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|  | County Fair Caramel Apple Bars |
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Caramel and apple is always a winning combination. These bars, cut in 3" squares and topped with ice cream, make a delicious plated dessert. Cut smaller, they pack nicely in your lunchbox.

**INGREDIENTS:**

**Crust**  
1. 1 cup (2 sticks, 8 ounces) unsalted butter  
2. 1 teaspoon salt  
3. 1/2 teaspoon baking powder  
4. 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
5. 3/4 cup (5 5/8 ounces) brown sugar, firmly packed  
6. 1 cup (4 ounces) confectioners' sugar or glazing sugar  
7. 2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
8. 2 3/4 cups (11 1/2 ounces) King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour  
9. 1 cup (3 1/4 ounces) nut flour\*  
10. 1 large egg  
  
**Filling**  
11. 4 to 5 medium tart apples, peeled, cored, and sliced, then chopped (about 5 cups, about 20 ounces prepared)   
12. 2 tablespoons (7/8 ounce) brown sugar  
13. 2 tablespoons (1 ounce) boiled cider, or substitute an additional 2 tablespoons brown sugar  
14. 1/4 teaspoon salt  
15. 1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
16. 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
  
**Topping\*\***  
17. 1 cup (10 ounces) caramel, from a block, or about 30 caramel candies  
18. 2 1/2 tablespoons (1 1/4 ounces) milk or cream

**DIRECTIONS:**

\*Almond (toasted or plain), hazelnut flour (toasted or plain), and pecan meal are all good choices. Or grind 1 cup nuts in a food processor; be sure to stop before the mixture becomes pasty.   
  
\*\*Or use our prepared caramel sauce.   
  
Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 9" x 13" pan or 10" x 10" bun pan.   
  
***To make the crust:*** Beat together the butter, salt, baking powder, cinnamon, sugars, and vanilla till smooth. Add the flours, mixing till crumbly. Set aside half the mixture (about 3 generous cups, 15 ounces); add the egg to the remainder, beating to combine. Press the crust with egg into the bottom of the prepared pan. Bake the crust for 17 minutes, till it's barely starting to brown around the edges. While the crust is baking, prepare the filling.   
  
***To make the filling:*** Slice the apples about 1/4" thick, then chop into 1/2" to 3/4" pieces. An apple peeler/corer/slicer gives you a great head start on this task. Combine the apples with the remaining filling ingredients, and distribute over the crust. Spread the reserved crust mixture over the apples.   
  
Bake the bars for 45 minutes. Remove them from the oven, and after 15 minutes cut them into squares, leaving them in the pan. Cool completely, then place the bars on a rack set over a piece of parchment.   
  
***To make the topping:*** Place the caramel and milk in a microwave-safe measuring cup, and heat till the caramel is very soft. Stir (reheating if necessary) till the mixture is smooth and pourable. Drizzle it over the bars. *Yield: 16 to 24 bars.*