Donald's Date Squares

Ingredients -- listed for 8"x8" pan and 9"x13" pans

Date filling:
- 225g (8x8) / 1 lb (about 450 g) (9x13) chopped dates -- about 30
- 3/4 cup (8x8) / 1-1/2 cups (9x13) water
- 1 tbsp (8x8) / 2 tbsp (9x13) lemon juice

Oat crumble:
- 1/2 cup (8x8) / 1 cup (9x13) all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup (8x8) / 1-1/2 cups (9x13) large-flake oats
- 1/2 cup (8x8) / 1 cup (9x13) packed brown sugar
- 1/4 tsp (8x8) / 1/2 tsp (9x13) baking soda
- pinch of salt
- 6 tbs / 85g (8x8) / 3/4 cup / 170g (9x13) margarine

Plus:
- margarine to grease the baking pan

Equipment:

- cutting board
- paring knife
- saucepan
- stove
- mixing spoons
- measuring spoons
- measuring cup
- kitchen scale
- two bowls
- countertop convection oven set to 350F
- egg flipper or other stiff flat item to flatten the base
- 8" baking pan
- electric mixer
- oven mitts

How to make:

- preheat oven to 350F
- Grease baking pan and put aside

Date filling:

- take out cutting board, kitchen knife, saucepan, spoon, measuring spoons, measuring cup
- take out dates
- as needed, pit dates
- chop pitted dates
- place chopped dates in saucepan

- measure out water
- pour water into saucepan with dates
- measure out lemon juice
- pour lemon juice into saucepan with dates and water
- Cook date mixture over medium heat, stirring often, until the dates break down completely, it becomes thick, glossy, and jam-like, and you can drag a spoon through and it briefly holds a line
- Set aside date mix to cool slightly.

Crumble base and crust:

- Measure out flour
- place in mixing bowl
- measure out oats
- place in mixing bowl with flour
- measure out brown sugar
- place in mixing bowl with flour and oats
- measure out baking soda
- place in mixing bowl with flour, oats, and brown sugar
- Mix dry ingredients
- Measure out margarine
- add margarine to bowl with flour, oats, brown sugar, and baking soda
- Fully mix with an electric mixer until you get a crumbly, slightly damp sand texture.

Assembling the date squares:

- Press about half the oat mixture firmly into the bottom
- Spread the warm (not piping hot) date filling evenly over it
- Sprinkle the remaining crumble on top and lightly press it down just enough to make it cohesive

Baking the date squares:

- Bake 30–40 minutes, until:
  - top is lightly golden
  - edges look set and slightly darker

Cool completely before cutting.