

Chocolate Almond Oatmeal Bites



I am so grateful that a friend passed this recipe along to me. I have made these bite sized morsels of deliciousness now several times with rave results from adults and children alike! Originally called Nikki's Cookies after the mom that was making them, I have renamed them after adding two tablespoons ground flax seed to boost omega 3's and cut the salt back to 1/4 tsp. They are packed with fiber and no added sugar, and if you make them with gluten-free oats, you also have a treat for a wide range of folks including those who eat gluten-free, dairy-free, egg-free for allergy reasons and the vegan crowd as well.

Ingredients

3 large, ripe bananas, well mashed (about 1 1/2 cups)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 cup coconut oil, barely warm – so it isn't solid (or alternately, olive oil)
2 cups rolled oats
2/3 cup almond meal
2 Tbsp ground flax seed
1/3 cup coconut, finely shredded & unsweetened
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon fine grain sea salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
6 – 7 ounces dark chocolate chips or dark chocolate bar chopped

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Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees, racks in the top third.
2. In a large bowl combine the bananas, vanilla extract, and coconut oil. Set aside.
3. In another bowl whisk together the oats, almond meal, shredded coconut, cinnamon, salt, and baking powder.
4. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and stir until combined. Fold in the chocolate chunks/chips. The dough is a bit looser than standard cookie dough, don't worry about it.
5. Drop dollops of the dough, each about 2 teaspoons in size, an inch apart, onto a parchment lined baking sheet. Bake for 12 – 14 minutes. I baked these as long as possible without burning the bottoms and they were perfect – just shy of 15 minutes seems to be about right in my oven.

Makes about 3 dozen bite-sized cookies.

Notes

You can use unsweetened carob, or grain sweetened chocolate chips, or do what I did and chop up 2/3 of a dark chocolate bar of greater than 70% cocoa. You can make your own almond meal by pulsing almonds in a food processor until it is the texture of sand – don't go too far or you'll end up with almond butter. And lastly, the coconut oil works beautifully here, just be sure to warm it a bit – enough that it is no longer solid, which makes it easier to incorporate into the bananas. If you have gluten allergies, seek out gluten-free oats.

Inspired from a recipe on 101Cookbooks.com

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