

Peanut Butter Chocolate Crispy Bars

*Adapted from a recipe from
Baked: New Frontiers in Baking*



CRUST

(if you like more crunch, double this portion of the recipe)

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups crisped rice cereal (aka Rice Krispies)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons light corn syrup
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- large pinch of kosher salt

PEANUT BUTTER LAYER

- 5 ounces good-quality milk chocolate, coarsely chopped
- 1 cup creamy peanut butter (not natural or old-fashioned)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla extract

CHOCOLATE ICING

- 3 ounces dark chocolate (60% to 72% cacao), coarsely chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon light corn syrup
- 4 tablespoons ($\frac{1}{2}$ stick) unsalted butter
- large pinch of kosher salt

Line an 8-inch square pan with aluminum foil then butter the foil.

MAKING THE CRUST

Put the cereal in a medium bowl and set aside. Add the sugar, corn syrup and water in a very small saucepan and stir until just combined. Don't splash it around. You want to avoid getting sugar on the sides of the pan. Cook over high heat **without stirring** until mixture reaches the soft ball stage, 235 degrees F. I had to tip my pan to get sufficient depth to register on my candy thermometer. Remove from the heat, stir in the butter and a pinch of kosher salt. Then pour the mixture over the cereal. Working quickly, stir until the cereal is thoroughly coated, then press it into the prepared pan. Let the crust cool to room temperature while you make the next layer.

MAKING THE PEANUT BUTTER LAYER

Melt the chocolate and peanut butter together in a medium-size bowl over a saucepan of barely simmering water (aka double-boiler). Stir until smooth. Remove the bowl from the pan to cool slightly and stir in the vanilla. Pour the mixture over the cooled crust.

Put the pan in the fridge (or outside if it's colder there than in your fridge...brrrr) for 1 hour, or until the top layer hardens.

MAKING THE CHOCOLATE ICING

Melt the chocolate, corn syrup, butter and pinch of salt together in a medium-size bowl over a saucepan of barely simmering water (aka double-boiler). Stir until smooth. Remove the bowl from the pan and let it sit for a minute to cool slightly. Pour the mixture over the chilled peanut butter layer.

Spread evenly (a small offset spatula works well for this). Put the pan in the fridge for 1 hour or until the topping hardens.

Cut into squares and serve. If there are any left...and that is a big "if"...store them in the fridge, covered tightly, for up to 4 days.

TASTING NOTES: These bars are very rich with great flavor and a nice balance of peanut butteriness to chocolate. However, I wanted even more crunch, so next time I make them, I will double the ingredients in the crispy crust.