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Date Paste

I have not met anybody yet who with a straight face can tell me that he/she does not love sugar. I do like sugar too. But I also know how bad sugar is for the body. It is highly processed and causes addiction. A while back when I was so sick, I thought I did not eat much sugar in my diet, but I was wrong. It took me a while to figure that out, and then, it took me a while to make decision to let it go. I know it is not easy, but it is possible if you have the will to do it. I hit rock bottom with my health and that was my turning point to stop eating sugar. At that time I chose to go cold turkey.

The good thing is that there are other alternatives to sweeten your food and your baking. You don't need to use sugar. One of them that I like is by using **Date Paste**. It can be bought at stores, but I rather make my own at home with no preservatives nor ingredients that will not do any good to my body. This recipe is pretty easy. You can use pitted dates or you can use whole dates and remove the pits yourself, like I do.

This is how I make my **Date Paste**:

1. Warm 4 C of water in a pot until bubbles start appearing at the bottom. The water doesn't have to boil.

2. If you use whole dates (like me), remove the pits (you can do this while the water is getting warm). Simply slide the date on one side with a knife, open it, and remove the pit with your hands. Yes, your hands will get sticky. I personally don't mind doing it and it doesn't take long, but if you don't like this part, (I know some people who don't), you can buy dates that are already pitted, and skip this step.

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3. Once the water is warm, remove the pot from the heat and add the pitted dates. You can also use a different bowl to soak the dates if you want. Make sure all the dates are fully covered with the warm water. Leave them there for 10 minutes. This will make the dates very soft.

4. Put the dates in a food processor (or high-speed blender) and add ¾ C of the water that you used to soak the dates. Blend until smooth. I rather use a food processor than a high-speed blender, because it gives me more space to scrape the sides of the food processor a couple of times with a spatula to make sure that the dates get well blended.   If you like your **Date Paste** to be more runny, simply add a little bit more water, but use the water where you soaked the dates.

You will end up with a nice sweet paste to sweeten your food or use it on your baking. Pour it into a clean container and cover it with the lid. Make sure it is not warm before you store it in the fridge. I like to store my **Date Paste** in mason jars. This recipe makes 2 cups of **Date Paste**, so a 2 C mason jar will work great to store it. Some people like using **Date Paste** instead of sugar in a 1-to-1 ratio, but it all depends on your taste, and might be different for different foods that you use it on. When it comes to baking, **Date Paste** not only adds sweetness but also moisture because it is made with water, so you might want to experiment how to sweeten your food with **Date Paste** based on your liking and find out the right amounts to add to you baked goods.

DATE PASTE

Ingredients
2 C of dates (whole or pitted)
4 C of water (filtered is preferred)

Kitchen Equipment
Food processor or high-speed blender
Knife
Cutting board
Pot that fits 4 C

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Warm 4 C of water in a pot.

2. If you use pitted dates, skip this step. If you use whole dates, remove the pits. Simply slide the date on one side with a knife, open it, and remove the pit with your hands.

3. Once the water is warm, remove the pot from the heat and add the pitted dates. Make sure all the dates get fully covered with the warm water. Leave them there for 10 minutes. This will make the dates very soft.

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