



Natural Peanut Butter and Jelly Cookies

Date Paste

2 cups whole pitted dates

2 cups warm water

In a small bowl, cover dates with water. Cover the bowl; set aside for 8 hours or overnight. Drain water from dates. Save water for another use. Puree dates in food processor until paste forms.

Cookies

1/2 cup date paste

2 Tablespoons molasses

1/2 cup natural smooth or chunky peanut butter with flaxseeds

1/4 cup olive oil

1 teaspoon vanilla

1/2 teaspoon grated orange peel

2 Tablespoons orange juice

1 cup all purpose flour

1/2 cup white whole wheat flour

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon cloves
1/2 teaspoon ginger
1/4 cup all natural strawberry fruit spread

Preheat oven to 350Fdegrees. Place nonstick baking pad on insulated cookie sheets.

In a mixing bowl, mix date paste, molasses, peanut butter, olive oil, vanilla, orange peel, and orange juice. In a small bowl, mix all dry ingredients; add to mixing bowl; mix to form a soft dough.

Using 1 Tablespoon dough scoop for each cookie, form into balls. Place on prepared cookie sheets; press lightly to flatten tops. With a fork, make a cross pattern on each cookie and with your index finger press an indentation in center of each cookie. Bake in 350 F degree oven for 10 to 12 minutes or lightly browned. Cool 5 minutes; move to cooling rack. Top each cooled cookie with 1/4 teaspoon all fruit strawberry fruit spread.
Yield: 36 cookies

Cook's Note: If desired, roll each cookie ball in unsweetened coconut; lightly flatten top and make an indention in center of each cookie.

About the Recipe: It's a cookie that the whole family can enjoy, sweetened with date paste, fragrant spices, and natural peanut butter. A touch of fresh tasting fruit spread adds extra flavor and that special topping. It's naturally a sweet treat!