

Date Bars

Ingredients

For the filling

250g dried dates, chopped
Grated zest and juice of one orange

For the base and topping

115g butter, softened
85g caster sugar
A few drops of almond essence
170g plain flour
55g ground almonds
A pinch of salt

Method

1. Heat the oven to 170C/325G/Gas3.
2. For the filling, place the dates, orange zest and juice into a small pan and heat over a low-to-medium heat, for 5-10 minutes or until mushy. Set aside to cool.
3. For the base and topping, mix together the butter, caster sugar and almond essence, then stir in the flour and salt. You will need to bring the mixture together with your fingers.
4. Press two thirds of the mixture into 28cm square tin, then chill for 10 minutes. Squeeze the remaining mixture into small clumps then chill.
5. Bake the base for 20 minutes then remove from the oven and turn the oven up to 190C/375F/Gas5.
6. Spread the date mixture over the base and sprinkle over the topping.
7. Bake for 20 minutes in the centre of the oven or until the topping is golden brown.
8. Cut into bars while still warm.