



Emma Zimmerman at home in Phoenix with her son, Max

## Raise the Bar

POWER YOUR NEXT OUTING WITH THIS SNACK

By Rachel Ng

**PORTABLE AND** calorically dense, the energy bar is an essential pick-me-up for hikers and other outdoor adventurers. Emma Zimmerman, cookbook author and cofounder of Hayden Flour Mills in Queen Creek, Arizona, often takes her homemade version on backpacking trips in the saguaro-spiked Superstition Mountains. It's filled with heart-healthy oatmeal and vitamin- and mineral-rich fruits and nuts. And unlike many store-bought bars, it feels like a soft brownie. Here's how to make it.

### Overnight Oat Bake with Cherries and Almonds

MAKES EIGHT BARS

#### INGREDIENTS

2½ cups cracked or rolled oats  
 13½ fluid ounces canned coconut milk  
 2 large eggs  
 ½ cup maple syrup  
 ½ cup packed dark brown sugar  
 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted  
 2 teaspoons baking powder  
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 teaspoon almond extract  
 ½ teaspoon fine sea salt  
 10 ounces pitted cherries, fresh or frozen  
 2 ounces slivered almonds  
 1 tablespoon flaxseeds (optional)  
 1 tablespoon chia seeds (optional)

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Grease an eight-inch-square baking tin. Place all ingredients except the cherries and almonds in a bowl and mix. Pour the mixture into the tin, smooth the sur-

face, then cover. Refrigerate overnight. In the morning, preheat your oven to 350 degrees. Top the mixture with the cherries and almonds, then bake for 45 to 50 minutes, until the edges start to brown and the middle sets. Go a little longer for firm bars and a little shorter for a more pudding-like consistency. Remove from the oven and cut into bars.

*Adapted from The Miller's Daughter, by Emma Zimmerman (Hardie Grant, 2022)*