dressing for at least 30 minutes softens them fully and seasons them deeply. To flavor the salad, we chose a simple lemon vinaigrette, rounded out with shallot and mustard. Sweet figs, crunchy nuts, and creamy cheese are the finishing touches. The Brussels sprouts can be sliced with a knife or the slicing disk of a food processor. Either way, slice them as thinly as possible. Shred the Gouda on the large holes of a box grater.

SERVES 8

- ¼ cup lemon juice**
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard**
- 1 tablespoon minced shallot**
- 1 garlic clove, minced**
- Salt and pepper**
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 2 pounds Brussels sprouts, trimmed, halved, and sliced very thin**
- 4 ounces smoked Gouda cheese, shredded (1 cup)**
- ½ cup chopped toasted pecans**
- 1 cup chopped Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs**

1. Whisk lemon juice, mustard, shallot, garlic and ½ teaspoon salt together in a large bowl. Slowly whisk in oil until incorporated. Toss Brussels sprouts with vinaigrette, and let sit for at least 30 minutes or up to 2 hours.

2. Fold in Gouda, pecans, and figs. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve.



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VALLEY FIG GROWERS PRO TIP

Chopping figs into small pieces that are similar in size to the other ingredients ensures that each bite contains a sweet burst of honeyed fig flavor and an overall balance of flavors and textures.



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Beet Salad with Spiced Yogurt, Figs, and Watercress

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS: Beets are very dense, so roasting whole ones can take up to 2 hours. Instead, we peeled and cut the beets into small chunks and microwaved them in a covered bowl with a small amount of water. Cutting them into pieces exposed much more surface area so they cooked faster, and cooking them in the microwave (as opposed to on the stovetop) caused water molecules inside the beets to boil rapidly and intensely, so they cooked through in less than 30 minutes. For the salad, we used the yogurt as an anchor for the other ingredients by thinning it with lime juice and water, spreading it on a platter, and topping it with lightly dressed beets and greens as well as toasted pistachios for crunch. Sweet figs complement the tangy yogurt and earthy beets. Be sure to wear gloves when preparing the beets to prevent your hands from becoming stained. The moisture content of Greek yogurt varies, so add the water slowly in step 2. We like to make this salad with watercress, but baby arugula can be substituted. For the best presentation, use red beets here, not golden or Chioggia beets.

SERVES 6

- 2 pounds beets, trimmed, peeled, and cut into ¾-inch pieces**
- 1 teaspoon plus 2 pinches table salt, divided**
- 1¼ cups plain Greek yogurt**
- ½ cup finely chopped Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs**
- ¼ cup minced fresh cilantro, divided**
- 3 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil, divided**
- 2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger**
- 1 teaspoon grated lime zest plus 7 teaspoons juice, divided, plus extra juice for seasoning (2 limes)**
- 1 garlic clove, minced**
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin**
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander**
- ¼ teaspoon pepper**
- 5 ounces (5 cups) watercress, torn into bite-size pieces**
- ½ cup chopped Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs**
- ¼ cup shelled pistachios, toasted and chopped, divided**



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1. In the largest bowl your microwave will accommodate, stir together beets, ⅓ cup water, and ½ teaspoon salt. Cover with plate and microwave until beets can be easily pierced with a paring knife, 25 to 30 minutes, stirring half-way through microwaving. Drain beets in colander and let cool.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together yogurt, finely chopped figs, 3 tablespoons cilantro, 2 tablespoons oil, ginger, lime zest and 1 tablespoon juice, garlic, cumin, coriander, pepper, and ½ teaspoon salt. Slowly stir in up to 3 tablespoons water until mixture has consistency of regular yogurt. Season with salt, pepper, and extra lime juice to taste. Spread yogurt mixture over serving platter.

3. In a large bowl, combine watercress, ¼ cup chopped figs, 2 tablespoons pistachios, 1 tablespoon oil, 2 teaspoons lime juice, and pinch salt and toss to coat. Arrange watercress mixture on top of yogurt mixture, leaving 1-inch border of yogurt mixture. Add beets to now-empty bowl and toss with remaining 1 teaspoon oil, remaining 2 teaspoons lime juice, and remaining pinch salt. Place beet mixture on top of watercress mixture. Sprinkle salad with remaining ¼ cup chopped figs, remaining 2 tablespoons pistachios, and remaining 1 tablespoon cilantro and serve.

Spiced Fish and Couscous Packets with Figs and Chermoula

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS: For an effortless meal, we pair quick-cooking tilapia and lemony couscous and bake them in foil packets. Chermoula, a heady Moroccan spice and herb mixture, flavors the fish, while honey-sweet figs complement the tender couscous. For an accurate measurement of boiling water, bring a full kettle of water to a boil and then measure out the desired amount. Mark an “X” on the outside of the foil where the fish fillet is the thickest, then insert an instant-read thermometer through the “X” into the fish to measure its internal temperature. Catfish, flounder, or sole can be used in place of the tilapia, but you may need to tuck the tapered ends under to achieve a more uniform thickness for even cooking. For catfish, start checking for doneness at 26 minutes; for flounder, start checking for doneness at 16 minutes; for sole, start checking for doneness at 23 minutes.

SERVES 4

- ½ cup minced fresh cilantro, divided
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons grated fresh ginger
- 4 teaspoons smoked paprika
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 teaspoons grated lemon zest, divided, plus 2 tablespoons juice
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1½ teaspoons table salt, divided
- ½ teaspoon pepper, divided
- ½ teaspoon brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1½ cups couscous
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1 cup finely chopped **Orchard Choice** or **Sun-Maid California Figs**
- 4 (6- to 8-ounce) skinless tilapia fillets, ¾ inch thick

1. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 400 degrees. Combine 6 tablespoons cilantro, oil, ginger, paprika, garlic, 1 tablespoon lemon zest, lemon juice, cumin, ½ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon pepper, sugar, and pepper flakes in a bowl; set chermoula aside.

2. Combine couscous, ½ teaspoon salt, and boiling water in bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and let sit until liquid is absorbed and couscous is tender, about 5 minutes. Fluff couscous with a fork, stir in figs and remaining 1 teaspoon lemon zest, and season with salt and pepper to taste.



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3. Lay four 16 by 12-inch rectangles of aluminum foil on counter with short sides parallel to the counter edge. Divide couscous evenly among foil rectangles, arranging in the center of the lower half of each foil sheet. Pat tilapia dry with paper towels and sprinkle with remaining ½ teaspoon salt and remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper. Place tilapia on top of couscous and spoon 1 tablespoon chermoula on top of each fillet; reserve remaining chermoula for serving. Fold top half of foil over fish and couscous, then tightly crimp edges into rough 9 by 6-inch packets.

4. Place packets on a rimmed baking sheet (they may overlap slightly) and bake until fish registers 135 degrees, 22 to 28 minutes. Carefully open packets, allowing steam to escape away from you. Using a thin metal spatula, gently slide couscous and tilapia onto individual plates, then sprinkle with remaining 2 tablespoons cilantro. Serve with remaining chermoula.

VALLEY FIG GROWERS PRO TIP

Soaking whole figs in hot liquid softens their skins and plumps their flesh. Steaming is a method that is just as effective. In this recipe, diced figs are mixed with couscous and steamed under a fillet of fish in a foil packet until tender and plump.

Pasta with Caramelized Onions, Figs, Pecorino Romano, and Black Pepper

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS: This quick pasta gets its bold flavor from a handful of simple ingredients. Caramelized onions provided complex sweetness. Instead of finishing them with sugar or honey as many recipes call for, we added baking soda, which speeds up the reaction that converts flavorless inulin (a polysaccharide present in onions) to fructose. We accented that sweetness by blooming coarsely ground black pepper in butter before stirring it into the onions, and we finished the dish with sharp and savory Pecorino Romano, bits of honeyed figs, and fresh-tasting parsley.

SERVES 4

CARAMELIZED ONIONS

- 3 pounds onions, halved and sliced through root end ¼ inch thick**
- ¾ cup plus 1 tablespoon water, divided**
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- ¾ teaspoon salt**
- ⅙ teaspoon baking soda**

PASTA

- 1 pound pasta**
- Salt and coarsely ground pepper**
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter**
- 1 cup chopped Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs**
- 1½ ounces shredded Pecorino Romano cheese (¾ cup), plus extra for serving**
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley**
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar**

1. FOR THE CARAMELIZED ONIONS: Bring onions, ¾ cup water, oil, and salt to boil in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over high heat. Cover and cook until water has evaporated and onions start to sizzle, about 10 minutes.

2. Uncover, reduce heat to medium-high, and use a rubber spatula to gently press onions into the sides and bottom of the skillet. Cook, without stirring onions, for 30 seconds. Stir onions, scraping fond from skillet, then gently press onions into sides and bottom of the skillet again. Repeat pressing, cooking, and stirring until onions are softened, well browned, and slightly sticky, 15 to 20 minutes.

3. Combine baking soda and remaining 1 tablespoon



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water in bowl. Stir baking soda solution into onions and cook, stirring constantly, until solution has evaporated, about 1 minute. Transfer onions to a bowl and set aside. (Onions can be refrigerated for up to 3 days or frozen for up to 1 month.)

4. FOR THE PASTA: Bring 4 quarts water to boil in a large pot. Add pasta and 1 tablespoon salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until al dente. Reserve 1½ cups cooking water, then drain pasta and return it to the pot.

5. While pasta cooks, melt butter in a 10-inch skillet over medium heat. Add 1 tablespoon pepper and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add reserved onions, figs, and 1/2 teaspoon salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until onions are warmed through, about 4 minutes.

6. Add Pecorino, parsley, vinegar, onions, and 1 cup reserved cooking water to pasta and stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve, adjusting consistency with remaining reserved cooking water as needed and passing extra Pecorino separately.

VALLEY FIG GROWERS PRO TIP

Adding hot pasta cooking water at the end of preparation is the key to creating a light caramelized onion and fig sauce that clings to the pasta.



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Paleo All-Morning Energy Bars with Figs

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS: It can be hard to find granola bars that are paleo-friendly because so many are made with oats, grains, and refined sugars. We wanted a portable snack that was easy to make and contained only whole, nutritious ingredients. A hearty collection of healthy nuts and seeds provided the basis for our homemade bars. Toasting the nuts and seeds before pulsing them in the food processor gave our bars a pleasant roasted flavor, and the moderate heat of a 300-degree oven ensured that they all toasted evenly without burning. Figs and maple syrup not only added satisfying sweetness but also aided in binding the bars together. We found that processing some of the figs with the maple syrup, warm water, and an egg white gave the bars a slight chew while still allowing the nuts and seeds to remain crisp. We stirred the remaining chopped figs into the mixture for textural contrast; tasters also liked the little bursts of sweetness. The final step in perfecting our homemade “granola” bars was to ensure that they were evenly baked. After baking the nut and seed mixture in a 13 by 9-inch baking pan, we cut it into bars while it was still warm (which made cutting clean lines much easier), spread the bars out on a baking sheet, and returned them to the oven to finish baking. The result: evenly toasted bars with lots of crunch and a slight chew that made a perfect, energy-packed snack. Be sure not to overbake the nuts and seeds in step 2; they will continue to toast while the bars bake.

MAKES 20 BARS

- 1 cup whole raw almonds**
- 1 cup raw cashews**
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup raw pepitas**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup raw sunflower seeds**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup flaxseeds**
- 2 tablespoons sesame seeds**
- 1 cup chopped Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup warm tap water**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup maple syrup**
- 2 large egg whites**
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons kosher salt**

1. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 300 degrees. Cut 18-inch length foil and fold lengthwise to 8-inch width. Fit foil into length of 13 by 9-inch baking pan, pushing it into corners and up sides of pan; allow excess to overhang pan edges. Cut 14-inch length foil and fit into the width of the pan in the same manner, perpendicular to the



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first sheet (if using extra-wide foil, fold second sheet lengthwise to 12-inch width). Grease foil.

2. Spread almonds, cashews, pepitas, sunflower seeds, flaxseeds, and sesame seeds on aluminum foil-lined rimmed baking sheet. Bake, stirring occasionally, until pale golden and fragrant, 15 to 20 minutes. Transfer nut mixture to food processor and let cool slightly, then pulse until coarsely chopped, about 5 pulses; transfer to a large bowl.

3. Process $\frac{1}{2}$ cup figs, warm water, maple syrup, egg white, and salt in now empty processor until smooth, about 30 seconds, scraping down sides of bowl as needed. Stir processed fig mixture and remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped figs into nut mixture until well combined. Spread mixture in prepared pan and press firmly into even layer using greased metal spatula. Bake until golden brown, 22 to 28 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Do not turn off oven.

4. Let bars cool in the pan for 15 minutes. Using foil overhang, lift bars out of the pan; transfer to a cutting board and cut into 20 bars. Space bars evenly on parchment paper-lined baking sheet and bake until deep golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Let bars cool completely on wire rack, about 1 hour. Serve. (Bars can be stored at room temperature for up to 1 week.)

Plant-Based Chocolate-Espresso Tart with Figs

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS: The key to this elegant, yet simple, tart is a “water ganache.” An emulsion of chocolate and hot water (instead of the usual heavy cream), this mixture is smooth and silky with an intense chocolate flavor. A layer of dried figs underneath the ganache and halved figs on top of the tart, complemented the bittersweet chocolate’s flavor and added a pleasant texture. The crowning touch: a three-ingredient espresso “meringue” inspired by Dalgona coffee. Instant espresso crystals, when dissolved in water with sugar and then whipped, created a billowy, glossy foam that could be piped or dolloped as an elegant decoration. Use a bitter-sweet chocolate with 60 to 70 percent cacao for the filling (higher-percentage cacao will set faster). You can skip the topping if you like and just dust the tart with cocoa powder or confectioners’ sugar, or add a dollop of whipped cream. For an accurate measurement of boiling water, bring a full kettle of water to a boil and then measure out the desired amount.

SERVES 10 TO 12

TART SHELL

- 1¾ cups (8¾ ounces) all-purpose flour**
- 3 tablespoons sugar**
- ¼ teaspoon table salt**
- ½ cup refined coconut oil, melted and cooled slightly**
- 3 tablespoons water**

FILLING

- ½ cup minced Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs**
- 10½ ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped fine**
- ¼ cup (1¾ ounces) sugar**
- ¼ teaspoon table salt**
- ¾ cup boiling water**

TOPPING (OPTIONAL)

- 6 tablespoons (2½ ounces) sugar**
- ¼ cup ice water**
- 4 teaspoons instant espresso powder**
- ½ cup Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs, halved**
- Unsweetened cocoa powder (optional)**

1. FOR THE TART SHELL: Whisk flour, sugar, and salt together in a bowl. Add melted oil and water and stir with rubber spatula until dough forms. Roll dough into 12-inch circle between 2 large sheets of parchment paper. Remove



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top sheet of parchment and, working quickly, gently invert dough (still on bottom sheet parchment) onto a 9-inch tart pan with a removable bottom. Center dough over pan letting excess dough hang over edge and remove remaining parchment. Ease dough into pan by gently lifting edge of dough with your hand while pressing into corners and fluted sides of pan with your other hand. Run rolling pin over the top of the pan to remove any excess dough. Prick dough all over with a fork, then wrap the pan loosely in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes. (Dough-lined tart pan can be refrigerated for up to 24 hours or frozen for up to 1 month).

2. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Line chilled tart shell with double layer of aluminum foil and fill with pie weights. Bake on rimmed baking sheet until tart shell is evenly pale and dry, 30 to 35 minutes, rotating sheet halfway through baking.

3. Remove foil and weights and continue to bake tart shell until light golden brown and firm to touch, about 20 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Set aside to cool completely. (Cooled crust can be wrapped in plastic wrap and stored at room temperature for up to 24 hours. Do not refrigerate or crust will become hard.)

4. FOR THE FILLING: Sprinkle minced figs into the cooled tart shell. Place chocolate, sugar, and salt in a bowl. Pour boiling water over chocolate mixture and let sit for 30 seconds, then whisk until mixture is completely smooth.

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Pour warm chocolate mixture over figs, popping any large bubbles that form with a toothpick, and let tart sit at room temperature until chocolate is set, at least 2 hours and up to 24 hours. (Do not refrigerate or crust will become hard.)

5. FOR THE OPTIONAL TOPPING: For the optional Topping: Using a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, whip sugar, ice water, and espresso powder on high speed until soft peaks form, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer mixture to pastry bag fitted with star tip and pipe decoratively over filling (or use zipper-lock bag with corner snipped off). Arrange halved figs around the edge of the tart. Dust with cocoa powder, if using, and serve.

VALLEY FIG GROWERS PRO TIP

Figs can be a sticky ingredient to prep, so to make chopping and mincing them easier, lightly spray the blade of your knife with vegetable oil spray.



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