

Nutty Strawberry Oat Bars Strawberry

Filling:

2 cups chopped strawberries
¼ cup pure maple syrup
1 Tablespoon granulated sugar
2 Tablespoons cornstarch
2 Tablespoons water

Base + Topping:

2 ¼ cup quick oats
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 cup unsalted almond butter (or peanut butter or sunflower seed butter)
¼ cup pure maple syrup
¼ cup apple butter
1 egg, beaten
½ cup sliced almonds

1. Combine the strawberries, maple syrup, and sugar together in a small sauce pan over medium heat. While stirring occasionally, bring to a boil then allow to boil for 1 minute. Mix the cornstarch and water until all of the cornstarch has dissolved and there are no more clumps. Remove strawberries from heat and stir in the pre-mixed cornstarch. Whisk together, then set aside to thicken and cool.
2. Preheat oven to 325°F. Line an 8x8 baking pan with aluminum foil with enough overhang on the sides for easy removal. Spray with non-stick spray and set aside.
3. Make the oat crust/topping: In a large bowl, combine the quick oats, cinnamon, almond butter, maple syrup, apple butter, and beaten egg. Mix until all of the oats are moistened and the mixture is thoroughly combined. Reserve 1/2 cup of the oat mixture. Press the remaining oat mixture into prepared baking pan. Make sure it is firmly pressed down and even. Spread the strawberry filling on top.
4. To the reserved 1/2 cup oat mixture, add the sliced almonds. Crumble this over the strawberry filling and press the topping down firmly into the strawberry filling.
5. Bake for 30 minutes or so, until the topping is lightly browned. Allow to cool completely before cutting into squares. 6. Makes 9-12 squares, depending how large you cut them. Squares stay fresh covered tightly at room temperature or in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. Also freezes well.