SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT · SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

John the Baptist honey granola bars

Prep 15 min **Cook** 15 min **Chill** 1 hr **Total** 1 hr 30 min **Makes** 12 bars **Level** Easy

ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED

Cooking is for children and grown-ups together. An adult should supervise at all times and handle the oven, stovetop, knives, and anything hot. The honey syrup gets very hot and sticks to skin, so a grown-up boils and pours it, and children wait until the mixture has cooled before pressing. Honey is never for babies under 12 months, even cooked into a bar. Raisins, dried fruit, and seeds can be a choking risk for children under 4: chop the fruit small, and cut bars into small pieces for young eaters.

ALLERGY INFORMATION

Contains milk (butter). The optional chocolate chips usually contain milk and soy. Made without wheat and nuts, but oats and crisp rice cereal are often not gluten-free (many rice cereals contain barley malt), so choose certified gluten-free ones if needed, and check labels for "may contain nuts" warnings. Contains honey. Always read ingredient labels, since brands vary, and ask about food allergies before you cook or share.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups (180 g) old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1 cup (30 g) crisp rice cereal
- ½ cup (70 g) raisins, chopped dates, or dried cranberries
- ¼ cup (35 g) sunflower or pumpkin seeds (optional)
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ cup (55 g) butter
- ⅓ cup (115 g) honey
- ⅓ cup (65 g) packed light brown sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ cup (45 g) mini chocolate chips (optional)

METHOD

1. Line an 8-inch (20 cm) square pan with parchment paper, leaving some hanging over two sides so you can lift the bars out later.
2. For a toasty flavor, spread the oats on a baking sheet and bake at 350°F (175°C) for 8 to 10 minutes, stirring once, until golden and fragrant. (Skip this for a softer, plainer bar.)
3. In a large bowl, stir together the oats, rice cereal, dried fruit, seeds, cinnamon, and salt.
4. In a small saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter with the honey and brown sugar, stirring. When it bubbles all over, boil for 2 full minutes, stirring the whole time, so the bars will hold together. Take it off the heat and stir in the vanilla.
5. Pour the hot syrup over the oat mixture and stir until every bit is coated. Scrape it into the pan.
6. Let it cool for 5 minutes, then lay a sheet of parchment on top and press down hard and evenly, right into the corners. When the top is cool to the touch, scatter on the chocolate chips and press them in.
7. Chill for 1 hour, or leave at room temperature for 2 hours, until firm. Lift out and cut into 12 bars.

LITTLE HELPERS CAN (WITH A GROWN-UP)

- Measure the oats and cereal into the big bowl
- Count out the raisins or dates
- Press the cooled mixture into the pan with a sheet of parchment
- Read Mark 1:1-8 aloud at the table

GOOD TO KNOW

- Bars that crumble usually needed a longer boil or a firmer press. Boil the syrup the full 2 minutes, and press hard.
- Wrapped one by one, the bars keep for 1 week in a cool place, ready for lunchboxes all through Advent.

A BLESSING BEFORE WE EAT

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen. Saint John the Baptist, pray for us, and help us prepare the way of the Lord in our hearts this Advent.