

11/17/12 - Oat Bars With Cranberries

During this busy time of year sometimes we need something to grab quickly for breakfast and go. In a word something portable. Healthy, tasty, dairy or dairy free the breakfast or snack item should satisfy your hunger for many hours. One more



On a recent trip to a spa, I tasted a fabulous chewy oat bar with dried cherries in the center. Using that as my model and consulting my favorite [Jazzy oatmeal cookie](#) recipe, I created this recipe for oat bars with cranberry sauce filling. I made four versions of the recipe during testing. One with butter, one with cream cheese, one with coconut oil (solid at room temperature), and one with Fleishman's parve margarine. Actually all four versions resulted in very tasty and chewy oat bars, two dairy and two dairy-free. Surely one formula to suit everyone's preferences for fats.

The other testing I did was researching how long would they keep. Great when cool, better the next day, and several days later when I found the four plastic wrapped pieces I used in the photographs in the back of the refrigerator, they were wonderful. What happened you may wonder to the four pans of oat bars baked for this recipe? Well, two went to my son's laboratory, and two went to my husband's office again!



Serves 9 to 16

2 cups flour

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon baking soda

3 cups old fashion oats

2 sticks unsalted butter

1 cup packed golden brown sugar

1/4 cup molasses

2 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla

1/2 cup chopped toasted pecans

1 cup dried cranberries

1 and 1/2 cups cranberry sauce (leftover from recipe)

Measure flour, cinnamon, salt and baking soda into a medium bowl. Stir to combine and set aside. Measure oatmeal into a medium bowl and set aside. In a large bowl of a stand mixer cream butter and brown sugar for 3 minutes, add molasses and beat until well blended on medium. Add eggs one at a time beating until combined after each addition. Add vanilla. Add dry ingredients and start mixer on lowest setting, mix until just combined. Add oats, mix for a moment, add pecans and cranberries.

Heat oven to 350° F. Spray a square brownie pan with non stick spray or grease with butter. Spread half of oatmeal batter into bottom of cake pan. Pat evenly into place. Spread with cranberry sauce. Cover with a second layer of oatmeal batter. The batter is thick and sticky and requires a little finesse to spread. I used a silicone spatula.

Place pan in hot oven and bake 20 to 23 minutes until top looks golden and crackly. Remove from oven and cool on a rack. When cool turn out onto a board to cut in squares. I suggest individually wrapping them for keeping. Keeps one day on counter and keeps for several days refrigerated.

You can make this same recipe substituting an 8 ounce package of cream cheese for the butter.

You can make this same recipe substituting 2 sticks of margarine for the butter.

You can make this same recipe substituting 1 cup coconut oil (solid like shortening at room temperature) and using coconut syrup for the molasses. Instead of pecans I added 1 and 1/2 cups of flaked coconut in this batch.





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