

Medjool Date Night eBook

Title: Six Date-Worthy Recipes for Six Different Dates



You've done it. You committed to *that word*.

A date.

This could be routine or life-changing. Whoever this person is, be they a blind first-time encounter or your spouse of decades - you've both agreed to carve out a few hours one evening, to spend time together, to the exclusion of everything else. No distractions other than some good food, maybe some good wine, and whatever conversation flows from that.

Your date is different from the others in your life. Otherwise you wouldn't be setting aside this kind of time for a date night, right? Your date is well-travelled. Medjool dates call the globe home, from California to Morocco, and all points in between. Your date is versatile, capable of many things. Medjool dates can go from sweet to savory dishes with ease, are nature's "power fruit" packed with vitamins and minerals your body needs. Your date is worth it, they've never made you feel like you made the wrong decision. Using Medjool dates in your next dish will leave you asking yourself why you didn't think of them sooner.

You want to impress. You know your way around a cutting board, the produce section, and the top food blogs out there. So you call home-field advantage and prepare a meal - something more meaningful, more personal than a reservation at the latest culinary fad in your area code. You want exotic. You want unexpected. You want exciting. Let our Medjool Dates help make Date Night unforgettable.

The Simple Date

Sometimes less is more. Perhaps it's a first date and you don't know the preferences of "the other half". Or perhaps the both of you have decided to go easy tonight, having both been party to one of those notoriously excessive client lunches. Simple doesn't have to be boring any more than an unstructured date has to be. Try this simple but unique adaptation of a Caprese salad with avocados and Medjool dates.

Avocado Caprese with Sweet Medjool Balsamic Drizzle

Yields 16-20 toasts and one cup of balsamic drizzle

Ingredients:

- 1 large baguette, sliced and toasted
- 3-4 large mozzarella balls, sliced and halved
- 2-3 avocados, pitted, peeled and halved
- 3-4 large tomatoes, sliced and cut in halves
- 6 Natural Delights Medjool dates
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup water
- salt and pepper, to taste
- 7-10 fresh basil leaves, julienned

Preparation:

1. Layer the mozzarella, avocado and tomato slices on the prepared toast.
2. Blend the dates, balsamic vinegar, water, salt and pepper together until smooth. Drizzle over the Caprese.
3. Sprinkle the basil on top and serve immediately.

Nutrition (per toast): Calories: 169.2; Total Fat: 7.5g; Saturated Fat: 1.7g; Trans Fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 8.2mg; Sodium: 264.9mg; Potassium: 281.2mg; Carbohydrates: 20.5g; Fiber: 2.4g; Sugar: 5.2g; Protein: 6.6g; Vitamin A: 3.1%; Vitamin C: 0.4%; Calcium: 14.2%; Iron: 4%

Callout: 3 Ways to Take Your Date Night from Dull to Dreamy

- Dress Up - Yep, you heard us. Dressing up gives any date that extra oomph. Remember, the more effort you put in, the more you'll get out of it.
- Leave Work *at Work* - As hard as this one can be, it's a must. Checking your email at the dinner table can easily kill the mood and transform your date night into extra time spent at work. Phones have an off button for a reason.
- Try Something New - Give up the same old date night routine for a little unpredictability. Go somewhere you've never gone, or do something you've always wanted to do - the possibilities are endless.

The On-The-Run Date

Date night where one cooks at home doesn't mean that you have to stay in. Sometime the best thing for you both is to get out and get away. This doesn't mean you have to travel encumbered with a cooler or thermal bag. Sometimes all you need is something tasty, packed with the essential ratios of protein/fat/carbs to keep you going at whatever it is you two are planning to do outdoors. For something that is truly simple to prep, completely portable, yet showcases your skills as a culinarian who does anything but the expected, try these antipasto Medjool skewers for an alternative to the traditional picnic fare - without all the gear!

Antipasto Medjool Skewers

40 skewers

Ingredients:

- 20 Natural Delights Medjool dates, pitted and cut in half
- 40 basil leaves
- 16 ounces mozzarella pearls
- 1 pint grape tomatoes
- 40 salami slices (about 11 ounces)

Preparation:

Layer the dates, basil leaves, mozzarella pearls, grape tomatoes and salami on skewers. Serve as an appetizer or snack on a platter. That's it!

Notes:

- This recipe can be modified for any number of skewers you'd like to make. The amounts are based on how many grape tomatoes typically come in a pint of grape tomatoes.
- Using a spicy salami is best to make the sweet and spicy pairing. This recipe includes Creminelli Piccante Salami.

Nutrition (per skewer): Calories: 108.6; Total Fat: 5.6g; Saturated Fat: 2.7g; Trans Fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 15.9g; Sodium: 232g; Potassium: 80.7g; Carbohydrates: 10.2g; Fiber: 0.8g; Sugar: 7.5g; Protein: 5g; Vitamin A: 3.2%; Vitamin C: 3.5%; Calcium: 8.1%; Iron: 1.4%

Call out: Other On-The-Run Date Options

Visit natualdelights.com to learn how to make these delicious take-along treats for any excursion.

*(Small pictures of each recipe with links to the recipes below)

- [Peanut Butter, Banana and Medjool Date Portable Pitas](#)
- [Medjool Date and Cherry Chicken Salad](#)
- [Whole Medjool Date, Fruit, Nut & Cheese Box](#)

The Grilling Weather Date

Those warm nights after the sun has set and the evening breeze starts to pick up, you can finally fire up the grill. If you don't have a grill, you can still get outside to enjoy the change in weather, watch the sunset, or perhaps the quiet of your backyard after dark. Ahi tuna gets a re-vamp along with your typical summer night date night with the addition of a visually and tastefully contrasting relish of cucumber and Medjool dates.

Ahi Tuna with Medjool Date and Cucumber Relish

Total Time: 25 minutes

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup Natural Delights Medjool Dates, pitted and chopped
- 1/2 cup English cucumber, chopped
- 2 tbsp. grated fresh ginger
- 1 tbsp. finely grated orange zest
- 1 tsp. soy sauce
- 4 (5-oz.) ahi tuna steaks
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

1. Stir together dates, cucumber, ginger, orange zest and soy sauce in a large bowl. Set aside.
2. Preheat a large skillet over high heat. Season tuna with salt and pepper and add olive oil to skillet. Sear tuna on both sides, cooking to desired doneness. (or grill - coat the steaks with a little olive oil to prevent them from sticking to the grill)
3. Transfer to a serving platter and spoon relish over the top.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories: 420, Fat: 12g, Saturated Fat: 3g, Trans Fat: 0g, MUFA: 5.42, PUFA: 3.12, Cholesterol: 70mg, Sodium: 150mg, Potassium: 787mg, Carbohydrates: 35g, Fiber: 3g, Sugar: 30g, Protein: 44g, Vitamin A: 70%, Vitamin C: 6%, Calcium: 4%, Iron: 15%

Callout: 3 Wine Pairings for Ahi Tuna with Medjool Date and Cucumber Relish

- If you opt to kick this up with some peppers or wasabi, then a good German Riesling will offset the heat without overpowering the dish itself: think Spatlese or Auslese - anything heavier and you could bury the lead.
- With clean, Pacific flavors like ginger and ahi, think light and crisp, like a regional Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand, or perhaps a Pinot Blanc from Oregon - both offer pleasing floral and herbal notes and white fruit without the cloying addition of oak or butter often found in Chardonnay.
- Champagne! While not everything goes with Champagne, it is one of the more versatile and under-sung, food-friendly wines out there. Go with Brut if you like it dry, or Demi-Sec if you prefer a more full-bodied wine.

The Something Light Date

Maybe you both just met at the gym and know how important it is to balance your intake against your efforts. Or perhaps you've both agreed it's time to get healthier: getting more active as well as more hands-on about what you both eat. Either way, there is never a bad time to enjoy a light meal, and what better way than the classic fish taco, but with a clever and refreshing twist: a date and mango relish.

Sweet & Spicy Fish Tacos

6 (2 tacos per person)

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoon olive oil
- 4 six ounce cod fillets
- 2 cups Natural Delights Medjool dates, pitted and chopped (about 16 dates)
- 2 cups diced mango (2-3 mangos)
- 2 cups shredded purple cabbage (¼ of a head)
- 12 small flour or corn tortillas
- (garnish) lime
- (garnish) cilantro
- (garnish) cotija cheese crumbles

Preparation:

1. In a small bowl, combine the chili powder, red pepper flakes, cumin, salt and pepper.
2. Rub the fillets with the spices.
3. In a pan over medium heat, add the olive oil to coat the pan and add in the spiced covered fillets.
4. Cook on each side for about (3-4 minutes) or until browned and cooked through.
5. Meanwhile, prepare the date relish by combining the chopped dates, diced mangos and purple cabbage.
6. To plate your fish tacos, place a fillet on each tortilla shell and top with the date relish.
7. Garnish with lime juice, cilantro and cotija.
8. Serve immediately.

Notes:

- You can also use tilapia or any other white fish in place of the cod. Try a "blackened" approach with a firmer fish like redfish or swordfish and a cast iron skillet: it'll play into the darker flavors and richness of the dates!
- To lessen the calories and carbohydrates, replace the soft tortillas with corn tortillas or Bibb lettuce wraps.

Nutrition (per 2 tacos on 6 inch corn tortillas, not including garnishes): Calories: 240; Total Fat: 2.2g; Saturated Fat: 0.3g; Trans Fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 31.2mg; Sodium: 169mg; Potassium: 413.2mg; Carbohydrates: 41.5g; Fiber: 4.7g; Sugar: 23.7g; Protein: 15.3g; Vitamin A: 9.2%; Vitamin C: 22.3%; Calcium: 5.4%; Iron: 6%

Callout: Healthy Eating for Healthy Relationships

- Healthy eating contributes to one's overall health, but eating healthy can also contribute to healthy relationships. Healthy people = healthy relationships.
- High blood pressure has a negative effect on the overall libido of both males and females, and certain medications used to treat high blood pressure can worsen these traits.
- High cholesterol (bad aka LDL) can lead to a buildup of plaque in the arteries, leading to atherosclerosis - the underlying cause of most heart disease. Even if you don't get to the heart disease stage, you will feel more tired, more irritable, less energetic. In short, no fun to be around.

The Comfort Food Date

Sometimes you just want what feels good. Maybe you both had a long day. Did you have to skip lunch? Maybe it's cold outside and you want to eat something a bit more substantial. Either way, comfort food, by definition, makes you happy. Meatballs have been soothing the palates and bellies of various cultures for centuries, but when the two of you decide to spend a night together without any distractions, to simply exhale and relax, this modern update on an old standard will bring a wider smile to those relaxing moments. Serve over pasta for a full meal, or to load up on carbs prior to a day of hiking, cycling or any physical activity.

Sweet & Spicy Meatballs

40-45 meatballs

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds lean ground beef
- 1 cup [date paste](#)
- 1 cup ketchup
- 2 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce
- 1 cup broth (or water)
- 2 garlic cloves, finely minced
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes

Preparation:

1. Cover a baking sheet in parchment paper. Roll the ground beef into 1 inch balls and place on the prepared baking sheet. Place under a broiler for 3-5 minutes until golden brown. Flip the meatballs and broil for another 1-3 minutes or until golden brown.
2. Place the browned meatballs in a slow cooker.
3. Meanwhile, stir the date paste, ketchup, soy sauce, broth/water, garlic and red pepper flakes together. Pour over the meatballs, stirring gently to coat all meatballs. Cook on low for 3-4 hours or until the internal temperature of the meatballs reach 165F.
4. Serve as an appetizer or entree with the sauce.

Notes:

- You may use water instead of broth to reduce calorie and sodium content.
- (Optional) Garnish with green onions.

Nutrition (per meatball, made with water instead of broth): Calories: 50.4; Total Fat: 1.4g; Saturated Fat: 0.5g; Trans Fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 11.6mg; Sodium: 106.6mg; Potassium: 18.3mg; Carbohydrates: 5.1g; Fiber: 0.3g; Sugar: 4g; Protein: 4.2g; Vitamin A: 0.4%; Vitamin C: 0.1%; Calcium: 0.2%; Iron: 2.9%

Callout: Skip the traffic and reservations! Have a cooking night at home and enjoy making your favorite dishes together.

- Plan ahead with a shopping list you either fill together, or as separate assignments prior to your cooking night at home.
- Bring the restaurant experience home: with a few inexpensive candles and a tablecloth, the old dining table can be transformed, adding meaning and significance to your date night.
- Play to each other's strengths. Who has the best knife skills? Let them prep. Who never burns the sauce? Let them man the pans. Or better yet: why not take the time to show one another the skills you have, sharing with them and learning about each other in the process!

The Sweet Endings Date

Every good performance deserves an encore. And even if dinner was a smashing success, it can always be made better with a knockout dessert. What's more, you've already put together the perfect dinner, why spend another hour on dessert? This simple yet classic dish of caramelized bananas only takes twenty minutes to prepare and harmoniously showcases the natural sweetness of Medjool dates. The golden, nutty flavors of Medjool dates work perfectly with cinnamon, caramelized brown sugar, and ripe bananas - the perfect ending to a perfect date!

Cinnamon Caramelized Bananas and Medjool Dates over Ice Cream

Total Time: 20 minutes

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. nutmeg
- 2 ripe bananas, quartered
- 8 Natural Delights Medjool Dates, pitted
- 4 (1/2 cup) scoops vanilla ice cream.

Preparation:

1. Melt butter in a large skillet. Add brown sugar and for 3 to 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in cinnamon and nutmeg.
2. Add bananas and dates and cook for a minute more to heat through. Serve warm with ice cream.

Nutritional analysis per serving - Calories: 610, Fat: 30g, Saturated Fat: 19g, Trans Fat: g, MUFA: 7.88, PUFA: 1.20, Cholesterol: 90mg, Sodium: 220mg, Potassium: 702mg, Carbohydrates: 90g, Fiber: 5g, Sugar: 78g, Protein: 4g, Vitamin A: 20%, Vitamin C: 10%, Calcium: 15%, Iron: %4

Callout: The Medjool date loves the dessert course

- The naturally sweet and nutty, figgy flavors of the Medjool date make it a perfect accompaniment to after dinner drinks, dessert wines, and cheeses.
- Putting Medjool dates to a little sear caramelizes them to a crunchy, unexpected consistency perfect for garnishing crême brûlée, ice cream, or even Belgian waffles.
- Then again, they are absolutely stunning just on their own!

Date night. Whether it is spent with someone you love deeply and dearly, or someone you hope may lead to that - it never hurts to put your best foot forward. And with Medjool dates, you can easily revamp the classics, or even invent your own dishes, all while looking good and feeling good in the process. So go ahead and put yourself out there. Don't be afraid to try new things. Don't be afraid to mix in some Medjool dates into your next Date Night.

If you'd like more ideas of how to incorporate Medjool dates into your culinary explorations, do visit us at www.naturaldelights.com