

Lemon Cream Cheese Squares: A Sweet and Tangy Dessert Delight

The Zesty Evolution of Lemon Bar Favorites



OVEN
350°F

TIME
15-20 min

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INGREDIENTS

to create these heavenly Lemon Cream Cheese Squares:

For the Shortbread Crust: 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour 1/2 cup powdered sugar 1/4 teaspoon salt 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter , very cold and cut into small cubes:

DIRECTIONS

1. Steps for the : Recipe
2. Let's bake these sweet and tangy dessert squares!
3. Prepare : Oven & Pan:
4. Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Line a 9x13 inch baking pan with parchment paper, leaving an overhang on the sides. This will make it easy to lift the squares out later.
5. Make the : Shortbread Crust:
6. In a medium bowl, whisk together 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, 1/2 cup powdered sugar, and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Add the very cold, cubed butter. Using a pastry blender or your fingertips, cut the butter into the flour mixture until it resembles coarse crumbs. Press the mixture firmly and evenly into the bottom of the prepared 9x13 inch baking pan.
7. Partially : Bake Crust:
8. Bake the crust for 15-20 minutes, or until lightly golden. Remove from oven and set aside while you prepare the filling. Reduce oven temperature to 325°F (160°C).
9. Prepare : Lemon Cream Cheese Filling:
10. In a large mixing bowl, beat the softened cream cheese with an electric mixer until very smooth and creamy.
11. Add : Sweetener & Flavor:
12. Gradually add 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar to the cream cheese, beating until well combined. Beat in the 1/4 cup all-purpose flour until just incorporated. Scrape down the sides of the bowl.
13. Add : Lemon & Eggs:
14. Beat in the lemon zest, lemon juice, eggs, and vanilla

extract until just combined. Do not overmix after adding the eggs.

15. Assemble & : Bake:
16. Pour the lemon cream cheese filling evenly over the warm, partially baked crust in the pan.
17. Bake for 30-40 minutes, or until the filling is set around the edges but still has a slight jiggle in the center. The top should be lightly golden.
18. Cool : Completely:
19. Remove from the oven and let cool completely in the pan on a wire rack. This is crucial!
20. Chill & : Serve:
21. Once completely cool, cover the pan loosely with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 4 hours, or preferably overnight, until thoroughly chilled and firm. Once chilled, use the parchment paper overhang to lift the entire slab of squares out of the pan. Cut into squares, garnish with extra powdered sugar, fresh lemon slices, or berries, and serve chilled.

SWAPS & NOTES

Cream Cheese: Using full-fat brick-style cream cheese is essential for the best firm texture and rich flavor in the filling.

Make sure it's completely softened to room temperature to prevent lumps.

Butter (Crust): The key to a tender, melt-in-your-mouth shortbread crust is very cold unsalted butter .

Do not use softened or melted butter for the crust.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Cold Butter for Crust: This is paramount for a tender, flaky shortbread crust.

Don't use softened butter for the crust.

Softened Cream Cheese (Filling): Ensure your cream cheese is truly at room temperature for a smooth, lump-free filling.

Don't Overmix Filling: Especially after adding the eggs.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/lemon-cream-cheese-squares-a-sweet-and-tangy-dessert-delight/>