

## **Key Lime Bars with Tropical Nut Crust**

*Start-to-Finish: 3 hours 20 minutes*

*Hands-On Time: 45 minutes*

*Makes about 30 bars*

### **Ingredients**

- 3 cups gingersnap cookies
- 1 cup blanched almonds
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 1 cup sweetened coconut
- 2 cups sugar
- 1/4 cup flour, plus 1 tablespoon
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 5 large eggs, beaten lightly
- Zested skin from 2 limes
- 1 cup bottled key lime juice (see Zesty tip above)
- Pinch of salt
- Powdered sugar for garnish if desired

### **Method**

1. Preheat an oven to 350°F. Line the bottom and sides of a 9-by-13-inch pan with non-stick aluminum foil leaving enough extra foil on the sides and ends so that you can pull the bars from the pan after they have cooled. Butter the foil.
2. Add the gingersnaps to the work bowl of a food processor and grind to fine crumbs. Transfer the ground cookies to another bowl and process the almonds, sugar and salt until finely ground. Return the cookie crumbs to the processor bowl and add the butter and coconut. Pulse until mixed and clumpy.
3. Transfer the crust mixture into the prepared pan and press evenly with the bottom of a cup to compact and firm it. Bake in the preheated oven for 10 minutes or until the crust is set. Cool on a rack.
4. To make the topping, whisk together the sugar and flour then whisk in the butter, eggs, zest, lime juice and pinch of salt. Pour the topping over the baked crust and bake again for 40 to 45 minutes or until the topping is set. Cool on a rack and refrigerate until fully set, about 2 hours.
5. Loosen the sides with a knife if necessary and pull the cookie from the pan using the foil as a guide. Flip it over onto another sheet of foil and peel the foil from the bottom crust. Then, using the bottom foil as an aid, flip it right-side up and sift powdered sugar over the top, if desired. Cut into squares with a large knife, wiping the blade with a wet paper towel between cuts and refrigerate until serving.
6. *Make-ahead:* Can be made up to 2 days in advance, kept covered and refrigerated.

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