

No Bake Peanut Butter Chia Granola Bars



Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups old fashioned rolled oats — (quick cooking can also be used—I just prefer the chewier texture of the old fashioned)
- 1/2 cup roughly chopped nuts — (walnuts, pecans, and almonds or a mix. I used walnuts)
- 1/4 cup uncooked millet — or uncooked quinoa
- 1/4 cup chia seeds
- 2/3 cup creamy peanut butter — (do not use the kind that must be refrigerated or the bars may not set)
- 1/3 cup honey — (I like raw—use maple syrup to make vegan)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips, — dried cherries, raisins, chopped dried apricots, chopped dried dates, etc. (I used chopped mejool dates)

Instructions

1. **OPTIONAL:** Preheat your oven to 350 degrees F. Spread the oats, nuts, quinoa or millet, and chia seeds on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake until the mixture is lightly golden and smells toasty, about 10 minutes. Set aside.
2. Line an 8x8-inch baking dish with plastic wrap or parchment paper, lightly mist with cooking spray, then set aside.
3. In a small saucepan over medium low heat, melt together the peanut butter and honey, stirring frequently until creamy and smooth. Remove from the heat, then stir in the vanilla, cinnamon, and salt.
4. In a large mixing bowl, combine the oats, millet (or quinoa), nuts, and chia seeds. Pour the peanut butter mixture over the top, then with a rubber spatula, stir until the ingredients are evenly coated. If using chocolate, let the mixture cool for 1 to 2 minutes to ensure the chocolate doesn't melt, then stir in any desired mix-ins (if you are not adding chocolate, you can stir in the mix-ins right away).
5. Transfer the mixture to the prepared baking dish. With a rubber spatula, press it firmly to the edges, then place a sheet of plastic wrap over the top and press down firmly with your fingers to make sure it is spread tightly and evenly. Refrigerate for 2 hours to allow the bars to set and the flavors to mingle. Use the plastic or parchment paper to remove the bars from the pan, slice into bars, and enjoy.

Recipe Notes

- I love toasting the ingredients in Step 1, because it deepens the bars' flavor. That said, if you can't handle turning on your oven, it is totally fine to skip this step! If you have time, I would still suggest toasting the nuts in a dry saucepan on low heat before adding them, because it does so much to maximize their flavor, but this is optional too.
- Store leftover bars in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. To freeze, individually wrap in plastic, place in a ziptop bag, then freeze for up to 2 months.