

TASTING TABLE

These Aren't Your Typical Energy Bars

Plant-based Phyter bars actually taste good, for a start



When you tear open the package of an energy bar for a midday snack, chances are it tastes like exactly that—a packaged good.

My latest snack crush, **Phyter bars**, take a different approach. They're made from fresh, phytonutrient-rich fruit and vegetable purées (hence the name) to help power you through your day. There are no preservatives, so like a growing number of products, you'll find these in the refrigerated section of the grocery store. Think Perfect Bars, but without animal products.

These bars come from Chicago chef David Choi Jr., who led the kitchen at his family's vegan Korean restaurant, Amitabul, for nine years. Which is likely why they taste like a fresh bar that someone just made in an actual kitchen, not a conveyor belt factory.

They've got all the buzzy labels (organic, vegan, gluten free, etc.), but they taste like real food. Plus, you can actually see the ingredients—if you share a bar with me, I *will* pick out all the raisins for myself. They come in flavors like sweet potato and coconut, butternut squash and peanut butter (my personal favorite), and a beets and cocoa one that tastes like a brownie.