

Date Sweetened Coconut Milk

Source: Adapted from: <http://www.ahappyhealthnut.com/2015/02/07/date-sweetened-coconut-milk/>

Ingredients:

- 2 cups unsweetened shredded coconut or coconut flakes
- 4 cups hot (not boiling) water
- 5-6 Medjool dates, pits removed
- A nut milk bag or cheesecloth
- High output blender or food processor

Directions:

1. Soak your pitted dates (if using them) in 1 to 2 cups hot water for 15 minutes
2. Add your coconut flakes and hot water to the high speed blender. *Note- you can make any amount of coconut milk you want. This recipe yields 4 cups. Just use a ratio of 1:2 coconut flakes to water. Example: 1 cup coconut flakes to 2 cups water.
3. Blend on high for 2-3 minutes.
4. Place the nut milk bag or cheesecloth over a large bowl and pour the mixture from the blender through the nut milk bag.
5. When the milk has cooled enough to handle, squeeze the milk through the bag or cheesecloth. Wring out thoroughly to get all of the milk out.
6. Discard the pulp or turn it into coconut flour.
7. If you're making the unsweetened version, you're done at this point. If you're sweetening, pour the milk back into the blender and add the soaked dates. Blend on high for an additional 2 minutes. Once again, pour the mixture through the nut milk bag or cheesecloth and wring out.
8. Store the coconut milk in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 5 days.

Note:

- Flavor options- add in after all coconut has been strained out: 1/2 tsp vanilla extract, 1/2 cup fresh or frozen strawberries, or 2 tsp cocoa powder + 1/2 tsp vanilla.
- As this mixture cools, the fat will separate and the cream will come to the top. You can scrape that off and whip it up into whipped cream, add it to smoothies, or add it to your coffee!
- Since there are no preservatives or fillers, the "cream" of the coconut milk may separate on the top if stored in the fridge. Just shake or stir before using.
- This coconut milk will not be thick and viscous like the coconut milk you get in the can. Those usually contain thickeners and emulsifiers. This is just plain old delicious and completely nutritious coconut milk.