No-Bake Almond Joy Bars (Vegan, Paleo)

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An easy chocolate coconut layer bar with a delectable almond flavored cookie crust.

Ingredients

Crust:

* 1 cup almond meal
* 2 tablespoons maple syrup
* 1 tablespoon melted coconut oil
* ¼ teaspoon pure almond extract
* Pinch of salt

Coconut Filling:

* 1 cup shredded unsweetened coconut
* 3 tablespoons pure maple syrup
* 2 tablespoons coconut oil
* 1 tablespoon water

Chocolate Topping:

* ¼ cup cocoa powder
* ¼ cup melted coconut oil
* 2 tablespoons maple syrup (at room temperature)

Instructions

1. Line a standard loaf pan with parchment paper and set it aside. To prepare the crust, combine the almond meal, maple syrup, coconut oil, almond extract, and salt in a medium bowl, and stir well until a sticky dough is formed. Press it evenly into the bottom of the lined loaf pan, and set aside.
2. To prepare the coconut filling, combine all of the filling ingredients in the mixing bowl and stir well. Spread the coconut mixture over the crust, then use a spatula to smooth the top. Set aside.
3. To prepare the chocolate topping, combine all of the ingredients in the mixing bowl and use a whisk to create a silky smooth chocolate sauce. (If any of your ingredients are cold, this sauce will firm up. If that happens, simply place the bowl in a warm area or in a hot water bath briefly to liquify the ingredients again.) Pour the chocolate sauce over the top of the coconut layer and smooth the top with a spatula. Place the pan in the freezer to set until firm, about one to two hours.
4. Pull on the parchment paper to easily remove the solid bar from the pan, then slice into bars and serve directly from the freezer. These bars will soften fairly quickly if left at room temperature, so it's important to keep them chilled until ready to serve.