

Bald Eagles

Makes about 15 eagles

Ever notice how cashews look exactly like the beaks on birds of prey? I did. When you make these little birds, dip in the coconut first and hold on to that part when you dip the cheese ball into the chocolate cookies; if you do the opposite, you'll get chocolate-cookie fingerprints on your eagles' heads.

- 16 ounces cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut flakes, for decorating
- 8 to 10 chocolate wafer cookies, finely crushed, for decorating
- 15 whole cashews, for decorating
- Mini chocolate chips or sliced dark raisins, for decorating

Using a stand mixer or a bowl and a spatula, mix together the cream cheese, sugar, and vanilla extract until combined. Form into 15 small, egg-shaped balls, about 2 tablespoons each, and set on a baking sheet. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate the cheese balls for at least 2 hours or overnight.

Before serving, dip the top of each ball into the coconut. Holding on to the coconut-coated portion, dip the bottom portion into the cookies; set each cheese ball down, coconut side up. Stick a cashew into each as a beak and use mini chocolate chips or sliced raisins for the eyes.