

## Dark Chocolate Cherry Quinoa Granola Bars

PREP TIME: 25 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 1 hour 45 minutes

Servings: 9 large or 12 small granola bars



### Ingredients

- 1 cup old-fashioned oatmeal
- 1 cup quinoa flakes (instant unflavored oatmeal would also work)
- 1/2 cup raw walnuts, chopped (or raw chopped nut of your choice)
- 1/2 cup raw pepitas (raw sunflower seeds would also work)
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut flakes
- 1/4 cup ground flax seeds
- 1/4 cup oatmeal flour (wheat bran would also work)
- 1/8 cup hemp seeds + 1 Tbsp reserved for the top
- 2/3 cup pure maple syrup
- 3 Tbsp coconut oil, melted
- 1 1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup dried cherries, chopped (or dried fruit of your choice)
- 6 oz dark chocolate, shaved + 2 tsp coconut oil

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a 9x9" pan with parchment paper allowing two ends to overhang for easy removal. Mix together the oatmeal, quinoa, walnuts, pepitas, and coconut on a large sheet pan and bake in preheated oven for 6-8 minutes, stirring at least once for even toasting. Remove from the oven then add mix to a large bowl. Stir in the ground flax seeds, oatmeal flour, hemp seeds, sea salt and dried cherries.

In a separate bowl add maple syrup, vanilla extract, and melted coconut oil and stir to combine. Pour liquid ingredients over dry and stir until well coated. Add granola mixture to a parchment lined pan. Use your hands and a small piece of parchment paper to press mixture firmly into the pan to create compact bars. Sprinkle remaining 1 Tbsp hemp seeds on top and place in preheated oven to bake for 35 minutes or until golden. Allow to fully cool prior to cutting (about 30 minutes). If you cannot wait to dig in, and cut the bars too soon, you may end up with uneven shaped/more crumbly bars...they will still taste the same but may not be as uniform in size and shape!

Once fully cooled, cut into desired bar size (we used a 9"x9" pan which made 9 large bars).

In a microwave safe bowl combine the shaved chocolate with 2 tsp coconut oil and melt the mixture in the microwave in 10 second increments (making sure to stir between each 10 seconds to avoid burning the chocolate). Dip each bar into the chocolate half way then place on a wax paper lined baking sheet. Allow bars to cool in the fridge for 15 minutes. Store bars in an air tight container in the fridge for up to 5 days.

Courtesy of The Green Blossom Kitchen