



There's a Chef in My Kitchen, LLC

Fruit 'n Nut Bites

Makes about 4 dozen 1/2-inch bites

This is a fabulously rich combination of almonds, figs or dates, and other dried fruit. While I love the tropical flavor of the coconut and mango in this recipe, don't limit yourself to this combination. Try other dried fruit combinations such as papaya, mango, and pineapple, or apricots, apples and even plums, for variety. The almonds deliver plenty of protein and in combination with the dried fruit are powerful little bites of fuel for your body.



Make sure your dried fruit is somewhat soft and pliable. If not, don't despair. Place the fruit in a microwave safe bowl and cook on high for about 15 to 20 seconds. Let sit in microwave undisturbed for about 2 minutes until soft.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup almonds (preferably raw or blanched)
- 1/4 cup hazelnut almond (or some other meaty nut, such as Marcona almonds, peanuts, or even cashews) (substitute additional almonds)
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla paste (or substitute a generous teaspoon vanilla extract)
- Pinch of coarse sea salt
- 1 6 ounce bag dried apricots, coarsely chopped (about 1 generous cup)
- 1 cup figs, coarsely chopped
- 1 1/2 tablespoons dried cherries
- 1/2 cup shredded unsweetened coconut, lightly toasted

Preparation:

Place the almonds, vanilla, and a generous pinch of sea salt into the bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Process until very finely ground.

Add the dried fruit to the food processor and process until the mixture starts to come together. Roll the mixture into balls about 1/2- to 1-inch in diameter. Roll the balls in the coconut until coated then place on a wax-paper-lined rimmed baking sheet.

Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Chef's Note:

These little bites can be made 2 to 3 days in advance. Store them in the refrigerator in an air tight container, separating layers with a sheet of waxed paper, or nonstick parchment paper.

As a delicious garnish to a salad or roasted poultry simply press the mixture flat on a wax paper-lined baking sheet, sprinkle with the toasted coconut and gently press on the coconut to adhere. Refrigerate until well chilled. Slice 2" x 2" squares, or other shapes, and serve atop salads or alongside roasted poultry as a garnish.

courtesy of: www.TheresAChefinMyKitchen.com