



Makes 12 bars
Preparation Time: 1 hours
Cook Time: 3 hours

INGREDIENTS:

20 pitted Deglet Noor dates (6 oz.), chopped

2 lemons

1 tablespoon flaxseed meal

1 cup brown rice flour

1 teaspoon baking soda

¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

¼ teaspoon sea salt

2 tablespoons sunflower butter

1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

2 tablespoons raw, unsalted cashews

½ cup unsweetened, unflavored plant-based milk, plus more if needed

½ cup pure maple syrup

2 cups mashed white sweet potatoes (see tip, recipe intro)

4 teaspoons arrowroot powder

2¼ cups fresh blueberries

Blueberry Cheesecake Bars

These impressive vegan lemon cheesecake bars are perfect for making ahead and serving on a special occasion, such as Mother's Day or [Valentine's Day](#). The date-sweetened crust includes sunflower butter for richness, while the creamy, lemon-infused filling features cashews and white [sweet potato](#). A fresh blueberry sauce finishes the dessert. To ensure clearly defined layers, be sure to chill the crust, lemon cream, and blueberry topping before assembling, then allow at least an hour to chill before serving.

Sweet potato mash: For 2 cups mashed sweet potatoes, prick two 10-oz. unpeeled white sweet potatoes with a fork. Microwave on high 5 to 7 minutes or until tender. Halve potatoes and scoop out pulp into a small bowl; discard skin. Mash potato pulp with a potato masher until smooth. Measure 2 cups mashed sweet potatoes.

For more inspiration, check out these tasty ideas:

- [Vegan Brookies](#)
- [Gluten-Free Fig Bars](#)
- [Sweet Potato Bars](#)
- [Vegan Strawberry Blondies](#)

By Kathryn Johnson, RDN, LD

- 1 Preheat oven to 400°F. Line an 8-inch square baking pan with parchment paper. Place the dates in a small bowl; add boiling water to cover. Let soak 10 minutes; drain well. Remove 5 teaspoons zest and squeeze 6 tablespoons juice from lemons. In another small bowl combine 3 tablespoons of the lemon juice and the flaxseed meal. Let stand 5 minutes.
- 2 In a large bowl stir together flour, 1 tablespoon of the lemon zest, the baking soda, nutmeg, and salt.
- 3 In a food processor combine soaked dates, flaxseed mixture, sunflower butter, and 2 teaspoons of the vanilla; process until smooth. Add date mixture to flour mixture; stir until well incorporated. (You may need to knead the dough a bit to combine.) Press evenly into the prepared pan. Bake 20 minutes or until set and lightly golden. Cool completely on a wire rack (1½ hours).
- 4 For lemon cream, soak cashews in enough very hot water to cover 15 minutes; drain and rinse. In a food processor or blender combine cashews, milk, ¼ cup of the maple syrup, 2 tablespoons of the lemon juice, and the remaining 2 teaspoons lemon zest and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Cover and blend 2 minutes or until very smooth. Add sweet potatoes; cover and blend until smooth, adding more milk, 1 tablespoon at a time, as needed to achieve desired consistency. Cover and chill at least 1 hour or up to 5 days.
- 5 For blueberry topping, in a medium saucepan whisk together the remaining ¼ cup maple syrup and 1 tablespoon lemon juice with the arrowroot powder until smooth. Stir in 2 cups of the

blueberries. Cook and stir over medium just until bubbly. Remove from heat; mash berries lightly with a potato masher or fork. Cover and cool completely, 1½ hours. Chill until ready to assemble bars.

- 6** To assemble bars, spread chilled lemon cream over cooled crust. Top evenly with blueberry filling. Chill assembled bars at least 1 hour before slicing.
- 7** To serve, slice bars and garnish with remaining blueberries. Bars will keep in the refrigerator up to 3 days.