

# Oatmeal-Fudge Bars

## Ingredients

### Crust and topping

- 1 cup quick-cooking oats
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted and cooled

### Filling

- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup packed light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons instant espresso or instant coffee
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 cups semisweet chocolate chips
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 large egg

## Preparation

For the crust and topping: Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and heat oven to 325 degrees. Line an 8-inch square baking pan with a foil sling: Fold two sheets of aluminum foil so they are as wide as the pan. Lay the sheets in the pan, perpendicular to each other, with the extra foil hanging over the edges. Push the foil into the corners, smoothing wrinkles. Grease the sides and bottom.

Whisk the oats, brown sugar, flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt together in a large bowl. Stir in the melted butter until combined. Reserve 3/4 cup of the oat mixture for the topping.

Sprinkle the remaining oat mixture into the prepared pan and press into an even layer with the bottom of a measuring cup. Bake the crust until light-golden brown, about 8 minutes. Let the crust cool completely on a wire rack, about 1 hour.

For the filling: Whisk the flour, sugar, instant espresso and salt together in a medium bowl. Melt the chocolate chips and butter together in the microwave, stirring often, 1 to 3 minutes. Transfer the chocolate mixture to a large bowl and let cool slightly. Whisk in the egg until combined. Stir in the flour mixture until just incorporated.

Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 325 degrees. Spread the filling evenly over the cooled crust and smooth the top. Sprinkle with the reserved oat topping. Bake the bars until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out with a few moist crumbs attached and the filling begins to pull away from the sides of the pan, 25 to 30 minutes, rotating the pan halfway through the baking.

Let the bars cool completely in the pan, set on a wire rack, about 2 hours. Remove the bars from the pan using the foil, cut into squares and serve.