

LEMON SHORTBREAD BARS

(Fine Cooking, Dec 2006, recipe by Nicole Rees)

For the crust:

Non-stick cooking spray or melted butter for the pan
7 oz. (14 Tbs.) unsalted butter, melted and cooled to just warm
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1/2 tsp. table salt
9-1/2 oz. (2 cups plus 2 Tbs.) all-purpose flour

For the lemon topping:

4 large eggs
1-1/4 cups granulated sugar
3 Tbs. unbleached all-purpose flour
1/8 tsp. table salt
3/4 cup fresh lemon juice
1 Tbs. finely grated fresh lemon zest
1 Tbs. confectioners' sugar

Line a 13 x 9 inch baking pan with foil, creating an overhang for easy removal. Lightly coat the sides of the foil melted butter to prevent the lemon topping from sticking.

In a medium bowl, stir together the butter, sugar, and salt. Stir in the flour to make a stiff dough. Press the dough evenly into the bottom of the prepared pan. Prick the dough all over with a fork. Refrigerate the pan for 30 minutes (or freeze for 5 to 10 minutes), until the dough is firm. While the crust cools, heat the oven to 325 F.

Remove the crust from the fridge (or freezer) and bake until golden and set, about 30 minutes.

Make the lemon topping: in a medium bowl, whisk the eggs, sugar, flour, and salt together until smooth, about 1 minute. Whisk in the lemon juice and zest. Pour the topping over the hot crust. Return the pan to the oven and increase the heat to 350°F. Bake until the topping is set in the center and the edges are golden, 20 to 25 minutes.

Cool on a rack for at least 1 hour. When the bottom of the pan is cool, lift the bars from the pan using the foil sides and transfer to a cutting board. Separate the foil from the bars, sift the confectioners' sugar over the lemon topping. Cut the bars into 2-inch squares.