

Apple Cranberry Crisp Bars

Karl Wolfe
Desserts – includes cakes & cookies

Makes 12 to 16 large bars

Ingredients

Bottom Layer

2 cups (190g) old-fashioned oats	1/2 teaspoon (3g) baking soda
1 cup (120g) all-purpose flour	1/4 teaspoon (1g) salt
1 cup (packed) (213g) light brown sugar	2 tsp (4g) Cinnamon

12 Tablespoons (1 stick + 2 Tbsp/5 ounces) butter, melted
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Top Layer

1 cup (120g) all-purpose flour	1/2 cup (packed) (106g) light brown sugar
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter or margarine	2 tsp (4g) Cinnamon

Middle Layer

4 1/2 generous cups unpeeled chopped/diced apples (about 4 Large [or ~8 small])¹
¾ cup Craisins
½ cup (99g) granulated sugar
3 Tablespoons (21g) all-purpose flour
2 teaspoon (4g) cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg (1/4 tsp. if freshly ground)
½ container Marzetti Old Fashioned Caramel dip
¼ cup (53g) light brown sugar
1 Tablespoon lemon juice
½ teaspoon allspice
zest of one medium orange

Method

For the Bottom Layer:

Heat the oven to 425 degrees F. Grease a 9" x 13" pan. In a large bowl, combine the oats, flour, brown sugar, baking soda, and salt. Stir in the melted butter and vanilla until thoroughly combined. Press this mixture lightly but evenly into the bottom of the pan with your fingers. (I also use the bottom of a stainless steel measuring cup to help make the crust flat and even.)

For the Top Layer:

Place the flour, brown sugar, and butter or vegetable oil sticks in a small bowl and use a fork, pastry blender, or your fingers to combine until the mixture resembles large crumbs (some pea-sized clumps are okay). Set aside.

For the Middle Layer:

Place sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, and flour into in the bowl you mixed the Bottom Layer; stir until combined. Add the apples, cranberries, orange zest, and lemon juice and stir until combined. Pour mixture evenly over the Bottom Layer in the pan.

Transfer ½ of the container Marzetti Old Fashioned Caramel Dip to a microwave safe bowl and microwave for 30 to 40 seconds in 10 second intervals stirring after each time or until warm and soft enough to pour. Pour over apples.

Sprinkle the Top Layer evenly over the apple mixture. Bake at 425 degrees for 15 minutes, then lower the oven to 350 degrees and bake until topping looks "dry" but edges aren't too brown, about 25 to 35 minutes.

Let cool in pan on a wire rack. Store in a cool place or refrigerate. Drizzle caramel sauce over bars prior to cutting. Serve warm with ice cream if desired or at room temperature or cold out of the refrigerator. Bars may also be frozen (individually wrapped in plastic).

Notes:

1. I use 2 different types of apples one sweet & the other tart (e.g. Honeycrisp or Fuji & Granny Smith or Mutso).
2. Can either use a tool to cor the apple or cut in half and use a melon ball tool to remove the core prior to chopping/dicing the apples.