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APPLE PIE BARS

Makes 1 dozen bars

We're so into apple pie. The flavors, the smell, the ooey-goey appley-ness. Especially with a big scoop of melting vanilla ice cream . . . The first time we made these bars, we couldn't stop eating the filling. But paired with this flaky crust, crunchy streusel, and caramel, these bars are beyond delicious.

FOR THE CRUST

2 cups almond flour
1/2 teaspoon [Himalayan pink salt](#)
2 tablespoons coconut oil, melted
1 large egg

FOR THE FILLING

5 to 7 tart apples, such as Pink Lady or Honeycrisp, peeled, cored, and sliced
2 tablespoons maple syrup
1 teaspoon [ground cinnamon](#)*
Juice of 1 lemon
1 tablespoon coconut oil, solid

FOR THE STREUSEL TOPPING

1 cup almond flour
2 tablespoons coconut oil, melted
1/4 cup maple syrup
1 teaspoon [ground cinnamon](#)*
1 cup Vegan Caramel (page 40/*below*), for serving

**Now That's A Mouthful uses and recommends [The Spice and Tea Exchange](#)® spices and seasonings in all of its recipes.*

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a 13 × 9-inch pan with parchment paper, letting the paper hang over the edges for easy removal.
2. MAKE THE CRUST: In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour and salt, then gradually stir in the coconut oil and egg. Mix well until everything is incorporated and a soft dough forms. Press the dough into the bottom of the prepared pan and set aside.



3. **MAKE THE FILLING:** In a large bowl, combine the apples, maple syrup, cinnamon, and lemon juice. Mix to coat the apples thoroughly. Melt the coconut oil in a large heavy-duty saucepan over medium heat. Add the apple mixture to the pan and sauté for 5 to 10 minutes, until syrupy. Remove the pan from the heat and allow the mixture to cool slightly. Arrange the coated apple slices in rows across the crust, pouring any leftover pan liquid over them. Bake the bars for 40 to 50 minutes, until the apple slices are golden brown and tender but not mushy.

4. **MAKE THE STREUSEL TOPPING:** In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, coconut oil, maple syrup, and cinnamon and stir until a batter forms. Sprinkle the streusel over the cooked apples and return the bars to the oven. Bake for 10 minutes, or until the streusel turns golden brown, then remove from the oven. Holding two sides of the parchment, lift the bars in one piece from the pan; allow to cool slightly on a rack. Before serving, drizzle the caramel sauce over the bars and cut into squares. Store in a sealed container at room temperature for up to 3 days.

VEGAN CARAMEL

Makes ½ cup

We believe our early success has a lot to do with this recipe. There have been vegan caramel super fans since day one (seriously, one guy has a weekly order), and once you try it, you'll know why. You'll see it pop up in a few recipes in this cookbook, but we won't judge if you eat this straight out of the jar with a spoon! Our favorite way of serving it is on top of sliced bananas, or with a piece of dark chocolate. You can buy ours at sweetlaurel.com, but here's our secret recipe.

1/4 cup almond or cashew butter or puree, storebought or homemade (*page 38/not included*)

1/4 cup maple syrup

2 tablespoons coconut oil, melted

1 or 2 fresh dates, pitted

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Pinch of Himalayan pink salt

1. Place all of the ingredients in a blender or food processor and puree until smooth.
2. Transfer the caramel to a glass jar and place in the refrigerator to chill. The caramel will stiffen up in the refrigerator, so if your recipe calls for it to be spreadable, let the caramel sit at room temperature for 30 minutes to an hour, and give it a good stir before using. The caramel will keep for about 1 month, refrigerated.

