

Pumpkin Bars *(Joy of Baking)*

Makes 20



Shortbread:

- 75 g pecans
- 260 g all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp kosher salt
- 170 g unsalted butter, room temperature
- 105 g light brown sugar, firmly packed

Pumpkin Filling:

- 3 large eggs, room temperature
- 2 cups/425 g) pure pumpkin puree
- 155 g firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- ⅛ tsp ground cloves
- ¼ tsp kosher salt
- 180 ml heavy whipping cream, at room temperature (35-40% butterfat)
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Garnish: (optional)

- 20 ml **cold** heavy whipping cream (35-40% butterfat)
- 7 - 15 g granulated white sugar, or to taste

Pumpkin Bars:

1. Preheat oven to **180°C**. Line the bottom and sides of a 23 x 33-cm baking pan with foil (shiny side facing up), and then **butter** the foil.
2. Place the pecans on a baking sheet and bake for **about 6 to 8 minutes** or until lightly brown and fragrant. Let cool and then finely chop. Set aside.

Shortbread:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer, fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the **butter** until smooth.
2. Add the **sugar** and beat, on low speed, until combined. Scrape down the sides and bottom of your bowl as needed.
3. Add the **flour** and **salt** and beat just until you have coarse crumbs (not a solid ball of dough).
4. Press the batter firmly and evenly onto the bottom of your prepared pan. Lightly prick the surface of the shortbread with the tines of a fork. Bake for **about 16 to 18 minutes** or until the shortbread is lightly browned.
5. Remove from oven and place on a wire rack. Immediately sprinkle the finely chopped pecans on the hot shortbread. With the back of a fork or spoon, gently press the pecans into the hot shortbread.
6. Let the shortbread cool for **about 15 minutes**.

Pumpkin Filling:

1. In a large bowl, whisk the **eggs**.
2. Add the **pumpkin, sugar, ground spices, and salt** and whisk to combine.
3. Gradually stir in the **cream** and **vanilla** extract.

4. Pour the filling over the pre baked crust and **bake for about 30 minutes**, or until the filling is set and has a shiny sheen. Remove from oven and place on a wire rack to cool.
5. Run a knife around the inside edges of the pan. You can then cut into bars while they are still in the pan. Or you can lift the pumpkin bars from the pan by holding onto the edges of the foil. Place on a cutting board, peel back the foil, and cut into bars or squares.

The bars can be covered and refrigerated for up to three days. Serve chilled or at room temperature.

Garnish:

1. Whip the **cream** with the sugar until stiff peaks form.
2. Place the whipped cream in a piping bag fitted with an open star tip and pipe a small rosette of cream on top of each pumpkin bar.