Vegan & Gluten-Free Chocolate Orange Date Bars

Cook Time: 0 min prep Time: 0 min total Time: 0 min servings: 0
Makes 12-16 bars

Ingredients:

Crust

- 1 1/2 tablespoons chia seeds
- 1 cup raw walnuts, toasted
- 2 cups rolled oats, divided
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup apple sauce
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Filling

- 300g pitted soft dates
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon orange zest
- 1/2 cup apple sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder
- 2 tablespoons almond butter
- 1/4 cup coconut cream
- 3/4 cup raw walnuts, chopped

Instructions:

1. Pre-heat the oven to 350F or 160C. Prepare an 8 or 9 inch square baking pan (or the equivalent) and line with parchment paper. Place on a baking sheet and set aside.
2. Mix the chia seeds with 1/4 cup of water. Set aside for 10 minutes to turn into a gel.
3. Place 1 cup of oats in a food processor, and process to turn into a flour. Then add 1 cup of walnuts, and process until the walnuts are ground. Transfer the ground oats and walnuts to a bowl, add the rest of the oats, baking powder and salt. Mix to combine. Then and the apple sauce, maple syrup, coconut oil, and vanilla. Stir well. You may need to use your hands at this point to make sure everything is well mixed. You will have around 500g of crust. Use about 330g for the base and reserve 170g for the topping. Or just eyeball it using 2/3s for the base, and a 1/3 for the topping.
4. Press the crust for the base into the prepared baking pan, making sure it's nice and even. Set aside while you make the filling.
5. In a food processor, place all the filling ingredients (except the walnuts!). Process until it's as smooth as you would like. It's okay if it's a little chunky. Spoon all over the base, and spread evenly. Sprinkle with the remaining crust, dropping it into clumps, followed by the chopped walnuts. Press down gently just to make sure the topping adheres to the filling.

6. Bake for 30 minutes. Set aside to cool completely before slicing and serving.