

Ginger Crunch Bars (adapted from Skibo Castle)

Adapted slightly from Gourmet Magazine, December, 1999 (title: Skibo Castle Ginger Crunch).



Very fragile little bites - think shortbread with ginger icing. Sort of.

SHORTBREAD:

- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 TBSP granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 4 ounces cold unsalted butter, cut into pieces

TOPPING:

- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon Lyle's golden syrup (British cane sugar syrup)
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 teaspoon dried lavender (optional - my addition) finely minced

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

Servings: 64

Lyle's Golden Syrup is a British product - sometimes a little hard to find. You may find it at World Market. You can mail order it from King Arthur Flour also. It imparts a very important caramel-buttery flavor to the icing. You can substitute honey, but it definitely won't taste the same. Some others who have made this recommend putting a foil sling into the pan before pressing in the shortbread layer. Remove the sling from the pan before the shortbread has cooled off, otherwise it will shatter.

1. Preheat oven to 350°F and grease a 13x9 metal baking pan. If you use a Pyrex dish, reduce temp by 25°. Don't over bake. Don't use an oversized pan; otherwise the shortbread will be too thin to hold together. You might be able to use a Pyrex 7x11, but increase baking time by 4-6 minutes. (This last one will be my pan size if I try this again.)
2. Make shortbread base: Sift together dry ingredients and blend in butter with your fingertips until mixture resembles coarse meal. Press evenly into bottom of pan (base will be thin). Bake in middle of oven until golden and crisp, 20 to 25 minutes.
3. Make topping just before pulling the shortbread from the oven.
4. Melt butter in a medium saucepan and whisk in remaining ingredients until smooth. Bring to a boil and simmer, stirring, 30 seconds. If the mixture is lumpy, continue cooking it until it foams up and almost starts to go to candy. Stir constantly so it doesn't burn.
5. Remove shortbread from oven and pour topping over, tilting pan to cover shortbread evenly, or use an offset spatula and spread to outside edges. If using, sprinkle the top with dried lavender. Cool slightly, then cut small squares while the cookies are still warm - otherwise they will crumble very easily.
6. Cool in pan on a rack.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 42 Calories; 3g Fat (54.2% calories from fat); trace Protein; 5g Carbohydrate; trace Dietary Fiber; 7mg Cholesterol; 17mg Sodium. Exchanges: 0 Grain(Starch); 1/2 Fat; 0 Other Carbohydrates.