

Viennese Chocolate-Walnut Bars

Maida Heatter's Book of Great Cookies

Internet Address:



From Maida Heatter's Book of Great Cookies

CRUST:

1/4 pound butter

1/4 cup dark brown sugar, firmly packed

1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour, sifted

CHOCOLATE-WALNUT FILLING:

1/4 cup apricot preserves, or other seedless preserves

6 ounces walnuts, about 1 1/2 cups

2 whole eggs

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

3/4 cup dark brown sugar, firmly packed

2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa

CHOCOLATE ICING:

6 ounces chocolate chips, about 1 cup

2 tablespoons light corn syrup

2 teaspoons rum, or espresso

2 teaspoons boiling water

2 ounces walnuts, cut medium-fine, about 1/2 cup

Servings: 32

The shortbread (bottom layer) is very tender and flaky, so when you remove the big squares from the 9x9 pan, do use a big spatula to get each section out; otherwise you'll crumble the shortbread too much. Keeps at room temp for a few days; if keeping long than that, freeze them in an airtight container.

1. CRUST: Adjust rack one third up from bottom of oven and preheat to 375°. In an electric mixer cream the butter. Beat in the sugar. On low speed gradually add the flour and beat only until the mixture holds together.
2. Place the dough by large spoonful over the bottom of an unbuttered 9-inch square pan. With your fingertips press the dough to make a smooth layer over the bottom of the pan. Bake for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, prepare the filling.
3. FILLING: In a small bowl stir the preserves just to soften them and set aside. Grind the walnuts to a fine powder in a blender or a nut grinder and set aside.
4. In the small bowl of an electric mixer beat the eggs at high speed for 2-3 minutes until they are slightly thickened. Add the salt and vanilla, and then, on low speed, add the sugar and cocoa. Increase the speed to high again, and beat for 2-3 minutes more. On low speed mix in the ground walnuts, beating only until the nuts are incorporated.
5. Spread the preserves over the hot crust, leaving a 1/2 inch border. It will be a very thin layer but it is really enough. Pour the filling over the preserves and tilt the pan to level the filling. Bake at 375 for 25 minutes. Let the cake cool completely and then prepare the icing.
6. ICING: In the top of a small double boiler, covered, over hot water on moderate heat, cook the chocolate until it is partially melted. Still on the heat stir the chocolate with a rubber spatula until it is completely melted and smooth. Add the corn syrup, rum or coffee, and the boiling water and stir until smooth.
7. Spread the icing evenly over the cake. Sprinkle with the nuts and press down gently with a wide metal spatula to press the nuts slightly into the icing. Let stand at room temperature until the icing is firm; it will probably take a few hours.
8. With a small, sharp knife, cut around the sides of the cake to release it and then cut the cake into quarters. With a wide metal spatula transfer the quarters to a cutting board and cut each quarter into 6-8 small bars. Place the bars on a serving dish, cover with plastic wrap, and let stand at room temp for a few hours, or overnight, before serving.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 154 Calories; 9g Fat (49.4% calories from fat); 3g Protein; 17g Carbohydrate; 1g Dietary Fiber; 21mg Cholesterol; 56mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1/2 Grain(Starch); 1/2 Lean Meat; 1 1/2 Fat; 1 Other Carbohydrates.

Carolyn T's Blog - Tasting Spoons:
<http://tastingspoons.com>