

Almond Apple Bars

From *Alpineberry* blog (no longer exists)



CRUST:

- 1 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt (or 1/4 tsp table salt)
- 3 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar, may use half artificial sweetener
- 1/4 cup light brown sugar, may use half artificial sweetener
- 1/3 cup almonds, finely chopped

TOIPPING:

- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar, may use half artificial sweetener
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar, may use half artificial sweetener
- 1/4 cup almonds, coarsely chopped

FILLING:

- 5 ounces cream cheese, softened at room temp.
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pound Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored & cut into thin slices (about 3 apples)

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 279 Calories; 14g Fat (45.7% calories from fat); 5g Protein; 34g Carbohydrate; 2g Dietary Fiber; 45mg Cholesterol; 176mg Sodium; 20g Total Sugars; trace Vitamin D; 49mg Calcium; 1mg Iron; 151mg Potassium; 83mg Phosphorus. Exchanges: .

Carolyn T's Blog: tastingspoons.com

Servings: 12

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 9x9 inch square baking pan with parchment. Butter the parchment.
2. CRUST: Sift flour and salt. Set aside dry ingredients. In the bowl of a stand mixer, beat the cream cheese and butter on medium speed until smooth, about 1-2 minutes. Add the almond and vanilla extracts and beat on medium until smooth, about 1 minute. Add the granulated and brown sugars and beat on medium speed until blended, scraping down the sides of the bowl once or twice. On low speed, mix in the flour-salt mixture and the 1/3 cup of finely chopped almonds just until the dough comes together. It should be crumbly.
3. Reserve about 2/3 cup of the crust mixture for the topping. Press the remaining dough evenly into the bottom of the prepared pan. You may use an offset spatula, your fingertips, or the bottom of a glass to smooth out the dough. Prick the dough all over with a fork. Bake until light golden, about 16-18 minutes. Remove crust from the oven.
4. TOPPING: While the crust bakes, make the topping by adding the flour, granulated and brown sugars to the reserved crust dough. Mix until well combined. It should be crumbly. Set aside topping and 1/4 cup coarsely chopped almonds while you make the filling.
5. FILLING: In a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Beat in the egg, lemon juice and salt until well mixed.
6. ASSEMBLY: Arrange the apple slices over the baked crust. Pour cream cheese filling over the apples and gently spread (using an offset spatula) the filling to cover. Crumble the topping over the filling. Sprinkle with the almonds. Bake until light golden brown, about 45-50 minutes. Let the bars cool in the pan for about 30 minutes. Remove from pan and cool completely on a cooling rack before cutting.