



WANT A HAPPY BELLY? Eat a Vegan Twinkie

by Julie Vitto | jvitto@flymagazine.net

You know the rush of childhood memories you get from biting into a Hostess Twinkie? That may just be a reaction from some of the ingredients used in the Twinkies – things like Polysorbate 60, which is a chemical also used in rocket fuel.

It wasn't long ago that the Great Twinkie Shortage of 2012 had everyone in a panic, wondering about the true shelf life of the cream-filled sponge cake. Urban legend has it those things last forever.

When Hostess announced the iconic snack cake would return to stores in 2013, the company also reported that the shelf life would extend to 45 days compared to its previous 26.

While there are trace amounts of egg in the Hostess Twinkie's list of nearly 40 ingredients, the recipe consists mostly of flour, sugar, shortening and a heap of chemical emulsifiers acting as preservatives.

Some say less is more, and for Lancaster baker Chelsea Zawisa, perfecting a vegan Twinkie recipe has proved people don't have to compromise their health to satisfy their cravings.

"I liked the idea of making something that was known for its unhealthiness and then making it healthy," says Zawisa, owner of the Happy Belly Bakery stand at Lancaster's East Side Market. "I use organic flour for all my pastries."

Happy Belly Bakery is in its

second year at the market, which is open on Sundays from 10 a.m.–2 p.m. until October 25.

Zawisa, a 2011 graduate of York Technical Institute's Pastry Arts program, describes finding a few different recipes for vegan Twinkies on Pinterest last year, which led to some trial and error until getting a product she was happy with.

Compared to the mass-produced recipe, the ingredient list for Zawisa's vegan Twinkie is pared down considerably.

The cake mix starts with a combination of whole wheat and all-purpose flour. Coconut oil is then added to bind and flavor the ingredients. It also helps those little Twinkies slide out of the pan in one piece after baking.

Sadly, no actual milk is used in the original Hostess Twinkie's creamy center. Instead, we got a blob of sugary animal shortening. Zawisa remedied this.

"I just buy raw cashew pieces and then soak them for a couple of hours before putting them in the food processor," she says. "Then I process them with maple syrup and water."

Zawisa is proud to

use local and organic ingredients – whether she's cooking at home or baking for the market.

"That's the whole reason I do this," she says. "The ingredients are important to me."

The recipe produces a delectable sponge cake with three stars of sweet, creamy filling piped in from the top. It's like looking at the older and wiser sibling to the cartoon sponge cake in the cowboy hat, smiling at us from a box of Hostess.

Zawisa's results are magical. Compared to the original, the taste and texture of the vegan Twinkie is more natural. The delicate sponge cake crumbles a little after each bite and the sweet cashew cream has a slightly nutty taste with a hint of maple syrup.

The first time I bit into a vegan Twinkie, I got a rush – and not from any rocket fuel ingredients. It was from the excitement of knowing there's another way to get that sugar fix all childhood dreams are made of.

Happy Belly Bakery
Lancaster East Side Market
135 N. Lime St., Lancaster

A lifetime of sandwiches

Every month until the end of time, we highlight our favorite locally-made sandwiches. Our list continues with three more mouth-watering options.

by Fly Staff



7 Smiley's Deli & Food Market Lancaster

Roast beef, Swiss cheese, lettuce, tomato, spicy mustard, salt, pepper & oregano.

8 Deli of Italy York

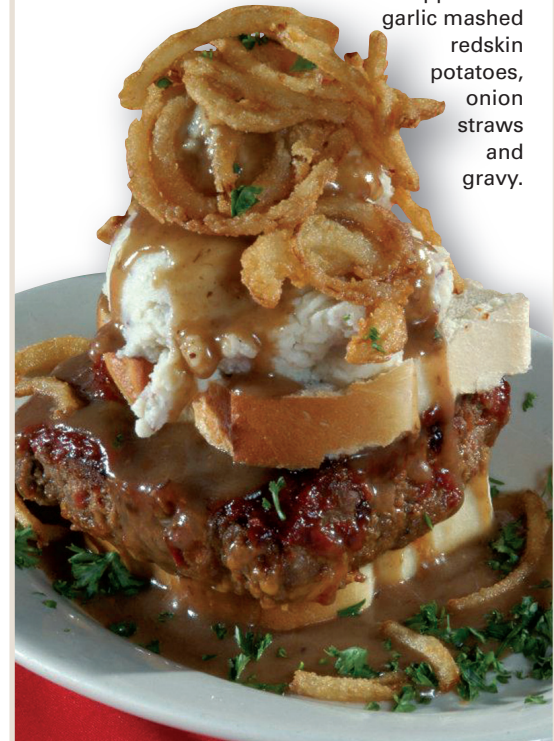
Qubano: Turkey, prosciuttini ham, pickles, provolone and Swiss cheeses with bacon, soviet and house dressing.



9 Duke's Riverside Wormleysburg

Peters Mountain Meatloaf Dinner:

Homemade meatloaf on thick sourdough bread, topped with garlic mashed redskin potatoes, onion straws and gravy.



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