

BROWNIE BITES

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After a cancer diagnosis left me with pesky food restrictions, I refused to resign myself to a lifetime of eating boring healthy food. Instead, I learned to cook. I taught myself how to cook **treats every** bit as decadent and satisfying as what I used to eat. Now that I make most of my meals from scratch, culinary alchemy sprung up as a theme in my new mystery, *The Accidental Alchemist*.

Here's a sampling of that culinary alchemy: a recipe that's easy, delicious, and healthy. This Brownie Bites recipe is one of my favorites because it transforms a few simple ingredients into a rich dessert in only a few minutes.

Total time: 10 minutes. Makes 12 brownie bites.

1/3 cup walnuts

1/3 cup almonds

2/3 cup dates

1/2 tsp vanilla

2 Tbsp cocoa powder, plus more for dusting

1 Tbsp water



Put the nuts into a blender or food processor and blend until the pieces are tiny. Add the rest of the ingredients and blend until combined; you may need to scrape the edges with a spatula a couple of times. (Tip: If the dates are hard, soak them in hot water for a few minutes to soften them before adding them to the blender.) Roll the lumpy dough into a dozen balls, and dust with additional cocoa powder to taste. That's it! The Brownie Bites are ready to eat.

Gigi Pandian is the USA Today bestselling author of the *Jaya Jones Treasure Hunt Mystery Series* and the new *Accidental Alchemist Mysteries* about a centuries-old female alchemist and her French chef sidekick—a gargoyle who was accidentally brought to life by a stage magician. Gigi was awarded the Malice Domestic Grant for her debut mystery novel, *Artifact*. Find her online at <http://gigipandian.com/>, and connect with her on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).