

Oh She Glows

Vegan Nanaimo Bars

Classic Vanilla, Mint Chip, and Pomegranate-Almond Variations

Adapted from Joyce Hardcastle, 1986.

(bonus Hot Cocoa recipe below).

Classic Vanilla Vegan Nanaimo bars

Bottom Layer

- ½ cup vegan butter (or regular butter)
- ¼ cup sugar
- 5 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted
- 1 flax egg (1 tbsp ground flax + 3 tbsp warm water, mixed) OR 1 egg
- 1 and ¼ cup graham cracker crumbs (will be sharing my homemade recipe this week on the blog)
- ¼ cup almonds, processed fine
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut

Middle layer

- ½ cup vegan butter (or regular butter)
- 2 tbsp coconut milk, full-fat (not light)
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp vanilla custard powder
- 2 cups icing/confectioner's sugar, sifted

Top layer

- 4 oz non-dairy dark chocolate or semi-sweet plus 2 tbsp vegan butter (or regular butter)
- Shredded coconut, to garnish (optional)

Directions:

1. Line an 8 inch square pan with parchment paper and grease with butter on all sides. Leave a few inches of parchment hanging on the two ends so you can easily lift it up out of the pan when firm.

2. **Middle layer:** I prefer to begin making the middle layer because it will be ready when your bottom layer is pressed into the pan.

In a small bowl, mix together the 2 tbsp of coconut milk and 1 tsp of vanilla with the 2 tbsp custard powder. Stir until smooth.

With an electric mixer, beat the butter in a large bowl until smooth and creamy. Now add in the custard, coconut milk, and vanilla mixture and beat for a few minutes.

Gradually, add in the icing sugar and beat for about 3-5 minutes until light and fluffy. Set aside.

3. Bottom layer: In a small bowl mix the flax egg together (1 tbsp ground flax + 3 tbsp warm water). Set aside for a few minutes to allow it to thicken up. In a saucepan, whisk together the butter, sugar, and sifted cocoa powder. Heat on medium to low and stir frequently until smooth.

Now add in the gelled up flax egg and stir well. It will have a strange gel-like consistency now, but have no fear! Stir for a minute or so.

Now remove from heat and stir in the coconut, processed almonds, and graham wafer crumbs. Stir well and then mix with your hands.

Press this mixture into your prepared pan, ensuring that you press it down very firmly and as evenly as possible. I used a pastry roller to smooth it out, but this is not necessary.

4. Take your middle layer frosting and spread over top of the bottom layer. Smooth it out as evenly as possible. Place in the freezer until firm, about 45 mins.

5. Top Layer: Melt your chocolate and butter in a double boiler or carefully in the microwave. Stir well until smooth and all clumps are gone. Remove the pan from freezer and spread the chocolate quickly over the top. Sprinkle coconut on top if desired. Smooth out as much as possible and then place back in the freezer for about 1 hour until set. Once set you can transfer it to the fridge to keep until ready or you can place it on the counter for about 10 minutes before cutting it into squares. Makes about 16 small squares.

Note: Middle layer gets very soft at room temperature. Please keep in the fridge until serving and always cut when chilled.

Mint Chip Vegan Nanaimo bars

Bottom Layer

- ½ cup vegan butter (or regular butter)
- ¼ cup sugar
- 5 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted
- 1 flax egg (1 tbsp ground flax + 3 tbsp warm water, mixed) OR 1 egg
- 1 and ¼ cup graham cracker crumbs (will be sharing my homemade recipe this week on the blog)
- ¼ cup almonds, processed fine
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut

Middle layer

- ½ cup vegan butter (or regular butter)
- 1 tbsp + 1.5 tsp spinach juice (for all-natural green colour) OR green food colouring + 2 tbsp full-fat coconut milk
- 1.5 tsp pure peppermint extract
- 2 tbsp vanilla custard powder
- 2 cups icing/confectioner's sugar, sifted

Top layer

- 4 oz non-dairy dark chocolate or semi-sweet plus 2 tbsp vegan butter (or regular butter)
- 3-4 tbsp Crushed candycane, optional

Directions:

1. Line an 8 inch square pan with parchment paper and grease with butter on all sides. Leave a few inches of parchment hanging on the two ends so you can easily lift it up out of the pan when firm.

2. **Middle layer:** I prefer to begin making the middle layer because it will be ready when your bottom layer is pressed into the pan.

In a small bowl, mix together the spinach juice (or food colouring + coconut milk), 1.5 tsp of peppermint extract, and the 2 tbsp custard powder. Stir until smooth.

With an electric mixer, beat the butter until smooth and creamy. Now add in the custard, spinach juice (or food colouring + coconut milk), and peppermint extract mixture and beat for a few minutes.

Gradually, add in the icing sugar and beat for about 3-5 minutes until light and fluffy. Set aside.

3. Bottom layer: In a small bowl mix the flax egg together (1 tbsp ground flax + 3 tbsp warm water). Set aside for a few minutes to allow it to thicken up. In a saucepan, whisk together the butter, sugar, and sifted cocoa powder. Heat on medium to low and stir frequently until smooth.

Now add in the gelled up flax egg and stir well. It will have a strange gel-like consistency now, but have no fear! Stir for a minute or so.

Now remove from heat and stir in the coconut, processed almonds, and graham wafer crumbs. Stir well and then mix with your hands.

Press this mixture into your prepared pan, ensuring that you press it down very firmly and as evenly as possible. I used a pastry roller to smooth it out, but this is not necessary.

4. Take your middle layer frosting and spread over top of the bottom layer. Smooth it out as evenly as possible. Place in the freezer until firm, about 45 mins.

5. Top Layer: Melt your chocolate and butter in a double boiler or carefully in the microwave. Stir well until smooth and all clumps are gone. Remove the pan from freezer and spread the chocolate quickly over the top. Smooth out as much as possible and sprinkle on crushed candy cane. Place back in the freezer for about 1 hour until set. Once set you can transfer it to the fridge to keep until ready or you can place it on the counter for about 10 minutes before cutting it into squares. Makes about 16 small squares.

Note: Middle layer gets very soft at room temperature. Please keep in the fridge until serving and always cut when chilled.

Pomegranate Almond Vegan Nanaimo bars

Bottom Layer

- ½ cup vegan butter (or regular butter)
- ¼ cup sugar
- 5 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted
- 1 flax egg (1 tbsp ground flax + 3 tbsp warm water, mixed) OR 1 egg
- 1 and ¼ cup graham cracker crumbs (will be sharing my homemade recipe this week on the blog)
- ¼ cup almonds, processed fine
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut

Middle layer

- ½ cup vegan butter (or regular butter)
- 2 tbsp pomegranate juice (for all-natural pink colour) **OR** red food colouring + 2 tbsp full-fat coconut milk
- 1.5 tsp pure almond extract
- 2 tbsp vanilla custard powder
- 2 cups icing/confectioner's sugar, sifted

Top layer

- 4 oz non-dairy dark chocolate or semi-sweet plus 2 tbsp vegan butter (or regular butter)
- Shredded Coconut, to garnish (optional)

Directions:

1. Line an 8 inch square pan with parchment paper and grease with butter on all sides. Leave a few inches of parchment hanging on the two ends so you can easily lift it up out of the pan when firm.

2. **Middle layer:** I prefer to begin making the middle layer because it will be ready to use when your bottom layer is pressed into the pan.

In a small bowl, mix together the pomegranate juice (or food colouring + coconut milk), 1.5 tsp of almond extract, and the 2 tbsp custard powder. Stir until smooth.

With an electric mixer, beat the butter until smooth and creamy. Now add in the custard, pom juice, and almond extract mixture and beat for a few minutes.

Gradually, add in the icing sugar and beat for about 3-5 minutes until light and fluffy. Set aside.

3. **Bottom layer:** In a small bowl mix the flax egg together (1 tbsp ground flax + 3 tbsp warm water). Set aside for a few minutes to allow it to thicken up. In a saucepan, whisk together the butter, sugar, and sifted cocoa powder. Heat on medium to low and stir frequently until smooth.

Now add in the gelled up flax egg and stir well. It will have a strange gel-like consistency now, but have no fear! Stir for a minute or so.

Now remove from heat and stir in the coconut, processed almonds, and graham wafer crumbs. Stir well and then mix with your hands.

Press this mixture into your prepared pan, ensuring that you press it down very firmly and as evenly as possible. I used a pastry roller to smooth it out, but this is not necessary.

4. Take your middle layer frosting and spread over top of the bottom layer. Smooth it out as evenly as possible. Place in the freezer until firm, about 45 mins.

5. **Top Layer:** Melt your chocolate and butter in a double boiler or carefully in the microwave. Stir well until smooth and all clumps are gone. Remove the pan from freezer and spread the chocolate quickly over the top. Smooth out as much as possible and place back in the freezer for about 1 hour until set. Once set you can transfer it to the fridge to keep until ready or you can place it on the counter for about 10 minutes before cutting it into squares. Makes about 16 small squares.

Note: Middle layer gets very soft at room temperature. Please keep in the fridge until serving and always cut when chilled.

Serve the bars with Peppermint Nog or with homemade hot cocoa (recipe below).

Peppermint Nog recipe coming soon!

Tall, Dark, And Handsome... Hot Cocoa

I adapted the 'hot coco-cocoa' recipe from Eat Drink & Be Vegan. This is hands down the best cocoa I have ever had. Ever. In eternity. Original post: <http://ohsheglows.com/2010/02/11/tall-dark-and-handsome/>

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup coconut milk (full strength, not light!)
- 3/4 cup unsweetened almond milk (or any milk)
- 1/4 cup Dutch-processed cocoa powder (I used regular cocoa)
- Pinch of sea salt to bring out the sweetness
- 3 tablespoons of maple syrup (or agave but I like maple syrup)
- marshmallows and cacao nibs/chocolate chips to garnish

Directions: Throw all ingredients into a pot and whisk like crazy. Bring to a low boil and then simmer on low for several minutes while whisking to remove clumps. Try not to burn your tongue like I did while taste testing! Pour into 1 or 2 mugs and top with marshmallows and chocolate chips.

Serves two (or one female that would bulldoze anything in her path to get to it!)

Have a safe and happy Holiday Season!