



Brownie Cheesecake Bars with Dulce de Leche

Makes: 16 (2-inch) square bars

Prep Time: 30-40 minutes Bake Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 1-1 & 1/2 hours plus chilling time

Brownie Layer:

- 7 tbsp unsalted butter
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup + 3 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp fine sea salt
- 1 large egg
- 1/4 cup + 3 tbsp all purpose flour
- 1/2 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips or chunks

Cheesecake Layer:

- 2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, at room temperature
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 large egg yolk
- 2 tbsp all purpose flour
- 1 tbsp lemon juice (approx 1/2 lemon)
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract or paste

Dulce de Leche Layer:

- 1 (15-ounce) can of dulce de leche

To prepare your 8 x 8 pan:

Cut a piece of cold butter and rub the bottom and sides of your pan. Rub the outer sides as well. This will serve as “glue” to keep the parchment paper on place. Cut 2 - 8” x 16” parchment paper pieces (I use this unbleached parchment paper that is already cut in 12” x 16” sheets, so I just had to cut it 8” wide). Place one paper centered into the pan and press through the bottom and sides, inside and out. Rub some butter on the parchment paper area inside the pan and place the other piece of paper across. Again press the paper through the bottom, inside and outside the pan to seal it toward the pan. Spray some baking spray on the bottom and sides of your pan. Place it in the fridge.

To make the Brownie Layer:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Put butter in a large glass bowl and place it on a large skillet filled with some water. Heat it over medium heat until melted. Add the sugar and stir until the sugar dissolves into the butter. You'll end up with a paste that is smooth and just a bit grainy. Take it out of the skillet and let it cool down.

After the butter mixture has cooled down mix in the cocoa powder. Add the vanilla and salt and stir. Add the egg and mix well. Add the flour and gently mix just until you can't see streaks of flour. Add the semi-sweet chocolate chips or chunks and mix them in.

Transfer the batter to the pan and press it down with your hands to make it even. Bake for 20 minutes.

Take the brownies out of the oven and increase oven temperature to 425°.

To make the cheesecake filling:

Either in the bowl of a stand up mixer and using the whisk attachment or in medium bowl using an electric hand mixer with the beaters attached, beat the cream cheese on medium speed for 3 minutes. Add the sugar and mix for 1 minute, making sure there is no sugar on top of the bowl. Decrease speed to low and add the eggs and egg yolk, one at a time.

Add flour, lemon juice and vanilla paste, waiting a few seconds before each addition to allow each ingredient to incorporate well. Scrap the wall of the bowl between additions, if needed. Stop mixing as soon as everything is well incorporated.

When the oven is 425°F, pour cheesecake mixture over brownie layer. Place pan in oven and bake for 5 minutes and then drop oven temperature to 275°. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, until the mixture looks shiny and firm but not dry. If it is still wobbly in the center, bake it for 1 or 2 more minutes. Remove from oven and let it cool down for 10 minutes, then chill in the fridge for at least 30 minutes before spreading the dulce de leche.

Warm the dulce de leche about three times in 10 seconds intervals to make it spreadable. Spread over cheesecake layer with a spatula or the back of a spoon. Chill for a few hours or overnight to set the dulce de leche.

Pull up one side of the bars at a time using the parchment paper just until you feel the bars are coming up. After releasing the four sides, gently pull two of the sides until they come out. Cut in squares. Store them in the fridge.

Recipe adapted from Dev Amadeo