



Chewy Granola Bars

Grocer's Daughter January 17, 2021

Granola bars felt like the perfect recipe to share in January, for the folks who are trying to eat a little better this year and those of us who just need quick and healthy snacks to keep us going through the winter months. This recipe, filled with whole grain oats, protein-packed nuts/seeds, and sweetened with dates and a little maple syrup, feels like both a treat and a healthy snack. The best of both worlds.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup pitted dates
1/4 cup maple syrup or honey
1/4 cup nut butter
1/2 cup chopped nuts
1/2 cup chocolate discs or cacao nibs
1 1/5 cups quick oats (or rolled oats pulsed in a blender or food processor)

PREPARATION

Create a paste with the dates by pureeing them with a food processor or a blender. Be careful doing this, stopping the machine frequently, as it can be really hard on the motor. If your dates are on the dry side, soak them in hot water for ten minutes to soften.

Place date puree, walnuts, oats and nibs in a big mixing bowl or the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment. Hold off on adding the chocolate if using discs.

Continued on next page...

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PREPARATION

In a small saucepan, bring syrup to a gentle bowl over medium-high heat. Add nut butter and whisk to combine into a smooth mixture.

Pour the maple-nut butter combination into the bowl and mix until thoroughly combined.

Stir in chocolate discs, if using.

Pour the mixture into an 8 x 8 pan lined with a sling of parchment paper or plastic wrap. Using your hands, firmly press the mixture until it evenly covers the pan.

Place the pan in the fridge for about an hour.

Once your bars have hardened a bit, lift the sling of parchment/plastic wrap to remove them from the pan and slice into bars.

Store in the fridge or freezer - depending how fast you plan to eat them!

Continued on next page...

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VARIATIONS

Jody's Nut Free Sunflower Cherry Bars

I was happy when Christina suggested a chewy granola bar recipe for our team this month because my boys start a winter session at the local outdoor school - Human Nature School - next week and they'll need plenty of healthy carbohydrates to fuel them. I opted for a nut-free recipe since nuts aren't allowed at most schools these days. I substituted our GDC Chocolate Sunbutter for the peanut butter, sunflower seeds for the walnuts and used our 64% dark chocolate discs. While I wouldn't typically choose a granola bar that has dried fruit, I added 1/4 cup dried tart cherries to this batch and we love them! The tart flavor of the cherries balances the earthy sunflower seeds. I like that there's no added refined sugar, only maple syrup and dates. I pulsed the oats for a few minutes in the blender and we really like this texture. It's a tasty GDC twist on a Lara Bar style granola bar. I plan to try a hazelnut version next.

Aubrey's PB&J Bars

What's better than one customized flavor of granola bars? Two flavors that work together perfectly, of course! The PB half of my bars were a chocolate seed butter version using GDC Chocolate Sunbutter, salted cashews and chocolate covered cacao nibs. To make the jelly version, I substituted cherry preserves for the nut butter and stuck with the salted cashews. I left out the chocolate because of how sweet I anticipated it might be. Nothing better than a great excuse to eat two bars instead of one!

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VARIATIONS

Christina's Hazelnut Dark Chocolate Bars

I've been making renditions of this granola bar recipe for more than six years and it's always a good week when there is a batch of these in the fridge. I made something I haven't tried before this time around using almond butter, roasted hazelnuts and 81% chocolate discs (and maple syrup made right here at home, of course!). I absolutely love dark chocolate with hazelnuts, so this was a match made in heaven. I opted for almond butter because the flavor doesn't mute those lovely hazelnuts and the result was a bar that felt a little more decadent simply because hazelnut is such a special flavor.

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