

HALFWAY TO HEAVEN BARS (MERINGUE TOPPED CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE BARS)

INGREDIENTS

For the crust layer:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (1 stick) butter, unsalted

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup granulated sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar

2 egg yolks

1 tablespoon water

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 cups flour

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 (12 oz) package chocolate chips ($\frac{1}{2}$ semi-sweet and $\frac{1}{2}$ milk chocolate works well)

For the meringue layer:

2 egg whites

1 cup brown sugar, dark or light

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INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Lightly coat a 9×13 jelly roll pan with non-stick spray.

For the crust layer:

In the bowl of a stand mixer, mix together butter, granulated sugar and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar until lighter in color and creamy. Add egg yolks, water and vanilla, and beat until well incorporated.

In a separate bowl, combine flour, salt, baking soda and baking powder. Add to butter mixture and mix just until incorporated. Pat dough into prepared pan.

Sprinkle bottom layer evenly with chocolate chips then slightly press the chips into the dough layer.

For the meringue layer:

In a clean mixer bowl, beat egg whites on HIGH until they are almost stiff. With mixer still on HIGH, carefully and gradually add the brown sugar and beat until egg whites are stiff.

Spread mixture over top of chocolate chips.

Bake the bars at 350F, for 25-30 minutes, or until top has darkened slightly and meringue is set and cooked.

Remove from oven and place on a cooling rack. Cool completely, then cut and serve.

Enjoy!