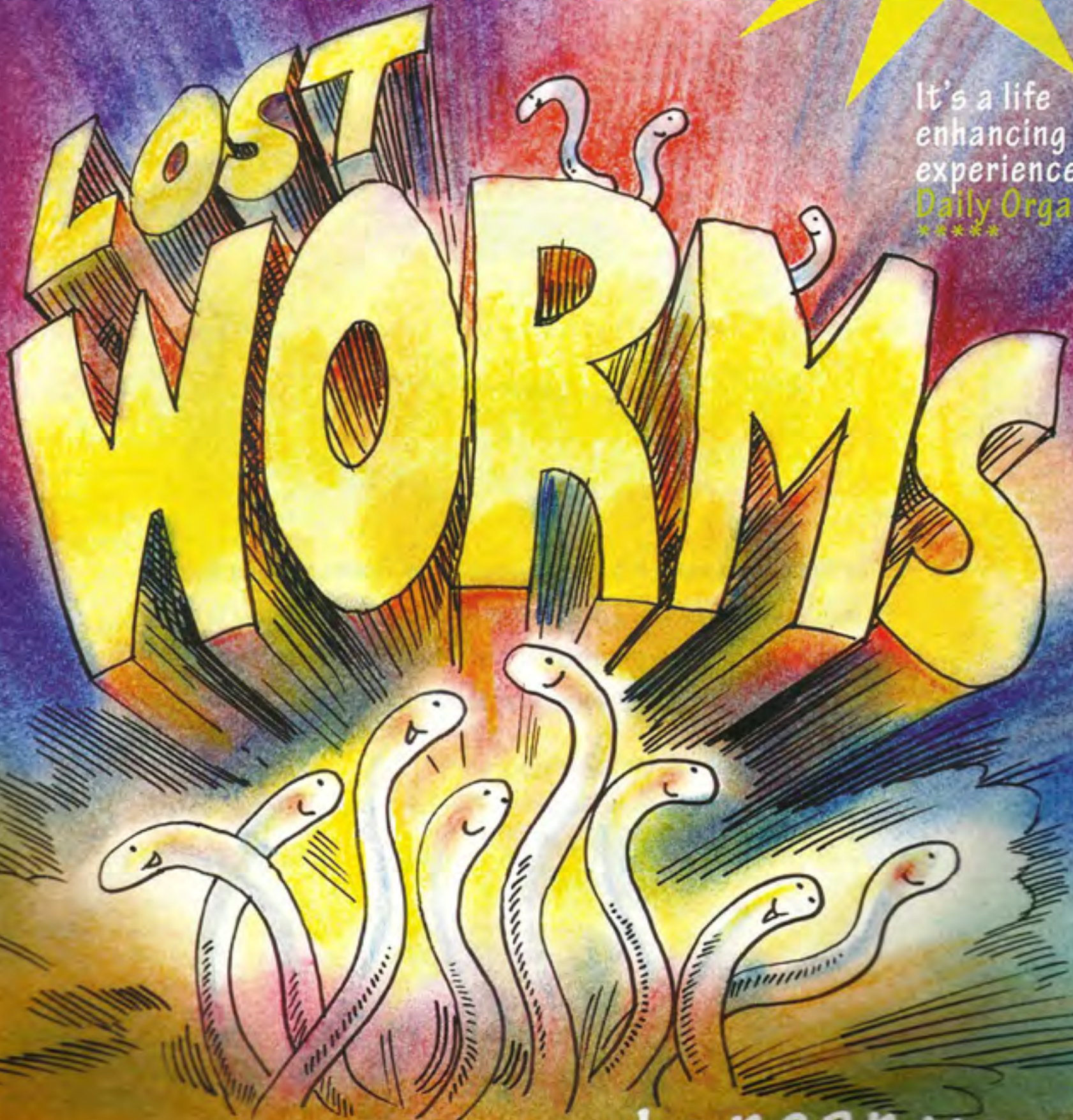


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AUGUST 2009

# FOODS MATTER

THE RETURN OF THE



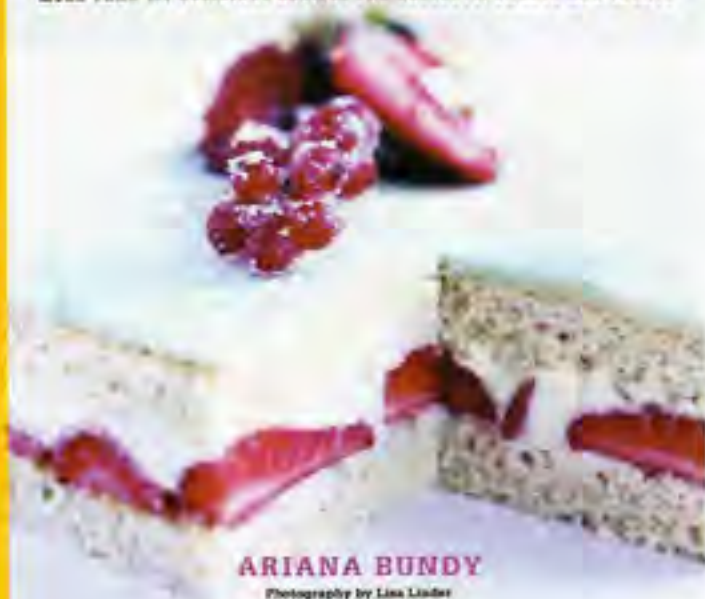
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MORE THAN 100 DELICIOUS RECIPES FOR DESSERTS, SWEETS AND TREATS



ARIANA BUNDY

Photography by Lisa Linder

We first reviewed the hardback edition of Ariana's book back in February 2006 – and it has obviously stood the test of time as here it is in paperback!

Ariana was a very successful pastry chef in Los Angeles in 1999 when she was diagnosed as lactose and soya intolerant and, two months later, her mother and brother were diagnosed as gluten intolerant. As she says, she had to forget almost everything she knew about baking and making desserts. But, using her well honed skills, she set herself to creating as luscious and mouth-watering concoctions from rice, tapioca and potato flours and starches, nut and seed milks, and ghee and coconut butter as she had previously from refined wheat flours and dairy cream.

The results, many of which are in her book, include everything from funky clusters, like the ones below, to 'silky smooth' pumpkin pie, feather-light dacquoise, chocolate chestnut truffles, baklava parcels and loads of delicious ice creams – coconut and lemongrass sorbet, pink champagne granita and Ariana's own Haagen Dazs-look-alike based on a rice or coconut milk creme anglaise!

*Recipes from Sweet Alternative by Ariana Bundy published by Conran Octopus at £12.99*

## Funky Popcorn Clusters

I love the combination of sweet and salty snacks, like honey and mustard pretzels or fleurs de sel (sea salt) caramel, and this recipe follows the same pattern – though it takes it to a whole new level with some very unusual ingredients. It's inspired by something I once bought from my local Japanese market – a cluster containing the usual nut and caramel combination, but with green tea powder, soya sauce and Japanese chilli crackers! If you prefer to use ready-made popcorn, make sure it's plain or, if you use lightly salted, omit the soy sauce.

60g popcorn kernels + 1 1/2 tbsp coconut oil or  
safflower oil or 7 cups unsalted ready-made popcorn  
175g melted dairy-free spread, ghee or coconut oil  
115g rice syrup  
325g light brown sugar  
1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda

a little less than 1 tsp soya sauce  
100g unsalted, shelled peanuts (optional)  
1/2 cup Mochi chilli crackers or a pinch of cayenne  
pepper  
1/4 tsp ground green tea powder



Prepare a tray lined with a silicon liner or well oiled aluminium foil. Pop your kernels the usual way by heating the oil in a heavy saucepan and adding the corn. Once popped, set aside to cool. Put the dairy-free spread or ghee, rice syrup and sugar in a heavy saucepan, stir and bring to the boil over a medium heat. Stop stirring and let it boil for about 10 minutes or until the temperature reaches 150C/300F on a sugar thermometer. Turn off the heat, add the bicarbonate of soda and soy sauce, stir then add the popcorn, peanuts if using them, and crackers.

Stir this quickly as the syrup cools very fast and can harden. Pour the mixture into the prepared tray and spread it quickly with a wooden spoon. Sprinkle with green tea powder. Leave to cool – then crunch! To make a plain version, simply replace the soy sauce with 1/2 teaspoon of sea salt, omit the crackers and tea and reduce the spread or ghee to 115g.

*Choc and nut:* Use a handful of chocolate chips instead of crackers

*Maple syrup:* Swap the rice syrup for maple syrup.

## Fudgey Hazelnut Brownie

Rich decadent chocolate squares with an adult edge! If you are allergic to nuts omit the hazelnuts and replace half the amount with more chocolate chips. I love to add coffee extract and candied orange peel to the mixture. Sun-dried sour cherries and pistachios also work really well. Whatever you do, don't overbake them so that they stay fudgey.

### Makes 9 chunky squares

175g dark (bittersweet / dairy-free) chocolate, diced  
 115g margarine, ghee or coconut butter  
 100g gluten-free flour, your own favourite or Ariana's mix – 50g rice flour, 20g sweet rice (mochiko) flour available in Japanese and Asian shops, 20g potato starch, 10g tapioca flour  
 30g sweet rice or mochiko flour  
 4 tbsp gluten-free cocoa powder  
 1/4 tsp bicarbonate of soda  
 1/2 tsp gluten and wheat-free baking powder  
 pinch sea salt  
 115g chopped hazelnuts, skinned and lightly roasted

Preheat the oven to 180C / 350F / Gas Mark 4.  
 Line a 23cm square baking tin with two pieces of greased greaseproof paper. Lay the first piece horizontally in the tin, overlapping each end, then lay the second piece at right angles so that the paper is criss-crossed. This will make it easier to remove the brownies after baking.  
 Place the chocolate and margarine, ghee or coconut butter in a bain marie or microwave and stir it around a bit. Let it melt almost completely then remove it and let it cool down. The remaining bits of chocolate will continue to melt in the hot mixture.  
 Sift the flours, cocoa powder, xanthan gum, bicarbon-



35g dark (bittersweet / dairy-free) chocolate chips  
 4 large eggs  
 300g unrefined caster sugar  
 2 tsp vanilla extract  
 1 tbsp hazelnut or other nut oil

ate of soda and baking powder into a large bowl and add a pinch of salt. Stir in the hazelnuts and chocolate chips.  
 Put the eggs, sugar, vanilla extract and oil into another bowl and blend in the liquid chocolate mixture. Now add this mixture to the dry ingredients.  
 Pour the mixture into the prepared tin and bake for 30–40 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out with just a few crumbs adhering to it. It will be crumbly until fully cooled so try to resist cutting it immediately. When cool cut the brownies as you like them into mini square or serious chunky tiles.

NO GLUTEN | NO DAIRY | NO SOY

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alternative**

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 Photographed by Lisa Linder

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is published by Conran Octopus at £12.99

*Foods Matter* readers can buy **sweet alternative**  
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