

## **COFFEE DATE SMOOTHIE WITH FOUR VARIATIONS**



This bracing smoothie combines a love of coffee with a brain-healthy protein-rich drink. Dates provide natural sweetness and a good dose of fiber, nut butters kick in with protein and healthy fats, and the optional mix-ins give even more protein-rich choices.

I love that this recipe minimizes waste. Coffee is a precious (not to mention expensive) resource so it's a shame to toss what's left in a pot. Instead, pour leftover coffee into ice cube trays and freeze for up to 3 months. You'll have a steady supply for making Coffee Date Smoothies and adding to iced coffee. Or, store in an airtight container in the fridge for a few days.

Makes 2½ cups, 1 large or 2 small servings

### **Ingredients:**

5 coffee ice cubes (recipe follows) from about ⅓ cup coffee (regular or decaf)

1 large frozen banana

3 large Medjool dates, pitted

¼ cup almond, cashew, peanut, or sunflower seed butter

¾ cup unsweetened almond or cashew milk

¼ tsp pure vanilla extract

Pinch kosher salt

Optional ingredients:

¼ cup unsweetened protein powder (for an additional 20 grams of protein)

¼ cup hemp or chia seeds (for an additional 10 grams of protein)

### **Instructions:**

In a blender, combine (in order) the coffee ice cubes, banana, dates, almond butter, milk, vanilla, salt, and protein powder or hemp seeds, if using. Blend on high until completely smooth. Thin with more milk or water until it is the consistency you like.

### **For the coffee ice cubes**

Makes about 14, depending on your ice cube tray. Pour 1 cup freshly brewed coffee into an ice cube tray and freeze until solid.

Tip: A silicon flexible ice cube tray with a no-spill snap-on lid works well here. Each tray holds about 1 cup of coffee, enough for 3 batches of the Coffee Date Smoothie.

### **Variations:**

#### **Kefir Coffee Date**

Substitute ⅔ cup kefir + 3 tablespoons of water for the milk.

## **BRAIN HEALTH KITCHEN by Annie Fenn, M.D.**

### **Cardamom Coffee Date**

Add ¼ teaspoon each ground cardamom and ginger.

### **Cacao Coffee Date**

Add 2 tablespoons natural cacao powder and ½ teaspoon pure almond extract.

### **Chai Date**

Substitute 5 chai ice cubes for the coffee ones, made from freshly brewed unsweetened chai tea.