

Farro Cranberry Squares

Great for entertaining, these photogenic fruit-and-farro squares don't need added sugar to satiate a sweet tooth. They're also wholesome and nourishing enough to eat as breakfast bars. Cranberries, cherries, and apples meld together in the lip-smacking sauce. Date Paste, used in both the base and sauce, adds natural sweetness and moisture.

By Darshana Thacker



Makes about 16 2-inch squares

Ingredients:

SQUARES

- 1 cup dry farro, rinsed
- 1 cup date paste
- ¼ cup oat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 tablespoon ground flaxseed
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- ¼ cup walnuts, crushed

SAUCE

- 1¼ cups dried, fresh, or frozen cranberries (6 ounces)
- 1 cup dried, fresh, or frozen pitted cherries (6 ounces)
- 1 medium apple, cored and finely chopped (1 cup)
- ½ cup date paste
- 1 tablespoon arrowroot powder
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened, unflavored plant milk

Directions:

1. In a saucepan, combine the farro with 2 cups of water; bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low; cover, and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and let cool, then fluff with a fork.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. In a bowl, combine farro, date paste, oat flour, baking powder, flaxseed, vanilla, and walnuts. Mix well. The texture will be sticky and lumpy. Transfer the mixture to the baking sheet and pat it into an 8-inch square that is between ¼ inch and ½ inch thick. Bake 20 minutes on the top rack.
4. Meanwhile, in a small sauce pot, combine cranberries, cherries, apple, date paste, arrowroot, and milk. Bring to a boil and simmer 5 to 10 minutes, until the fruits soften and the mixture has thickened. Let the fruit topping cool 10 minutes.
5. Remove baked farro square from oven. Spread the topping on the baked farro, and chill in the fridge for least an hour. When ready to serve, cut into pieces.

Date Paste: One pound of pitted dates, One cup of liquid (water, milk, unsweetened juice)

Soak dates in liquid overnight or for several hours until much of the liquid is absorbed. In food processor fitted with the “S” blade, process dates and liquid until completely smooth. Store date paste in the refrigerator.