

THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES



Noir Bars (slightly adapted from Sugarcrafter)

The only significant change I've made to the original recipe is to increase the cream in the ganache topping. I used the original, lower amount, but when the dessert was chilled, it was too solid - each bite squished out the filling instead of cutting through the topping.

I used a mix of 60% cacao chocolate and 80% cacao chocolate in the topping. Unless you like your chocolate really bitter, I recommend sticking to something closer to 60%.

My favorite way to melt chocolate is in a fake double boiler: Put about 1 inch of water in a saucepan and bring it to a simmer over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to medium and place a small heatproof bowl (preferably stainless steel, but glass will work; it just takes longer in glass) over the saucepan, making sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Add the chocolate and stir occasionally with a rubber spatula until the chocolate is completely melted, about 5 minutes.

Chocolate cookie base:

1¾ cup (8.4 ounces) all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon baking soda
8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
1 cup (7 ounces) granulated sugar
½ teaspoon salt
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped (½ cup), melted

Chocolate cheesecake filling:

2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter, softened
pinch salt
6 ounces (1½ cups) powdered sugar
4 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped (⅔ cup), melted
1 teaspoon vanilla

Ganache:

12 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped (2 cups), melted
1 cup heavy whipping cream

1. Adjust a rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 375 degrees. Spray a 9-by-13-inch pan with nonstick spray. In a medium-sized bowl, combine the flour and baking soda.
2. For the cookie base: Place the butter in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment (or a large mixing bowl if you're using a hand-held mixer). Beat the butter on medium-low speed until it's smooth, then add the sugar and salt. Continue beating on medium speed until the mixture is light and fluffy, about 2 minutes, scraping the sides of the bowl as needed. With the mixer running, add the egg, then the vanilla and melted chocolate. Reduce the mixer speed to low and gradually add the flour mixture, mixing just until evenly combined.
3. Spread the mixture evenly in the prepared pan. Bake until set, 10-12 minutes. Transfer to a cooling rack and allow to cool to room temperature.

4. For the cheesecake filling: Place the cream cheese, butter, and salt in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Beat on medium-low speed until smooth. Reduce the speed to low and add the powdered sugar. When the sugar is incorporated, increase the speed to medium-high (high on a hand-held mixer) and beat until smooth and lighter, 2-3 minutes. Add the melted chocolate and vanilla. Spread the mixture over the crust. Chill until set, about 2 hours.
5. For the ganache: Stir together the chocolate and cream. Spread over the filling. Chill until set, about 1 hour.