

MIXED BERRIES & CREAM BARS

Makes about 12 bars

An elegant spin on a familiar formula, the coolest dessert of summer has arrived. We paired a slightly salty pretzel cake base with a cream filling and topped it off with a scattering of fresh berries.

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 cups (400 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract*, divided
- 1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup (75 grams) finely ground pretzels (see Note)
- 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt

- ½ cup (120 grams) whole milk
- 16 ounces (454 grams) cream cheese, softened
- 2 cups (480 grams) cold heavy whipping cream
- 6 ounces (170 grams) fresh raspberries
- 6 ounces (170 grams) fresh blueberries
- 6 ounces (170 grams) fresh blackberries

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Place a 13x4-inch strip of foil in bottom and up sides of a 13x9-inch baking pan. (This strip will help you remove your bars from the pan after freezing, as the parchment paper tends to rip.) Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and 1 cup (200 grams) sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to

scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, pretzels, baking powder, and salt. Gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Spoon batter into prepared pan, smoothing top.

4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool completely in pan.

5. Clean bowl of stand mixer and paddle attachment. Using the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese at medium speed until smooth, about 1 minute. Add remaining 1 cup (200 grams) sugar, and beat at medium speed until smooth. Beat in remaining 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla. Transfer to a large bowl, and set aside.

6. Clean bowl of stand mixer. Using the whisk attachment, beat cold cream at medium speed until thickened. Slowly increase mixer speed to medium-high, and beat until stiff peaks form. Using a whisk, fold about one-third of whipped cream into cream cheese mixture until combined. Fold in remaining whipped cream just until combined. Spread onto cake layer, smoothing flat with an offset spatula. Lightly press berries into cream cheese mixture, leaving a ¼-inch border on all sides. Cover with plastic wrap, and freeze until set, at least 4 hours or overnight.

7. Let bars stand at room temperature for 20 minutes. Using excess parchment and foil as handles, remove from pan. Using a hot, dry knife, trim ¼ inch off each side, and cut into bars. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

*We used Heilala Pure Vanilla Extract.

Note: To finely grind pretzels, place in the work bowl of a food processor, and pulse until finely ground, about 10 times. Alternatively, place pretzels in a resealable plastic bag, and crush with a rolling pin.