

DARK CHOCOLATE STRAWBERRY CRUNCH

Vegan, gluten-free, dairy-free, refined sugar-free, heart-healthy

How cute are these little pink coconut candies dipped in chocolate? They're just as yummy as they look. The fresh tart flavor of strawberries comes through in the creamy frosting and then you bite down into a yummy, crunchy cookie base. I made a healthy coconut-oat-cookie-base which is low glycemic using unrefined coconut sugar as a sweetener. The delicious, vegan strawberry frosting is made with soaked cashews and freeze-dried strawberries. A perfect little heart healthy candy that sparkles with color.

Ingredients

2 and 1/4 cups oats
3/4 cup shredded coconut
1/2 cup coconut sugar
pinch of salt
3/4 cup coconut oil

Vegan Frosting

1 and 1/2 cups raw cashews
soaked 1 hour and drained
1/3 cup full fat coconut milk
1/3 cup maple syrup
1 and 1/2 tablespoons coconut oil
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/3 to 2/3 cup dried strawberry powder

Chocolate

1 cup dark chocolate chunks or chips
1 tablespoon coconut oil
large crystal salt for tops

Makes 24 squares



1. Preheat oven to 350°F/180°C. Prepare liberally with baking spray two 12-count single brownie tins (24 total) or three 12 cavity mini candy square molds (36 total).
2. Using a food processor or blender combine oats, coconut, sugar and salt. Pulse until the oats are broken down into a rough crumble. Place in a bowl.
3. Melt the coconut oil and pour the heated oil into the bowl with oat-coconut-sugar-mixture and stir to combine into a crumbly, wet dough.
4. Press 1 to 2 tablespoons dough firmly on the bottom of each square to make individual, solid crusts. Use enough dough to make a 1/2-inch (12 mm) crust, when compacted.
5. Bake single brownie tins for 12 minutes, candy molds for 10 minutes. Once cooled, place tins in freezer.
6. **Frosting:** Soak cashews for one hour and drain. In a blender combine soaked cashews, coconut milk, maple syrup, coconut oil and vanilla. Blend until extra creamy. Stir in 1/3 cup strawberry powder. If the frosting is too thin, stir in up to another 1/3 cup powder to thicken (a tablespoon at a time). The frosting will thicken as it cools.
7. Remove squares from tin, spread a dollop of frosting onto each square and make smooth. Place one fresh cut strawberry on each top to decorate. Return to freezer.
8. **Chocolate:** Combine chocolate and coconut oil in a microwave safe bowl and microwave for 90 seconds. Stir to combine into a glossy, smooth chocolate coating. Remove squares from freezer. Holding a square in your hand, dip its corner into melted chocolate. Dip twice for extra chocolate. Then sprinkle large crystal salt on tops before chocolate sets.

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