



Lemon Bars*

Makes 12

Crust Ingredients

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 10 tbsp /140 grams unsalted butter), melted and cooled
- 45 grams granulated sugar (less than ¼ cup)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp fine sea salt
- 2 to 4 lemons (I zested 3 for the crust)
- 1½ cups / 200 grams all-purpose flour

Lemon Layer Ingredients

- 1 cup/200 grams granulated sugar
- ¼ cup / 33 grams all-purpose flour
- 4 large eggs, room temperature
- ⅔ cup fresh lemon juice (from the lemons above) I measured and used 3 ½ lemons which yielded over ⅔ cup juice
- Powdered sugar, for dusting (optional-I did not use this)

Instructions

Heat the oven to 350 degrees. Line the bottom and sides of a 9-inch square metal pan with foil. Lightly coat with nonstick cooking spray.

Combine the butter, sugar, vanilla, and salt in a large bowl. Finely grate in the zest of three lemons (reserving the zested lemons for the lemon layer), then mix until well combined. While stirring, gradually add the flour and stir just until the dough comes together into a mass. It is a very soft dough. Scrape into the prepared pan and gently press the dough into an even layer. I used a bench scraper to do this and pricked the crust with a fork all over.

Bake until the center is dry, and the edges are golden, ~15 minutes. I watch the crust and if it starts to bubble up, I open the oven door and prick it again in the places it has bubbled so it is flat.

While the crust bakes, make the lemon layer. Squeeze ⅔+ cup juice from the zested lemons and more fruit if needed. In the same bowl used for the crust, whisk the sugar and flour. Whisk in the eggs until smooth, then whisk in the lemon juice just until incorporated.

When the crust comes out of the oven, immediately turn the oven down to 300 degrees. I took my plastic bench scraper and shimmied the crust down the four sides to release the crust from the edges.

Whisk the lemon mixture again and gently pour it over the hot crust. Put the pan back into the oven right away.

Bake until the lemon layer is set around the edges and jiggles a tiny bit in the center, about 20 minutes.

Cool completely in the pan, then refrigerate uncovered until cold and fully set, at least three hours. Carefully cut the bars into 12 pieces (personally I would cut them in half again - they are buttery and rich) and put them on a serving platter. Serve cold or at room temperature. The bars can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to five days. I generally serve these with some raspberries for color!

*Adapted from Genevieve Ko, *New York Times*