

Almond Butter Granola Bars

It amazes me how popular “bars” are these days. In the name of convenience, many people pick up a bar for lunch or snack and call it a day. Let me assure you that you are not fully absorbing and utilizing all of those “added” vitamins/minerals promoted on that label. AND, most granola bars are filled with refined sugars and additives (*not to mention over processed*). These little gems instead provide you with protein and essential fats from the nuts and seeds; making them a perfect snack for a craving midmorning/afternoon (at least for all you bar lovers!) ENJOY ~ Julie

Makes ~8-10 bars

¼ cup almonds, *toasted and coarsely chopped*
1 cup Bob’s Red Mill gluten free oats
3½ Tbsp. almond flour (*or you can use rice flour*)
1 scoop (~15 grams) protein powder*
¼ cup raw pumpkin seeds (or sunflower seeds)
¼ cup dried goji berries, currants, or raisins
1 tsp. cinnamon
¼ tsp. salt
¼ cup almond butter
¼ cup maple syrup
1 tsp. vanilla extract
½ cup 100% organic apple juice
1 ½ Tbsp. melted coconut oil

**Use whatever you enjoy, whether it is a Whey, pea, rice, or pumpkin seed powder. Adding the protein powder is optional, but it DOES increase the protein punch in the bar keeping you satisfied longer.*

Nourishing “Nuggets”:

- You can be creative and add different seed and nut combinations to your preference, as well as the nut butter type.

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
2. Grease an 8x8” baking pan
3. Combine the almonds, oats, flour, protein powder, seeds, currants/goji berries, cinnamon, and salt in a medium bowl and stir to combine.
4. Whisk the almond butter, maple syrup, vanilla, and apple juice together in another bowl.
5. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry, stirring until the dry ingredients are thoroughly moistened.
6. Press mixture evenly into the pan. Then bake for 20 minutes.
7. Remove the pan from the oven and cut into 10 bars, next brush the coconut oil over the top and return the pan to the oven and bake until golden brown, ~15-20 minutes.
8. Cool in the pan for ~10 minutes and then remove the bars with a spatula and finish cooling on a rack.

