

## HAZELNUT AND DARK CHOCOLATE BITES

MAKES 25 / PREPARE 10 MINS / REFRIGERATE 20 MINS

### Ingredients

- 100g Dark chocolate (at least 70% cocoa solids)
- 75g Whole hazelnuts
- 125g Soft dried apricots (Sulphur-free)
- 100g Roasted chopped hazelnuts

### Instructions

Toast the whole hazelnuts in a dry pan for a couple of minutes until light golden and fragrant. Watch them as they burn very easily. If they had the skins on, put them in a tea towel and rub until the skins fall off. Set aside to cool a little.

Chop the chocolate into small pieces and put in a heatproof bowl. Suspend it over a pan of barely simmering water, ensuring the bottom of the bowl does not touch the water, and stir occasionally until melted.

While the chocolate is melting, process 50g of hazelnuts in a high-speed blender until very fine. Chop the apricots into 3 or 4 pieces each and add to the blender. Blitz until the nuts and fruit start to combine. Add the chocolate to the fruit and mix nut and pulse until well combined.

Put the roasted chopped hazelnuts in a shallow bowl. Pick a heaped teaspoon of the mixture, and flatten in on your slightly wet palm, put a whole hazelnut in the middle and wrap the chocolatey fruit and nut mixture. Roll the ball into the shallow bowl with the chopped hazelnuts.

Refrigerate for 20 min to firm up. Keep in the fridge for up to two weeks.



### Nutrifacts



**Hazelnuts** are high in the antioxidant **VITAMIN E** and minerals like copper which is an important component of a powerful antioxidant enzyme (Superoxide dismutase or SOD) that helps reduce the levels of harmful free-radicals in our bodies and **MAGNESIUM**, necessary for energy production, muscle relaxation as well as calcium metabolism.

**Dried fruit** is quite high in sugar but its effect on blood sugar levels is modulated by the high **FIBRE** content. Adding protein and fat from the nuts also helps reduce the blood sugar increase.

**Cocoa** is rich in **FLAVANOLS**, a type of **FLAVONOIDS**, that research shows may reduce high blood pressure and maintain healthy arteries. Flavonoids also have antioxidant properties and may help protect us against free-radical damage.

**Cocoa** stimulates the production of **SEROTONIN** and endorphins by the brain which gives us a sense of wellbeing and happiness.

The purer the cocoa, the higher the levels of antioxidants.