



HEALTHY WAYS DATES



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Dates are chewy, sweet fruits that grow on date palms and are native to the Middle East. They can be eaten fresh or dried, and they have different tastes and textures depending on their variety. Dates are a good source of potassium, magnesium, iron, and fiber.

RECIPES

Banana-Date Smoothie

Ingredients:

2 medium ripe bananas	¼ cup pitted dried dates
2 cups milk	2 teaspoons chia seeds, soaked if time allows
½ teaspoon ground cardamom or cinnamon	½ medium lime, juiced
4 ice cubes	pinch salt

Directions:

1. Place all the ingredients in a blender and blend on high speed until smooth, about 1 minute. Divide between 2 cups and serve with a sprinkle of cinnamon and salt. Best if served immediately. (Makes about 4 cups total.)

Note: Soaking chia seeds: If time allows, soak the chia seeds in 4 teaspoons of water for an hour. The chia seeds will turn into gel, making them easier to blend. Larger batches of chia seeds can also be soaked (2:1 ratio water to chia seeds) and kept refrigerated for up to 1 week.

Kale & Quinoa Salad with Dates & Citrus Dressing

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon olive oil	1 large onion, diced	salt
½ cup red quinoa	1 small clove garlic, smashed	1 bunch leafy kale
½ cup whole dates	½ cup roasted whole almonds	1 mandarin orange, juiced
½ lime, juiced	2 teaspoons maple syrup	¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
salt	freshly ground black pepper	

Directions:

1. Heat the olive oil in a wide sauté pan over medium heat. Add the onion and sprinkle lightly with salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion has darkened to a toasty brown and smells caramelized. Remove from the heat and set aside.
2. Rinse the quinoa in a fine mesh strainer. Add it and the garlic to a 2-quart saucepan set over medium-high heat and sauté for about a minute both to dry the grain and toast it lightly. Add 1 cup water and 1/2 teaspoon salt and bring to a boil. Cover and turn the heat to low; cook for 15 minutes. Turn off the heat but leave the lid on for an additional 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, remove the lid and fluff with a fork.
3. Slice off the muddy bottoms of the kale stems, then slice the rest of the bunch into fine ribbons. Wash thoroughly and spread on a towel to dry.
4. Pit the dates and slice them into quarters. Roughly chop the almonds.
5. Make the dressing: Whisk the juices together (you should have about 1/4 cup total of juice, or a little less). Whisk in the maple syrup and olive oil. The dressing will be emulsified but still thin. Stir about 2 tablespoons of the dressing into the quinoa after it finishes cooking.
6. Assemble the salad: Toss the kale with all of the still-warm quinoa and the caramelized onions. Toss with about half the dressing and taste. Add the remaining dressing if desired, then toss with the dates and almonds. Taste a bite; if it needs more salt, add it now, as well as fresh pepper if desired.



MAKE IT A MEAL: RECIPES



Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip Date Cookies

Ingredients:

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| ¾ cup rolled oats | ¼ cup peanut butter |
| 8 pitted Deglet Nour dates | ½ teaspoon vanilla extract |
| 1 teaspoon cinnamon | 4 tablespoons water |
| ¼ cup chocolate chips | |

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F (176°C).
2. Lightly grease a cookie sheet or line with baking paper.
3. In a food processor add oats, peanut butter, dates, vanilla and cinnamon. Process until well-ground, approximately 30 seconds. Mixture should resemble uniform coarse crumbs.
4. While continuing to process, add water 1 tablespoon at a time until dough forms. When one large ball of dough forms while your machine is running, your processing is done. That means your dough is sticky enough to hold together and not crumble apart.
5. Transfer the dough to a bowl and mix in chocolate chips.
6. Use a teaspoon or 1-inch scoop to create 20, 1-inch balls, or double the size to make 10 cookies. Level the bottom of each dough ball to form a little dome. Place 2 inches apart on a cookie sheet. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes. Cookies are done when the chocolate chips are just melted, the cookie is warmed throughout and the top is only slightly toasted.
7. Let cool before eating.

No-Bake Coconut Truffles

Ingredients:

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| 12 mejdool dates, pitted | 2 tablespoons water |
| 4 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder | ½ cup puffed rice |
| ½ cup shredded unsweetened dried coconut | |

Directions:

1. In food processor or blender puree dates and water until a sticky paste/ball forms. Pulse in cocoa powder until solid dough forms. Stir in puffed brown rice.
2. With small scoop, form mixture into 14 tablespoon-sized balls.
3. Roll each ball into coconut to lightly coat.
4. Refrigerate for 30 to 60 minutes to set.

Spiced Carrots & Dates

Ingredients:

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| 1 pound carrots, trimmed and sliced | 1 tablespoon olive oil |
| salt | freshly ground black pepper |
| 10 pitted dates, sliced | ¼ cup roughly chopped pecans or walnuts |
| ¼ cup fresh mint, chopped | 3 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil |
| 1 lemon, juiced | 2 teaspoons honey |
| ¼ teaspoon salt | ¼ ground cumin |
| Ground cinnamon | ⅛ teaspoon ground cardamom, optional |

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Prepare the carrots, and make sure to cut them into pieces that are fairly similar in size so that they cook evenly. I like to cut them crosswise on an angle for a pretty presentation. Toss the sliced carrots in olive oil, salt, and pepper. Spread them out in a single layer on the baking sheet. Roast for 25 to 30 minutes until tender.
2. In the meantime, prepare the other ingredients. Whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, honey, salt, cumin, cinnamon, and cardamom in a small bowl or measuring cup.
3. When the carrots are finished roasting, transfer them to a mixing bowl. Add the sliced dates, pecans, and fresh mint. Pour the dressing over the mixture, and stir until coated. Serve and enjoy!