

Fudgy Quinoa Brownies



Quinoa in brownies? Yes! This seed-like grain cooks up in minutes and adds nutty, whole grain flavors to these fudge-like treats. These tiny seeds pack in a lot of brain health nutrition, too: fiber, flavonoids, omega-3 fats, and protein, including all nine essential amino acids. Small bits of quinoa folded into the batter add a pleasantly chewy texture, too.

Quinoa flour amps up the seed's unique flavors in these brownies, but other flours work well, such as almond, hazelnut, white whole wheat, and whole wheat. Extra-virgin olive oil provides brain-friendly fats, and dark chocolate and cacao gives you heart- and brain-healthy flavanols.

Makes 16 2-inch brownies

Ingredients:

⅓ cup dry quinoa (or 1 cup leftover cooked quinoa)
½ teaspoon kosher plus more for cooking the quinoa
2 large eggs
½ cup maple syrup
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
½ teaspoon orange blossom water, orange extract, or the zest of one orange (optional)
2 tablespoons water
¾ cup quinoa or almond flour
½ cup natural cocoa powder (not Dutch processed)
½ cup dark chocolate chips

Directions:

To cook the quinoa, bring a small saucepan of salted water to a boil. Add ⅓ cup dry quinoa, reduce the heat to a simmer, and cook until plump and the grains sprout a tail, about 12 minutes. Drain and set aside to cool.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line an 8-x-8-inch baking pan with parchment paper; set aside.

Whisk eggs, maple syrup, oil, vanilla, orange blossom water (if using), and 2 tablespoons water in a medium bowl until smooth.

Fold in the quinoa flour, cacao powder, and ½ teaspoon salt until no streaks of flour remain. Set aside 3 tablespoons of the cooked quinoa to top the brownies, then fold the rest into the batter, along with the chocolate chips, stirring until evenly distributed.

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Scrape into the prepared pan and smooth over the top with a spoon. Sprinkle the remaining quinoa overtop.

Bake until the center is set and a toothpick placed in the center comes out clean, 22 to 26 minutes.

Cool brownies in the pan for at least 30 minutes. Lift parchment paper and place brownies on a cutting board. Cut into 16 squares.