

Mocha Empower Glo Bars

VEGAN, GLUTEN-FREE, SOY-FREE OPTION, KID-FRIENDLY OPTION,
FREEZER-FRIENDLY

MAKES 12 BARS

PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES

BAKE TIME: 6 TO 9 MINUTES

CHILL TIME: 10 TO 15 MINUTES

These bars have the perfect balance of sweet and salty flavor and crunchy, chewy texture. The real secret, though, is their mild coffee flavor and aroma, which pair perfectly with roasted almond butter and chocolate. They make for a perfect grab-and-go snack to enjoy with a coffee. When I ran Glo Bakery, this was a best-selling Glo Bar—it often sold out within an hour! I prefer to use freshly ground coffee beans for the best flavor. Caffeinated or decaf, it's your choice.

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F (160°C). Line a 9-inch (2.5 L) square pan with two pieces of parchment paper, one going each way.
2. Spread the almonds over a small baking sheet and toast in the oven for 6 to 9 minutes, until lightly golden in some spots. Transfer to a plate and let cool.
3. Grind the coffee beans in a coffee grinder until a fine powder forms. If you don't have a coffee grinder, you may be able to do this in a blender. Just make sure the beans are ground very fine.
4. In a large bowl, stir together the ground coffee, oats, cereal, chocolate chips, shredded coconut, and salt.
5. In a small pot, stir together the brown rice syrup, almond butter, and coconut oil until combined. Bring the mixture to a low simmer over low heat, stirring carefully and being careful not to burn it, then remove from the heat. Stir in the vanilla.
6. Add the toasted almonds to the dry ingredients and stir. Immediately pour the brown rice syrup mixture over the dry ingredients and stir until the oats are fully coated in the syrup mixture. This can take some elbow grease, but it's worth it so you don't have dry patches. The chocolate chips will melt during this process to create a uniform chocolate flavor in the bars.
7. Scoop the mixture into the prepared pan and spread it out evenly with lightly wet hands or a spoon. Grab a pastry roller, if you have one, and roll out the mixture until even and smooth. Or simply press down firmly with your hands—the more you pack down the mixture, the better the bars hold together. Using your fingertips, press the mixture in along the edges to create straight edges.

(recipe continues)

1/3 cup (75 mL) chopped raw almonds
2 heaping tablespoons (40 mL) dark roast coffee beans (you can use decaf beans, if preferred)

1 1/3 cups (325 mL) gluten-free rolled oats

1 cup (250 mL) crispy rice cereal (not puffed rice)

1/4 cup (60 mL) non-dairy chocolate chips

1/4 cup (60 mL) unsweetened shredded coconut

1/4 teaspoon (1 mL) fine sea salt

1/2 cup (125 mL) brown rice syrup

1/4 cup (60 mL) smooth Roasted Almond Butter (see page 75)

2 teaspoons (10 mL) virgin coconut oil

1 teaspoon (5 mL) pure vanilla extract

Make it soy-free Use soy-free non-dairy chocolate chips, such as Enjoy Life brand.

Make it kid-friendly Use decaf coffee beans, or simply omit the coffee altogether.

8. Place the pan in the freezer, uncovered, for 10 to 15 minutes, until the bars firm up enough to slice. With a pizza slicer, slice the block into 12 bars. Wrap the leftover bars in plastic wrap and store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 1 week or in the freezer for up to 4 weeks. The bars will firm up when chilled. You can let them sit at room temperature for 5 to 10 minutes before enjoying, if a softer texture is desired.