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Frugal. Who me? Welll..... My sister laughs at me because I held out on getting an iPhone until recently to avoid the cost of the data package. I only caved when I realized how much easier this blogging gig would be with one! I purchase my greeting cards, craft materials and coloring books in the dollar section at Target...only if they are ONE DOLLAR (when did it become the two or three dollar section, anyways?). I regularly negotiate with the cable company, I shovel my own driveway in the dark early mornings instead of buying a snow blower or hiring it out and I have even started mixing up my own face cream and body butters to escape the price tags on costly chemical-free options in the stores.

So, yes, I may be just a little frugal. Except for when it comes to FOOD. Somehow I break my pre-set spending budget grocery shopping for food for my LITTLE family almost every month! No...I'm not confessing by exactly how much. I will simply say this: It's sadly and frustratingly too much.

The problem is that I just can't stop! I eat it up, literally!! I love the grocery store. I love looking at food, touching it and exploring in the aisles. When a new one opens up, I revel at the chance to take a field trip! I'd like to blame it on the food industry and American food system for certain subsidies alongside lack of support for more healthful options. But that's a topic of another time.

When it comes to my personal spending habits, I suppose I justify my food shopping addiction with health. Obviously. But, beyond that, I also simply love to eat! I love trying new ingredients, flavors and combinations all requiring me to rack up my already lengthy shopping list. The up side is that we nearly NEVER eat out. It's been months since we purchased a meal in a restaurant and the last time I took a ride through a drive through was when I was pregnant with my second daughter. Let's just say it didn't go so well!

Why this topic right now? Right before I present you with a wonderful new recipe? Because when you take a look at the ingredients in these wonderfully decadent cookie bars, you will see immediately that they cost much more than making a good old fashioned pan of processed sugar, high glycemic,

non-nutritive cookies. But that's precisely why I like having THESE, rather than the alternative hanging around our house. I love that they offer WHOLE vegetarian protein, good fats and antioxidants. Almond butter, quinoa flour and dark chocolate all included in this SHORT list of ingredients makes a 'cookie' for an after-school snack look lovely...to mom and kids!

It's not always that I splurge on something like this. In fact, I have a super inexpensive healthy 'cookie bar' recipe too. But, variety is the spice of life, right? And especially when it comes to including all kinds of wholesome ingredients in your kitchen's cabinets.

Recipe category

[Sinless Sweet Treats](#) [1]

Restricted to members

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Ingredients

- ¼ cup unsalted butter (I prefer to use real butter, grassfed preferably)
- ¾ cup smooth almond butter
- 2 'flax eggs'*
- ¾ cup coconut sugar (or non-liquid sweetener of your choice)
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- ¾ cup quinoa flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup dark chocolate chips or chopped dark chocolate (think 65% cocoa or higher)

Recipe Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat an 8-inch-square baking pan with cooking spray and line the bottom with parchment paper.
- Beat butter and almond butter in a mixing bowl with an electric mixer until creamy. Beat in flax eggs, sugar and vanilla. Whisk quinoa flour, baking powder and salt in a small bowl. Mix the flour mixture into the wet ingredients until just combined. Stir in chocolate chips. Spread the batter evenly into the prepared pan.
- Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out with just a few moist crumbs on it, about 25 minutes. Cool partially before cutting and enjoying. Let cool completely before storing. I like to store these cut with parchment paper between layers in the fridge or freezer.

Featured Image



Recipe Description

A distinctive taste makes this a 'cookie' worthy of an adult palate. But since my little girls love them too so I guess that makes these higher protein, gluten free, nutritious treats a crowd pleaser all around!

Recipe Notes

*I like to bake without real eggs from time to time to make it a completely vegan recipe. This substitute almost always works out well. For each real egg a recipe calls for, simply soak 1 tablespoon milled flax in 3 tablespoons water for a few minutes. For this recipe, use 2 tablespoons flax and 6 tablespoons water (or 2 whole eggs).

**[Quinoa flour](#) [2] can be found near the flours in the natural foods section of some grocery stores or health foods stores. I have also put raw quinoa into my Nutrabullet or Ninja single cup attachment and made my own! You can also use a grain mill or clean coffee grinder. The raw quinoa turns easily into a powdery flour

[Buy Quinoa flour here.](#) [2]

[Here's what I'm currently using to blend and grind](#) [3].

I think I may try doubling the recipe and baking in a 9x13 cake pan next time! If you beat me to it, let me know how it goes!

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Links

[1] <https://www.livinghappilywhole.com/recipe-category/sinless-sweet-treats>

[2]

http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B001390LVU/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B001390LVU&linkCode=as2&tag=happwhol-20&linkId=UW62BPLM5TO2VHE6

[3]

http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00A3D5IZ6/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_il_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B00A3D5IZ6&linkCode=as2&tag=happwhol-20&linkId=63VN2QNN2XDTCLC