

Caramel Apple Shortbread Crumble Bars- Mary Robichaud

Ingredients:

3 cups flour
¾ cup confectioner's sugar
1-1/2 cups softened butter
1-1/2 cups sugar
3 large Granny Smith apples, cored, peeled and sliced 1/8" thick
1/3 cup water
¾ cup heavy cream
2 tablespoons butter
1 teaspoon coarse salt

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Line a 9 x 13 inch baking pan with parchment paper.
3. In a stand mixer fitted with a paddle, mix together the flour and confectioner's sugar.
4. Add the butter to the mixture in large cubes and mix just until dough comes together. Do not overmix.
5. Pat 2/3 of the dough on the pan with the parchment paper, pressing down to make an even crust. Reserve the remaining dough for the crumble.
6. Bake in the preheated oven for 20 minutes.
7. While the crust is baking, make the caramel apple filling.
8. Mix the water and sugar in a saucepan.
9. Heat the sugar and water until the sugar dissolves.
10. Bring the sugar syrup to a boil, brushing the sides of the pan down with a brush dipped in water to prevent crystals from forming. When the sugar has caramelized to a nice amber brown color, add the apples and stir constantly. The apples will release liquid when they hit the caramel and may harden a bit in places. Continue stirring. The caramel will melt back into the liquid in a minute or two.
11. Continue to cook the apples for 3 or 4 minutes until the caramel is thick again.
12. Add the cream, butter and salt to the pan being careful as the mixture will bubble up and is VERY hot.
13. Continue stirring and cooking on high until the caramel settles back down.
14. Once the mixture is glossy and smooth, remove from heat.
15. Pour the caramel apple mixture over the baked crust.
16. Crumble the remaining dough over the caramel apples.
17. Bake for 15 minutes or until the caramel is bubbly and the crumble is golden brown.
18. Let cool for at least 1 hour before cutting.