



Fruit 'n Nut Chocolate Truffles

A healthy dark chocolate sweet treat

1/2 cup raw cashews or roasted cashews
1/3 cup chopped and pitted soft dates
3 Tablespoons almond butter
1/2 cup unsweetened or dark chocolate cocoa
1/4 cup date sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1/3 cup fine chopped or ground almonds

In a small bowl, cover cashews with hot water; set aside for 3 hours; drain water from cashews.

Place dates in hot water to soften. Remove dates from water; set water aside.

Combine the dates and cashews in a food processor; process to a paste. Add the almond butter and process to combine. Add the cocoa powder, date sugar, vanilla and 1 teaspoon reserved date water. Pulse until well combined.

Pinch some of the mixture between your fingers to see if it holds together. If it is too dry, add more date water, 1 teaspoon at a time until mixture can be shaped into balls. If it's too soft, refrigerate for twenty minutes or until firm.

If it is still too soft, add cocoa powder 1 teaspoon at a time.

Use your hands to shape and roll a small amount of the mixture into a 1-inch balls; transfer to a plate. Repeat until all the mixture has been rolled into about 20 balls.

Place the ground almond in a shallow bowl. Roll the truffles in the almonds until they're coated, pressing on them if needed to cover completely. I found it helpful to moisten them lightly with date water before coating. Transfer the coated truffles on a plate; refrigerate until firm before serving. Serve truffles in colorful mini cups. Yield: 20 truffles

Cook's Note: I used roasted cashews and rinsed off the salt. If desired, you can use vanilla beans or paste in place of the extract. If you enjoy a sweeter truffle, use 1/3 cup date sugar.

Recipe Inspired by: Michael Greger, N.D., *The How Not to Die Cookbook*.

About the Recipe: If you want something sweet, try one of these nutritious truffles. I love the idea that they are made from dried fruit and nuts. The thick fudgy nugget is coated with a layer of ground almonds. What a special healthy treat!