

# ONE BITE

VEGAN MAGAZINE





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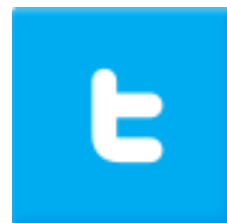
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# 5-Ingredient *Healthy Date Bars*

(Gluten-Free)

By Karlie Bryant



**A** new recipe, a new confession: I LOVE dates. My love of dates goes beyond healthy. Needless to say, I cannot keep them in my house. Because, if they are in the house, they aren't there for long. Case in point: when my mom and G.G. were in town we bought 10 lbs of dates from the farmer's market. It took me less than one week to eat them. I'm not picky about the variety – Deglet Noor, Medjool, Honey, Barhi, I love them all. Alone, with almond butter (my favorite), in

smoothies, these bars...

These bars are EVERYTHING. Only 5 ingredients (not including the baking powder and salt – okay, I cheated a bit) and they taste like heaven. They're so good that I struggled with the decision to take some to work so I didn't eat them all (I easily could have). At one point, I even resented my co-workers for taking my date bars away from me. Keep in mind, they didn't ask me to make them and had no idea I was bringing them. Nor did they steal them from me.



Like I said, my love of dates goes beyond healthy.

However, among the foods I could be obsessed with, dates are a pretty good choice.

Although they have a significant amount of natural sugar (at least when you're eating them in the quantities I do), dates are also packed with great nutrients that your body needs. In fact, they have more potassium, calcium, and iron than a banana. They're also a good source of fiber, something the majority of us need more of (more than 90% of adults and children eat below the daily recommended amount<sup>1</sup>), which make them a terrific alternative to other sweeteners.

For this recipe, you can use any type of date you want. I like using Medjool because they are usually softer (and sweeter). If your dates are on the dry side, you will want to put them in a saucepan with a 1/2 cup of water (add more if necessary). Cook them on high until the water begins to boil, then turn down the heat and start mashing them with the back of a spoon (wood works best).

If your dates are already soft, the method I use in the recipe below is the easiest. It also saves you from dirtying a pan, which means fewer dishes to clean when you're finished. Who doesn't like that?!

### 5-INGREDIENT HEALTHY DATE BARS (GLUTEN-FREE)

Yield: 16 Squares

#### DESCRIPTION

Gluten-free, vegan 5-ingredient date bars that make the perfect dessert or on-the-go snack. Naturally sweetened and made from real, whole foods.



## INGREDIENTS

For the date filling:

- 2 cups (400 g) pitted dates (since size/weight vary depending on the variety, best to weigh them if possible)
- pinch of sea salt, optional
- For the crust and topping:
- 2 1/2 cups gluten-free rolled oats
- 1 1/2 cups gluten-free rolled oats, blended into flour
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/3 cup coconut palm sugar, organic if possible (I used this one)
- 1/2 cup unrefined, cold-pressed, virgin coconut oil, melted
- 1/2 cup cashew butter, check the label to make sure the only ingredient is cashews (I used this one)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (approx. 180°C).
2. Soak the pitted dates in hot water (doesn't have to be boiling) for 15 minutes until softened. Set aside while soaking to make the crust/topping. If your dates are really dry, use the alternative softening method in the notes below.
3. Using a food processor or coffee grinder grind 1 1/2 cups of oats until they resemble a fine flour. Alternatively, you can buy oat flour at the grocery store. I just find this method more cost-effective.
4. Place all the crust and topping ingredients into a food processor (including the oat flour from the previous step) and pulse until well combined and crumbly.
5. Put 2/3 of the mixture into a parchment-lined 8 inches baking pan. Make sure to press it down firmly to make the crust layer even.
6. Drain the dates and use your hand (or the back of a spoon if hot, but hands work better) to mash them into a paste. Or, use



- the alternative method in the notes below.
7. Spread the date mixture on top of the crust layer from step 4.
8. Top the date mixture with the remaining oat mixture, spreading evenly.
9. Bake in preheated oven for 20-25 minutes.
10. Enjoy!







## NOTES

- If your dates are really dry, place them in a saucepan with 1/2 cup water (add more if necessary) and heat on high until the water begins to boil. Turn down the heat to low and begin to mash the dates with the back of a wooden spoon. Continue to add water as necessary until you get a smooth, but thick, paste.
- If the topping doesn't completely cover the date mixture, be sure to keep an eye on it so the exposed dates don't burn. If they start to burn, put aluminum foil over the edges to prevent them from over-cooking.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Karlie Bryant is a plant-based blogger, food photographer, and self-love junkie in training. She explores the connection between what we eat and how we feel and uses this to help people enhance their mood, decrease their anxiety, and live a happier life. Often found hiking around Southern California with her sidekick (a.k.a. dog) P.J.

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