

Russ Cohen's Black Walnut Honey Squares

Ingredients

For the Crust:

- 1/3 Cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1/3 Cup brown sugar (OK to substitute Sucanat or maple sugar)
- 1/4 Teaspoon salt
- 1 Cup all-purpose flour

For the Filling:

- 1/4 Cup unsalted butter
- 1/3 Cup brown sugar (OK to substitute Sucanat or maple sugar)
- 1/3 Cup honey
- 1 Tablespoon half & half (OK to substitute light cream or whipped cream)
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/4 tsp. each cinnamon, allspice and ground cloves
- 1 to 1 1/2 Cups chopped Black Walnuts (toasting them a bit in the toaster oven first helps bring out their flavor)



Preparation

Preheat oven to 350°. Line an 8×8 inch baking dish with aluminum foil, and butter or spray with non-stick cooking spray.

In the bowl of a stand mixer (or with an electric mixer), cream together butter and sugar. Add in salt and flour, and beat until crumbly.

Press mixture into the prepared pan, and bake for 15 minutes.

While the crust is baking, begin preparing the topping by combining butter, sugar, honey, and half & half in a sauce pan over medium heat. Stirring constantly, bring mixture to a simmer, and allow to simmer for one minute. Remove from heat and stir in the vanilla, spices and chopped black walnuts.

Remove the crust from oven, and pour filling over the top. Return to oven and bake for another 15 minutes.

Remove to a wire rack, and allow it to cool completely.

Remove the entire contents of the foil-lined baking dish (it should come out easily in one piece), place on a cutting board, and then make cross-wise cuts so you are left with approx. 3/4 to 1 inch by 3/4 to 1 inch squares.

The recipe should yield about 49 (7X7) squares.

For additional wild food recipes, go to <http://users.rcn.com/eatwild/recipes.htm>

More info about Russ Cohen's schedule of public wild edibles programs: <http://users.rcn.com/eatwild/sched.htm>

Russ Cohen's Triple Maple Hickory-Nut Sandwich Cookies

(The "triple" in the cookie name comes from the three types of maple products used in this recipe: maple syrup, maple sugar and maple cream. BTW, I have found maple creams to vary in their firmness/runniness; you want it to be spreadable but not runny. If it is too stiff, stir in a bit of maple syrup to soften it; if it is too runny, stir in enough maple sugar to thicken it to the right consistency.)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup softened butter
- ½ cup granulated or powdered maple sugar
- 4 Tbsp. maple syrup
- 1 large egg yolk
- ½ tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 cups flour
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 ¾ cups Shagbark Hickory (*Carya ovata*) nuts (can substitute pecans or walnuts if necessary)
- Maple cream for spreading (about 1/3 to 1/2 cup).



1. Beat butter in a large mixing bowl for three minutes or until creamy. Beat in maple sugar gradually. Add maple syrup, egg yolk and vanilla extract to the bowl; beat well. Mix flour and salt together and add gradually to the other ingredients in the mixing bowl; then add the chopped hickory nuts and mix until well-blended.
2. Place the mixing bowl with the dough in it into the fridge for at least a half hour until it stiffens. Then remove from the fridge, divide the dough in half and shape into "logs" about two inches in diameter. Wrap with plastic wrap, waxed paper or parchment and refrigerate again until firm (at least an hour).
3. Preheat oven to 350° and get a greased cookie tray or two ready.
4. Slice the logs into rounds about 1/8" thick, then place the rounds onto the cookie sheet, leaving some space between the slices (they will spread out a bit during baking).
5. Bake for 10 minutes at 350°; then remove cookie tray from oven; the undersides of the cookies should be a golden brown color. If not; leave in for a minute or two more; if so, then flip all the cookies over, re-insert in oven and bake 4 minutes more or until both sides of cookies have a (or are close to a) golden brown color.
6. Remove cookies from cookie sheet, allow to cool to room temperature, then pair the rounds up into (more or less) matched pairs. Spread about a teaspoon's worth of maple cream on top of one cookie, then gently squish down on it with the second cookie to make a sandwich.

Makes 35-40 sandwich cookies.

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More info about Russ Cohen's schedule of public foraging programs: <http://users.rcn.com/eatwld/sched.htm>

More info about Russ' foraging book, Wild Plants I Have Known...and Eaten: http://users.rcn.com/eatwld/press_release.htm

More info about Russ Cohen: <http://users.rcn.com/eatwld/bio.htm>