

Caramel Apple Cheesecake Bars with Streusel Topping

Ingredients

Apples:

3 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored and finely chopped
2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

Streusel Topping:

1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 cup all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 cup quick cooking oats
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, softened

Base:

2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar
¼ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon cinnamon
1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened

Cream Cheese Layer:

2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Caramel Sauce:

4 tablespoons butter
1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
½ cups half-and-half or cream
Pinch of salt
1 tablespoon vanilla

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

In a small bowl, stir together chopped apples, two tablespoons sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Set aside.

For the streusel, in a medium bowl, combine all the streusel topping ingredients and mix until crumbly. Set aside.

For the base, in a medium bowl, combine flour, brown sugar, salt and cinnamon. Cut in butter with a pastry blender or two forks until mixture is crumbly but combined. Press evenly into a 9X13-inch baking pan lined with aluminum foil.

Bake for 10 minutes or until lightly browned.

For the cream cheese layer, while the crust is baking, in a large bowl, beat cream cheese with 1/2 cup sugar until smooth. Then add eggs, one at a time and then the vanilla. Mix well. Pour over the warm crust.

Spoon the apple mixture evenly over the cheesecake layer. Sprinkle the streusel topping over the apples. Bake for 30 minutes until the filling is set.

Cool the bars to room temperature. Drizzle with the caramel topping (or plate individual slices and drizzle with topping one by one).

For the caramel sauce, mix butter, brown sugar, half-and-half or cream, and salt in a saucepan over medium-low heat. Bring the mixture to a simmer and cook while whisking gently for 5 to 7 minutes, until thickened slightly. Add the vanilla and cook another minute to thicken further. Turn off the heat and pour the sauce into a jar. Refrigerate until cold. If the caramel sauce has cooled in the fridge long enough to harden, warm slightly before drizzling on bars.