

Banana Cream Cheese Squares



Level: Easy

Prep Time: 50 minutes

Serves: about 24

Cooking & Chill Time: 2 hours 10 minutes

Crust:

1½ stick (or ¾ cup) unsalted butter
½ cup dark brown sugar, packed
1¼ cups all-purpose flour

Cream Cheese Layer:

1 (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
1 cup confectioners powdered sugar
1/3 (8 oz.) container whipped topping (Cool Whip)

Banana and Vanilla Filling:

6 to 7 medium bananas, sliced
3 (3.4 oz.) boxes instant vanilla pudding
4½ cups whole milk

Topping:

2/3 (8oz.) container whipped topping
(Cool Whip)
Chopped roasted macadamia nuts, for
garnish (optional)



For Crust: Preheat oven to 350°. In a medium bowl, combine the butter, brown sugar, and flour with a pastry cutter until all are combined. Pour into a 9x13 pan and firmly press the crust mixture with your fingers until even. Bake for 10 minutes. Cool on a wire rack.

For Cream Cheese Layer: In a medium bowl, mix the cream cheese and sugar with a handheld mixer until combined. Fold in 1/3 of the container of whipped topping. Spread evenly over cooled crust.

For Banana and Vanilla Filling and Topping: Evenly place sliced bananas over cream cheese layer. In a large bowl, mix the vanilla pudding mix and milk with a whisk for 2 to 3 minutes until mixture thickens. Evenly spread the pudding mixture over the bananas. With an angled icing spatula, evenly spread remaining whipped topping over the pudding layer. Refrigerate for 2 hours. Sprinkle with chopped roasted macadamia nuts before serving, if desired.

Notes:

- To roast macadamia nuts, lightly spray a flat baking sheet or pan with non-stick cooking spray and spread out nuts evenly. Toast at 325° for about 10 to 12 minutes until the nuts become aromatic. No longer because they tend to burn. Chop after cooling and store in an airtight container until ready to use.