

Classic Dessert Squares and Bars for Every Occasion

Raspberry Coconut Bars

My grandmother made raspberry jam every year and it was a precious commodity, but once in a while, we would use a cup to make these. It was worth it! You can also make them with other kinds of jam—try marmalade!

Serves 36 | Prep. time 15 minutes | Cooking time 30 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 cup raspberry jam

For the base

- 1 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup sugar
- ½ cup butter
- ¼ teaspoon salt

For the top layer

- 2 eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 cups shredded coconut
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 1⅛ teaspoon baking soda

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (177°C) and butter a 9x9-inch baking pan.
2. Combine the crust ingredients until crumbly and pat them into the prepared pan.
3. Spread the jam on top.
4. For the top layer, in a mixing bowl, beat the eggs until frothy.
5. Gently mix in the sugar, coconut, vanilla, baking powder, and baking soda.
6. Spread over the jam layer.
7. Bake for 30 minutes, or until golden and set.
8. Cool before slicing.

Chewy Praline Bars

If you like chewy coconut praline, try these! There's just something about the combination of butter, brown sugar, coconut, and pecan that keeps us coming back for more.

Serves 24 | Prep. time 10 minutes | Cooking time 35–40 minutes

Ingredients

For the base

- 1 ½ cup flour
- ¾ cup icing sugar
- ¾ cup butter, melted

For the praline layer

- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 ¾ cups brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1 ¼ cups pecans, chopped
- ¾ cup shredded coconut
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (177°C) and butter a 9x13-inch baking dish.
2. Combine the flour, icing sugar, and butter, and press gently into the prepared pan.
3. Bake for 12–15 minutes, until lightly golden.
4. Gently beat the eggs with the remaining ingredients just until combined and pour over the prepared crust.
5. Return the pan to the oven for 20 minutes, and cool until just slightly warm before slicing.

Nutty Chocolate Cookie Bars

These moist and chewy cookie bars come together in no time with just a few common ingredients! If you love chocolate, this one will be the one!

Serves 24 | Prep. time 10 minutes | Cooking time 35 minutes

Ingredients

For the base

- 1 ¾ cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup icing sugar
- 6 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup cold butter, cubed

For the top layer

- 1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 (12-ounce) package semi-sweet chocolate chips, divided
- 1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup unsalted peanuts

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (177°C).
2. In a medium mixing bowl, combine the flour, icing sugar, cocoa, and baking powder. Mix well.
3. Cut in the butter until crumbly, and press the mixture into an ungreased 9x13-inch baking pan. Bake for 15 minutes.
4. Put aside 1 cup of the chocolate chips. You can chop the peanuts if desired
5. Meanwhile, in a saucepan over medium heat, combine the sweetened condensed milk, chocolate chips, vanilla, and salt. Stir until melted, and spread over the prepared crust.
6. Top with the reserved chocolate chips and the nuts, pressing them gently into the chocolate cream layer.
7. Bake for 20 minutes or until set. Let cool completely before slicing.

Bourbon Blondies

These brown sugar beauties are for the grownups' table and are soft and chewy with just enough bourbon flavor. Add raisins if you like—and some orange peel for the holidays.

Serves 20 | Prep. time 10 minutes | Cooking time 25 minutes

Ingredients

For the blondies

- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 3 tablespoons bourbon
- 1 ¼ cups sifted all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt

For the frosting

- ¼ cup butter
- 2 cups icing sugar
- 2 tablespoons bourbon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (177°C) and butter a 9x9-inch baking pan.
2. Cream the butter and sugar together. Add the egg and bourbon and mix well.
3. Add the remaining ingredients and stir just to combine.
4. Spread the batter in the prepared pan and bake for 25 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, prepare the frosting. Combine the ingredients and mix until smooth.
6. When the blondies are completely cooled, drizzle on the icing and slice.

Chocolate Confetti Squares

We bet you had these growing up. The good news is, now that you're a grown-up, you can make them any time you want!

Serves 16 | Prep. time 15 minutes

Ingredients

- ¼ cup butter
- 1 cup peanut butter
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 ¼ cups chocolate chips
- 1 (10-ounce) bag mini marshmallows
- 1 cup peanuts, chopped roughly

Directions

1. Butter a 9x9-inch baking dish.
2. In a large saucepan over medium-low heat, melt the butter and add the peanut butter. Cook, stirring constantly, until smooth. Remove the pot from the heat.
3. Add the vanilla and chocolate chips and stir until melted. (You can return the pot to the burner if you need a little more heat.)
4. Let it cool until you can hold your hand on the bottom of the pot and stir in the marshmallows and peanuts.
5. Press into the pan, chill until firm before slicing into squares.

Fig Bars

Did you know that these fig bars we all remember so well were one of the first commercially available cookies on the market, and are said to have been the beginning of Nabisco's long and industrious existence? These homemade ones are fun to make and are so wholesome and tasty.

Serves 24 | Prep. time 20 minutes | Cooking time 20–25 minutes

Ingredients

For the biscuit

- ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ⅓ cup butter
- 1 egg
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats (not instant)

For the fig filling

- 8 ounces figs
- ⅓ cup orange juice
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon allspice

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (177°C) and set out a baking sheet.
2. Prepare the filling. Chop the figs and place them in a saucepan with the other filling ingredients. Simmer until soft and thick, and then set aside to cool.
3. Combine the biscuit ingredients and press them into a ball and divide in half. On a lightly floured surface, roll one portion out to a rectangle that is a ¼ inch thick.
4. Stir the fig mixture and using a spoon, lay the filling out on the dough in rows lengthwise, leaving about half an inch between them. These margins will be molded around the edges of the filling to create the sides of the bars.
5. Roll the second portion of dough to match the first and place it on top.
6. Using your fingers, gently press the edges to close the dough around the filling. Cut with a knife or pizza cutter lengthwise, leaving long strips of filled dough.
7. Use your fingers to gently close the edges of the bars and transfer them to the baking sheet.
8. Bake for 20–25 minutes and let them cool before cutting them into shorter bars.

Apple Walnut Squares

This recipe came from a recipe card that had no dates on it, but from the stains, we're guessing it was sometime around 1970. Moist and wholesome, these squares are not too sweet and pair very nicely with a cup of afternoon tea.

Servings 16 | Prep. time 10 minutes | Cooking time 35–40 minutes

Ingredients

- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 cup pure maple syrup
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 medium tart apple, peeled and chopped
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- Cinnamon sugar, for sprinkling

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (177°C) and butter an 8x8-inch baking dish.
2. In a mixing bowl, cream the butter and maple syrup.
3. Add the egg and vanilla and combine until smooth.
4. Gradually incorporate the dry ingredients, and fold in the apples and walnuts.
5. Spread the batter in the prepared pan and sprinkle the top with cinnamon sugar.
6. Bake for 35–40 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

***These recipes and more are found in Louise Davidson's *Squares and Bars Forgotten Recipes: Old-Fashioned Classic Squares and Bars That Are Still Amazing Today*. To get your copy, click on the cover below or click [here](#).

