

Pumpkin Bars

Prep: 25 minutes

Cool: 2 hours

Bake: 25 minutes at 350°F

Makes: 36 bars

Ingredients

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 cups sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
4 eggs, lightly beaten
1 15-ounce can pumpkin
1 cup vegetable oil
1 recipe Browned Butter Frosting

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large bowl stir together flour, sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, baking soda, salt, and cloves. Add eggs, pumpkin, and oil; stir until combined. Spread batter evenly in an ungreased 15×10×1-inch baking pan.
2. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool in pan on a wire rack for 2 hours.
3. Spread with Browned Butter Frosting. Cut into bars.

Browned Butter Frosting: In a small saucepan heat 1/3 cup butter over low heat until melted. Continue heating until butter turns a light golden brown. Remove from heat. In a large mixing bowl combine 3 cups powdered sugar, 2 tablespoons milk, and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Add browned butter. Beat with an electric mixer on medium speed until spreading consistency, adding additional milk if necessary. Makes about 1 1/2 cups.

To Store: To store, place bars in a single layer in an airtight container; cover. Store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Per bar: 178 cal., 8 g fat (2 g sat. fat), 28 mg chol., 109 mg sodium, 25 g carb., 1 g fiber, 2 g pro.

Nutty-Caramel Pumpkin Bars: Prepare as directed in Step 1. In a small bowl stir together 1 1/2 cups chopped pecans, toasted, and 1/3 cup caramel-flavor ice cream topping. Spoon nut mixture over batter in pan. Continue as directed in Step 2. Use only half of the Browned Butter Frosting (chill or freeze the remaining frosting and use it to frost cupcakes). Stir enough milk into the frosting to make it a drizzling consistency. Drizzle over cooled bars.

Per bar: 190 cal., 11 g fat (1 g sat. fat), 26 mg chol., 113 mg sodium, 23 g carb., 1 g fiber, 2 g pro.

Applesauce-Cranberry Bars: Prepare as directed, except substitute one 15-ounce jar (13/4 cups) applesauce for the pumpkin, replace 1/2 cup of the sugar with honey, and stir 1 cup dried cranberries and/or dried tart cherries into the batter. Lightly sprinkle top of frosted bars with ground cinnamon.

Per bar: 193 cal., 8 g fat (2 g sat. fat), 28 mg chol., 108 mg sodium, 29 g carb., 1 g fiber, 2 g pro.

Cream Cheese Swirl Pumpkin Bars: Prepare as directed in Step 1. In a medium mixing bowl combine half of an 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened, and 1/4 cup sugar. Beat with an electric mixer on medium speed until combined. Beat in 1 egg and 1 tablespoon milk. Drizzle the cream cheese mixture over pumpkin batter in pan. Use a knife to gently marble the mixtures together. Sprinkle 1/2 cup miniature semisweet chocolate pieces over batter before baking. Continue as directed in Step 2. Omit Browned Butter Frosting.

Per bar: 160 cal., 9 g fat (2 g sat. fat), 33 mg cholesterol, 108 mg sodium, 19 g carb., 1 g fiber, 2 g pro.