



## **Try Me Days: Mejool Date**

### **Mejool Date Facts:**

There are different kinds of dates, but the Mejool date is special because it is not only sweet but has a caramel-like taste. Dates are a stone fruit with a single, rock-hard pit that is surrounded by a soft and sticky edible flesh. You always want to remove the pit before you eat a date!

Although they are small, they are mighty in taste and nutrition! Each date contains fiber which supports healthy digestion; calcium, potassium, and magnesium which support strong bones; and iron, copper, and vitamin B6 important for growth and development. They also are high in antioxidants which help protect the body from diseases like cancer and heart disease while also improving brain health.

Dates are a concentrated source of *natural sugar* but are a *low glycemic food* and should not cause a large increase in blood sugar. Each date contains about 50 calories, so intake should be limited, but they can be a great sweet snack that is full of vitamins, minerals, and fiber! Dates are a great sugar alternative!

### **Recipes:**

**1- Date paste:** soak 1 cup of pitted dates by covering them with hot water for 10 minutes. Blend the dates and the soaking water in a food processor until thoroughly mixed. Keep in a sealed container, like a mason jar, in the refrigerator for up to 2-3 weeks. Use the paste as a spread on toast, added to sauces, dressings, or desserts instead of sugar. Substitute 1:1 with sugar in recipes.

**2- Date sugar:** you can find this in some stores or online. Date sugar is dried dates that are ground up into a powder. It can be used as a sugar alternative in baking.

**3- Date treat:** remove the pit from the date. Fill the date with the nut butter of your choice and enjoy!

**4- Chocolate date energy balls:** Healthy and easy to make!

Author: modified from PCRM. Makes 23 Servings

#### **Ingredients:**

- pitted dates (1 1/2 c)
- raisins (1/2 c)
- rolled oats (1 c)
- pumpkin seeds (2 tbsp)
- cocoa powder (1/4 c)
- iodized salt (1/8 tsp)

- pure vanilla extract (1 tsp)
- nondairy chocolate chips, optional (3 tbsp)

Directions:

- 1- In a food processor, combine the dates, raisins, oats, and pumpkin seeds. Process until the mixture is crumbly.
- 2- Add the cocoa, protein powder (if using), salt, and vanilla. Process again, and let the processor run until the mixture begins to get sticky and form clumps.
- 3- Add the chocolate chips (if using) and pulse until a ball forms on the blade.
- 4- Remove the bowl and roll small scoops (about one tablespoon each) of the mixture into balls. Continue until all of the mixture is used.
- 5- Transfer to an airtight container in the refrigerator, where they will keep for a couple of weeks, or to the freezer, where they will keep for a couple of months.

**5- Five Ingredient Peanut Cup Energy Bites:** EASY, 5 ingredient peanut butter energy bites sweetened with dates and studded with oats, dark chocolate and chia seeds! Full of fiber, protein and healthy fats.

Author: Minimalist Baker. Makes 15 Servings

Ingredients:

- 1 cup dates (pitted - if dry, soak in warm water for 10 minutes, then drain well)
- 3 Tbsp all-natural salted peanut or almond butter
- 1/4 cup dairy-free dark chocolate (roughly chopped)
- 1 Tbsp chia seeds (or sub flax or hemp seeds)
- 2/3 cup gluten-free rolled oats

Directions:

- 1- Pulse pitted dates in a food processor or blender until they're in small pieces or it forms a ball
- 2- Add oats, chocolate, chia seeds and peanut butter and pulse or mix until combined. You want there to be consistently small pieces but not overly processed.
- 3- Carefully roll into 1-inch balls using the warmth of your hands to mold them together. Should yield 14-15 balls (amount as original recipe is written // adjust if altering batch size).
- 4- To set, pop in fridge or freezer for 15 minutes. Otherwise, eat as is! Will keep fresh in an air-tight bag or container for up to a week. Freeze for longer term storage.