



Chocolate Peanut Butter Bars

Ingredients Bottom Layer

1/2 cup unsalted butter
1/4 cup sugar
5 tbsp unsweetened cocoa (I use Valhrona)
1 egg, beaten
1 1/4 cups graham cracker crumbs
3/4 cup coarsely crush pretzels (I find the thinner salted versions work better than the thick ones - I only had the thick ones for the shoot above, but that's my lesson learned)

Directions

If you have a double boiler use that to melt the butter, sugar and cocoa. I use a metal bowl over a lightly simmering pot of water (water should not touch the bowl). While bowl is still over the water, add the beaten egg a little at a time until the mixtures thickens.

Remove bowl from the heat and add the graham cracker crumbs and crushed pretzels. After they are well mixed press the crumbs into a flattened layer an 8x8 cake pan. I use square non-stick baking pan and line it with two pieces of parchment paper crisscross, this makes it easier to get the bars out of the pan for cutting the squares. Set this aside while you start the middle layer.

Middle Layer Ingredients

1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted and slightly cooled.
2/3 cup powdered sugar, sifting this first is good to get any clumps out.
1 cup smooth, natural peanut butter (no salt added) I like Laura Scudder's.
1/2 tsp salt (only use if you bought unsalted PB, otherwise adjust to taste.
1 tsp vanilla



Directions

Add peanut butter and melted butter together in a small bowl, mix in sugar, salt and vanilla until it forms a thick paste.

Now it's time to add the peanut butter over the bottom layer of chocolate pretzel goodness. I have thought about doubling the peanut butter layer as I'd like a bit more thickness, so I might try that next time. Now put all of this in the refrigerator while you make the final Top layer. This way the peanut butter has time to get a little stiff, otherwise it's hard to spread the final chocolate layer on top.

Top Layer Ingredients

5 oz. semi sweet chocolate chips (I love bittersweet or just straight dark chocolate bars for this layer, but use any fine chocolate you like)

1 tbsp unsalted butter

Pink Himalayan salt (or any fine sea salt)

Directions

Again if you have a double boiler use that to melt the chocolate and butter. I use a metal bowl over a lightly simmering pot of water (water should not touch the bowl). Stir until smooth.

Now take the pan from the refrigerator and pour the chocolate mixture over the peanut butter layer and spread it evenly. Then return to the refrigerator about 10 minutes. (top should be a little soft still). Sprinkle light with the Himalayan salt and return to the fridge and let it completely cool until it becomes hard.

Take out the parchment papered bars and cut into squares or rectangles. I've done both and wrapped them in paper with twine for a special presentation, but it's faster to just cut in and eat it, so good.

