Oil-Free Vegan Banana Bread

Prep time:  15 mins

Cook time:  45 mins

Total time:  1 hour

Serves: 1 loaf

Ingredients

* 6 ripe bananas
* ¼ cup raw sugar (such as turbinado)
* 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
* 1 cup full-fat coconut milk
* 1 ½ cups oats
* 2 ½ cups whole-wheat flour
* ¼ cup ground flax seeds
* 2 teaspoons baking soda
* 1 teaspoon baking powder
* 1 teaspoon salt
* ½ cup chocolate chips or cacao nibs
* ½ cup chopped walnuts

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Line a 9-by-13-inch baking dish (or 2 loaf pans) with parchment or lightly grease with coconut oil. Set aside.
3. Puree the bananas in a blender, then transfer to a large bowl.
4. Add the sugar, vanilla and coconut milk to the banana puree, and stir well to combine. Stir in the oats, and set aside for 10 minutes. (This allows the oats to soften. If you skip this step, the bread will still turn out just fine, but the oats will stay slightly dry in the center. This will yield a tougher, drier loaf overall.)
5. In a medium bowl, combine the flour, flax, baking soda, baking powder and salt.
6. After the oats have soaked, use a sturdy wooden spoon to fold the dry ingredients into the wet a third or so at a time, until thoroughly mixed.
7. Fold in the chocolate chips or cacao nibs and walnuts. Reserve a few for the top, if desired.
8. Transfer to your prepared baking dish, using a spatula to smooth it to the edges. (The batter will only be about an inch deep.)
9. Bake for 45 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. (If you use two loaf pans, start to check the bread after 40 minutes.)
10. Remove from the oven and allow to cool before slicing using a serrated knife. If using a 9-by-13-inch baking dish, cut down the center lengthwise first. Cover tightly and consume within five days before best results. You can also freeze individual slices for up to three months. Wrap slices first in parchment, then place in an air-tight container.