

Homemade Almond Milk



Ingredients:

1 cup (1/3 lb.) raw almonds

Honey, sugar, agave syrup, or maple syrup, to taste (optional)

Vanilla Extract, to taste (optional)

Procedure:

Soak the almonds overnight or up to 2 days. Place the almonds in a bowl and cover with about an inch of water. They will plump as they absorb water. Let stand, uncovered, overnight (10-12 hours) or up to 2 days. The longer the almonds soak, the creamier the almond milk.

Drain and rinse the almonds. Drain the almonds from their soaking water and rinse them thoroughly under cool running water. At this point, the almonds should feel a little squishy if you pinch them.

Bring a kettle or sauce pan of water to a boil with 3 cups of water.

Blend at the highest speed for 2 minutes. Place the almonds in the blender. Add 1 cup of room-temperature water to the almonds. Pulse the blender a few times to break up the almonds, then blend continuously for two minutes. The almonds should be broken down into a very fine meal and the water should be white and opaque.

(If using a food processor, process for 4 minutes total, pausing to scrape down the sides halfway through.)

Steep the Almond paste. Transfer the paste to a medium size heat-resistant bowl and add 2 cups of the boiling water. Let steep for about 10 minutes.

You can skip the steeping step and just add 2 cups of room temperature water to the paste in the blender and blend until thoroughly combined. The mixture will be very frothy.

Why steep? The hot water coaxes out the nuts' flavor better than cold water, resulting in a superior flavor and a richer texture.]

Strain the almonds. Line a strainer with either an opened nut bag or cheese cloth, and place over a measuring cup. Pour the almond mixture into the strainer.

Press all the almond milk from the almond meal. Gather the nut bag or cheese cloth around the almond meal and twist close. Squeeze and press with clean hands to extract as much almond milk as possible. You should get about 3 cups. (See Recipe Note for what to do with the leftover almond meal.)

Sweeten to taste. Taste the almond milk, and if a sweeter drink is desired, add sweetener to taste.

Vanilla Almond Milk. Add vanilla to taste, if a vanilla almond milk is desired.

Refrigerate almond milk. Store the almond milk in sealed containers in the fridge for up to three days or freeze for longer storage.

Using the Leftover Almond Meal: The leftover almond meal can be added to oatmeal, smoothies, and muffins as it is. You can also spread it out on a baking sheet and bake it in a low oven (275-300 degrees F) until completely dry (2-3 hours). Dry almond meal can be kept frozen for several months and used in baked goods instead of flour or combined with flour.

Yield: 3 cups (24 oz)

Nutritional Information: 1 cup (8 oz) without added sweetener

5 calories (5 from fat), 0g total fat, 0g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 5mg sodium, 0g carbohydrate (0g dietary fiber, 0g sugar), 0g protein

Vanilla Extract: 1 teaspoon = 12 kcals & 0.5 carbs

Imitation Vanilla Extract with alcohol: 1 teaspoon = 10 kcals & 0.1 carbs

Imitation Vanilla Extract with no alcohol: 1 teaspoon = 2 kcals & 0.6 carbs

Recipe source: <http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/recipe/homemade-almondmilk>

Source for the Nut Milk Bag:

<http://www.amazon.com/Best-Nut-Milk-Bag-Reinforced/dp/B00K12RQHU>