

DELICIOUS CHOCOLATE LAYER BARS



CHOCOLATE WITH GRENACHE

Pairing chocolate with rich red wines is often a clash of strong flavors and doesn't work. [Mathis Grenache](#) is an exception because the fruit plays more prominently than the tannins against the bitter elements of chocolate. These layer bars are dense and rich. Try serving with raspberries or cherries or a kirsch liqueur drizzled over the top. Long-lasting, keep in a tin or freeze for up to a month. They are also fabulous when warmed in the oven!

INGREDIENTS

12 oz. semi-sweet chocolate chips
8 oz. (1 pkg.) cream cheese
½ c. + 2 Tbsp. (half a can) evaporated milk
1 c. chopped walnuts
½ tsp. almond extract
1 c. softened butter (2 sticks)
2 eggs
½ tsp. almond extract
3 c. flour
1¼ c. sugar
1 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. salt

PREPARATION

Oven: 350° | Grease a 13" x 9" pan.

Melt chocolate, cream cheese and evaporated milk in a bowl, either in the microwave (checking frequently and stirring until smooth) or on the stovetop in a double-boiler. Stir in ½ tsp. of almond extract and chopped walnuts. Set aside.

In a large bowl, combine butter and sugar until well-blended. Stir in eggs and ½ tsp. almond extract until smooth.

Sift together flour, baking powder and salt. Add dry ingredients in batches, if necessary, to butter and egg mixture until well-blended.

Next, divide the dough layer in half, pressing one-half into the bottom of the 13" x 9" pan. Scoop out and spread the chocolate-walnut mixture over the bottom layer evenly.

To spread the top layer of the dough (which is very thick) over the chocolate, choose from two methods: 1. Put dollops of dough over the chocolate and then use a spatula to spread and blend the dough flat. Or, (recommended) 2. Spread a long length of Saran wrap (or similar plastic wrap) in front of your 13" x 9" pan (longer than the pan so you can grab the ends) on the countertop.

Next, spread the remaining layer dough on the plastic wrap to approximately fit the 13" x 9" interior, pressing with your fingers to fit the plastic wrap. (Eyeball against the pan.) Then, gently flip the wrap over (like roll fondant, if you've ever worked with this cake topping) onto the chocolate spread and gently pull back the plastic wrap from the smooth dough topping. (The dough does not adhere to the plastic wrap and rolls off it easily, but it is a bit heavy.)

Spread any dough to the edges if it didn't fit perfectly using a spatula or knife.

Bake at 350° for approximately 35 minutes, until lightly golden brown. This is a dense dessert. Cool and cut into bars.

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