



Very Vanilla Beany Birthday Cake Blondies with Creamy Vanilla Bean Frosting

By Dylan Sabuco

Prep Time 15 / Cook Time 15 / Serves 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

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

measure: to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

blend: to stir together two or more ingredients until just combined; blending is a gentler process than mixing.

mix: to thoroughly combine two or more ingredients until uniform in texture.

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

Equipment

- Oven
- Muffin pan
- Paper cupcake liners
- Large mixing bowl
- Medium mixing bowl
- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Can opener
- Wooden spoon
- Blender (or bowl + liquid measuring cup + immersion blender)

Ingredients

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Cake:

- 1 stick unsalted butter, softened **(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub 1/2 C dairy-free/nut-free butter)**
- 3/4 C granulated sugar
- 1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract **(for GLUTEN ALLERGY use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor—check label)**
- 1 pinch salt
- 1/2 15-oz can white beans **(for LEGUME ALLERGY sub 2 large eggs, if no egg allergy)**
- 1/4 C water
- 2 C all-purpose flour **(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose)**
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 1/4 C rainbow sprinkles + more to sprinkle on frosted cupcakes **(for VEGAN option and SOY ALLERGY use 100% natural sprinkles)**

Frosting:

- 1 1/2 C powdered sugar
- 2 T canned white beans **(for LEGUME ALLERGY sub 2 T milk or dairy-free/nut-free milk)**
- 1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract **(for GLUTEN ALLERGY use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor—check label)**

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Dairy: For 1 stick unsalted butter, substitute 1/2 C dairy-free/nut-free butter.

Gluten/Wheat: Use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor. Substitute gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour.

Legume: In Blondies, for 1/2 15-oz can white beans, substitute 2 large eggs (if no egg allergy). In Frosting, for 2 T canned white beans, substitute 2 T milk or dairy-free/nut-free milk.

Soy/Vegan option: Use 100 percent natural sprinkles and check labels to avoid soy, gelatin, confectioner's glaze (shellac), or beeswax.

Instructions

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intro

You're in store for a tasty treat! Growing up, I would come home from middle school to a little rainbow confetti cake in a ramekin just waiting for me to dig in. My mom always liked to surprise me and my friends with cakes and cookies after school. This recipe is inspired by those tasty rainbow-filled cakes. Blondies are like the vanilla version of a brownie (at least, that's how I think of them). Technically, I would call them a cookie bar, but the texture inside is rich and cakey, just like the cake I remember from middle school. Our Very Vanilla Beany Birthday Cake Blondies with Creamy Vanilla Bean Frosting combine sprinkles, white beans, vanilla, and some other standard cookie ingredients to make an absolutely delicious and egg-free treat!

measure + mix

Start by measuring the following ingredients into a large mixing bowl: **1 stick softened butter**, **3/4 cup granulated sugar**, **1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**, and **1 pinch of salt**. Mix with a wooden spoon until well combined and creamy.

blend + stir

Open **1 can of white beans**. Drain and rinse the beans. Place half of the beans with **1/4 cup of water** into a blender (or bowl for use with an immersion blender) and blend until smooth. Add the beans to the bowl of wet ingredients. Stir to combine.

superstar food spotlight

Beans are really an amazing food. They contain fiber, potassium, complex carbohydrates, and protein and have a very low glycemic index. This combination of factors, paired with their low sodium and low cholesterol content, results in a food superstar, especially for people with diabetes or high blood pressure. Beans have been found to have one of the lowest glycemic indexes (which is how quickly food will raise blood sugar when digesting). Foods with a high glycemic index make blood sugar levels rise and fall rapidly, and foods with a low glycemic index make blood sugar levels rise less and fall slowly. That makes beans great for helping us regulate our blood sugar safely and consistently, and it also means we get more long-lasting energy from beans than from a high-glycemic food like white bread.

measure + mix

Next, measure the dry ingredients into a medium mixing bowl: **2 cups flour**, **1 teaspoon baking powder**, and **2 teaspoons cornstarch**. Stir with a wooden spoon until well combined. Pour the dry ingredients into the wet and stir. Finally, measure **1/4 cup of rainbow sprinkles** and add them to the blondie batter, folding the sprinkles into the batter gently. If you add them too soon or stir them too much, the color of the batter will become gray.

bake + cool

Preheat your oven to 350 F. Prepare a muffin pan with cupcake liners. Place 3 tablespoons of the batter into each of the wells of the lined muffin pan. Allow the batter to settle into the muffin pan while the oven finishes preheating. Slide the pan into the preheated oven. Bake for 15 minutes or until the top of each blondie begins to crack. Remove the blondies from the oven. Cool for at least 5 minutes.

measure + blend

Next, we'll make the frosting. Measure **2 tablespoons white beans** and **1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract** in a blender (or liquid measuring cup for use with an immersion blender). Pour the vanilla bean mixture into a large bowl.

measure + whisk

Then, measure and add **1 1/2 cups powdered sugar** to the bowl with the vanilla bean mixture. Whisk to combine. Keep whisking until a thick and creamy frosting forms.

decorate + devour

Finally, let's add a little decoration. Add a thin layer of the Creamy Vanilla Bean Frosting. Then, add a dusting of rainbow sprinkles on top of the frosted blondies. Dig in, enjoy, and devour these Very Vanilla Beany Birthday Cake Blondies with Creamy Vanilla Bean Frosting!

Featured Ingredient: Beans!

Hi! I'm a Bean!

"Hey! How've you bean ... I mean, been? My name is Cannellini, and I'm a white bean! We beans go back a long, long time. A couple of my cousins are the Navy bean and the Great Northern bean. You can add us to soups, stews, and chili, or eat us all by ourselves! We sometimes cause tummies to inflate (you know, get gassy?), but soaking, draining, and rinsing dried beans really well might help prevent that from happening. Did you know that Senate Bean Soup is on the menu at the US Senate's Dirksen Café every single day?! I'm inflating with pride just thinking about that!"

History

Globally, there are 13,000 known varieties of beans. They include the white bean, like the Italian Cannelini, Great Northern, and Navy Bean; the black turtle bean (usually shortened to black bean); and the pinto bean. What kind of beans are you using today?

Beans were one of the first foods gathered, according to archaeologists. Our hunter-gatherer ancestors used beans as food tens of thousands of years ago. They were grown around 7,000 years ago in the Middle East.

In ancient Greece, public officials were elected if they picked the single white bean from a bunch of black

beans.

In the 15th century, Spanish explorers brought beans to Europe when they returned from voyages to the New World. Then, Spanish and Portuguese traders took them to Africa and Asia to sell.

Beans are now prevalent worldwide, primarily due to their use as an inexpensive, plant-based protein. Today, the largest commercial producers of common dried beans are India, China, Indonesia, Brazil, and the United States.

North Dakota grows forty percent of the beans in the US, more than any other state!

Brazil grows the most beans in the world.

In Nicaragua, newlyweds are given a bowl of beans for good luck.

Anatomy & Etymology

Did you know: Beans are technically a fruit!

Beans are legumes, so they have seeds that dry in the seed pod. Other legumes include lentils, peas, peanuts, and soybeans.

Beans plants leave the soil better and healthier than before they were planted. Most plants deplete the soil, but not beans. This is because they have nodules on their roots that add nitrogen, which the soil needs.

The world's tallest bean plant was over 45 feet tall! That's the equivalent of three average-sized giraffes stacked on top of one another. The plant was grown in the USA in 2003.

The word "bean" was first used before the 12th century. It comes from the Old English "bēan," from the Proto-Germanic "bauno," and is related to the Dutch "boon" and German "Bohne."

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Beans are harvested at full maturity when their pod reaches about six inches long, and the leaves turn brown and fall off about 75 days after the beans are planted.

When harvested, the shells are broken open, and the beans are collected as long as they are dry. If they're not thoroughly dried, they can be hung up to finish drying before they're popped from their shells.

We can't eat raw, uncooked beans. Why? Because beans have something called lectins that are poisonous, and the only way to remove most of these lectins is to cook the beans.

If you're using dried beans, soak them before cooking to remove "antinutrients," compounds that block the absorption of nutrients.

Dried beans are generally available in prepackaged containers as well as bulk bins; both canned and dried beans are available throughout the year.

Canned beans can stay fresh for years!

Combine the creamy texture of beans with a whole grain such as brown rice, and you have a virtually fat-free high-quality protein meal.

Beans are made into burgers, dips, brownies, cakes, dips, fudge, muffins, pies, and drinks (coffee and

cocoa beans). They can also be used in jewelry, toys, and musical instruments. "Bean bag chairs" are made with polystyrene "beans," but the small bean bags for play are sometimes made with real dried beans.

Nutrition

Beans are complex carbohydrates and high in fiber, which keeps our digestion strong and smooth and our tummies happy.

Beans are excellent sources of iron, magnesium, and potassium. The body needs these minerals to grow, develop, and stay healthy.

Beans supply several B vitamins to our diet, especially folate (B-9). These vitamins contribute to healthy brain function, formation of red blood cells, increased energy, and decreased cancer and cardiovascular disease risk.

The fiber and protein in beans are good for stabilizing blood sugar. They are popular with vegans and vegetarians because they replace some of the nutrients found in meat.

Beany Expressions:

Bean counter = an accountant

Bean pole = describing someone tall and thin

Cool beans = when something is cool

It doesn't amount to a hill of beans = when something doesn't add up to much

Full of beans = full of energy, enthusiasm

Hasn't got a bean = doesn't have any money

Not worth a bean = not worth anything

Spill the beans = dish the dirt, tell the truth