

BRYANNA'S SPICY CHOCOLATE-PECAN BROWNIES WITH A HINT OF ORANGE

Serves 12

Yield: one 9 x 9" OR 7 x 11" pan, 12 bars

The Aztec royalty liked their chocolate with some chile in it, and modern chefs and chocolatiers have made this combo popular with at least a portion of chocolate lovers. This is my contribution-- a spin-off from the Fudge-y Light Vegan Brownies in my book *"The Fiber For Life Cookbook"*. These are a little richer-- they taste positively decadent!

Dry Mix:

1/2 cup regular whole wheat flour (*not pastry flour*)

2 1/2 tablespoons your favorite chile powder

1/2 teaspoon baking powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

Flaxseed/Egg Replacer Mixture:

1/4 cup water

1 tablespoon flax seeds

1 tablespoon Ener-G or Orgran egg replacer powder

Cocoa Batter:

1/3 cup vegan butter (try my homemade palm oil-free vegan Buttah)

1 cup brown sugar, packed, or Rapadura or Sucanat

1/2 cup organic cocoa powder, unsweetened

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

1/2 tablespoon water, Bourbon, rum or Kahlua

grated zest of 1 organic orange

Additions:

3/4 cup (4 oz.) organic, dairy-free semisweet small chocolate chunks or chips

1/2 cup chopped pecans

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Oil a 9 x 9", or 7 x 11" baking pan and line the bottom with cooking parchment.

In a small bowl, mix together the flour, chile powder, baking powder, and salt. Set aside.

Place the 1/4 cup water, flax seeds and egg replacer in a blender. Blend on high for several minutes, until the mixture is "gloppy" like slightly beaten egg whites, with little brown flecks of flax skin throughout. (*OPTION: you can blend the mixture with a hand/immersion/stick blender, but this works best if the flax seeds are ground in a coffee/spice mill first.*) Set aside.

In a small saucepan, melt the vegan butter gently over medium heat OR melt it in a medium-small microwave-proof bowl in the microwave for 1 minute. Stir in the sugar until dissolved, then stir in the cocoa, vanilla, water or liquor, and orange zest. Fold the Flax Seed/Egg Replacer mixture into the cocoa mixture. Add the Dry Mix and stir briefly just to blend. It is a thick batter. Add the chocolate chunks or chips and the pecans and stir to mix.

To bake the brownies:

Spread on the brownie batter into the prepared pan and spread it evenly with a wet spatula. Bake for about 15-17 minutes. You may have to experiment with timing, according to your oven (try to use an oven thermometer to check the temperature, which can vary even in new ovens), and according to how fudge-y you like the brownies.

Cool on a rack, then cut into 12 squares. Serve at room temperature.

Nutrition Facts

Nutrition (per bar): 230.1 calories; 44% calories from fat; 12.1g total fat; 0.0mg cholesterol; 117.7mg sodium; 217.2mg potassium; 32.3g carbohydrates; 3.7g fiber; 18.1g sugar; 2.6g protein; 4.9 points.