



Butterscotch Oatmeal Holiday Squares

The Magic of Brown Butter

Let me tell you about brown butter. It is a simple trick. You melt butter in a pan. You watch it. It turns a golden color. It starts to smell like toasted nuts. Doesn't that smell amazing? That smell is pure kitchen magic.

That nutty flavor is the secret heart of these bars. It makes the butterscotch taste deeper. It feels warm and cozy. I learned this from my friend Margie years ago. She swore by it for cookies. I still laugh at how proud she was. Why does this matter? It turns a simple treat into something special with just a little extra care.

Mixing Up Memories

This recipe is a hug in a pan. The oats make it chewy. The butterscotch makes it sweet. The brown butter makes it rich. When you stir it all together, the kitchen feels happy. It reminds me of making treats for my grandkids after school.

They would hover by the counter. They wanted to lick the spoon. I always let them, of course. *Fun fact: Butterscotch is not butterscotch! It is butter and “scotch,” an old word for “to cut.” The candy was cut into pieces.* So, what is your favorite smell from your childhood kitchen? Is it cinnamon, or maybe fresh bread?

A Simple Trick for Easy Clean-Up

The recipe says to make a foil sling. Do not skip this. It sounds fussy, but it is not. You just lay foil in the pan both ways. Leave some hanging over the edges. This is my best kitchen trick.

When the bars are cool, you just lift the whole block out. No struggling with a knife in the pan. No scratched baking dish. It makes life so much easier. Why does this matter? Little tricks like this keep baking fun, not frustrating. Do you have a favorite kitchen shortcut? I would love to hear it.

The Glaze That Shines

The glaze is the final touch. It is just butterscotch chips, sugar, water, and salt. You pour hot sugar water over the chips. They melt into a shiny sauce. You drizzle it over the warm bars. It soaks in just a little.

This makes the top sweet and pretty. It looks like you worked very hard.

But it only takes a minute. It is the ribbon on the gift. Do you prefer your bars plain or with a little glaze or frosting on top?

Sharing the Sweetness

These squares are for sharing. They are perfect for a lunchbox. They are great for a holiday plate. I always make a double batch. One for now, and one to wrap up for a neighbor.

Food tastes better when it is shared. That is a true thing. A small treat can brighten someone's whole day. It is a little way to say, "I am thinking of you." So, who will you share your first batch with? I hope you make some wonderful new memories with this old recipe.

See also Golden Holiday Roast Chicken with Gravy

Ingredients:

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
All-purpose flour	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups (6 $\frac{1}{4}$ ounces/177 grams)	For the bars
Old-fashioned rolled oats	2 cups (6 ounces/170 grams)	For the bars
Baking soda	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon	For the bars
Salt	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon	For the bars
Butterscotch chips	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (4 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces/128 grams)	For the bars
Unsalted butter	16 tablespoons	For the bars
Dark brown sugar (packed)	1 cup (7 ounces/198 grams)	For the bars
Vanilla extract	2 teaspoons	For the bars
Large egg	1	For the bars

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Butterscotch chips	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces/43 grams)	For the glaze
Dark brown sugar (packed)	2 tablespoons	For the glaze
Water	1 tablespoon	For the glaze
Salt	$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon	For the glaze



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Hello, my dear. Come sit at the counter. I'm making my holiday squares. The kitchen smells like toasted butter and brown sugar. Doesn't that smell amazing? These bars are pure comfort. They are chewy, sweet, and full of butterscotch. I've made them every December for fifty years. My grandson calls them "sticky hug bars." I still laugh at that. Baking them is like wrapping up a warm feeling. Let's make some memories together.

Instructions

Step 1: First, get your pan ready. Line a 13×9 inch pan with foil and grease it. This makes cleanup so easy. Now, heat your oven to 350 degrees. Mix your flour, oats, baking soda, and salt in a bowl. Set it aside. This is your dry team. (Greasing the foil well means your bars won't stick!)

Step 2: Time for the magic. Put your butterscotch chips in a big bowl. Melt the butter in a skillet. Keep cooking until it turns a lovely brown. It will smell nutty and wonderful. Pour this hot butter over the chips. Whisk it smooth. The chips will melt right away. What does browned butter smell like? Share below!

Step 3: Whisk the brown sugar into your butterscotch mix. Then add the vanilla and egg. Stir in your dry team in two parts. The dough will be thick and shiny. I love this part. Spread it evenly in your pan. Bake for about 18 minutes. Rotate the pan halfway. Your kitchen will smell like heaven.

Step 4: Let's make the shiny glaze. Put more butterscotch chips in a

small bowl. Simmer sugar, water, and salt in a pot. Pour this hot syrup over the chips. Whisk until it's glossy. Drizzle it all over the warm bars. Now, the hard part. You must let them cool. It takes about an hour and a half. (Resist cutting them too soon, or they'll be messy!)

See also [Cherry Chocolate Yuletide Drops](#)

Step 5: Finally, use the foil to lift the whole slab out. Let it cool completely on a rack. Then, cut into little squares. I always get 36 perfect pieces. They are perfect for sharing. Or for hiding a few for yourself. I won't tell a soul.

Creative Twists

Add a handful of toasted pecans to the dough for a lovely crunch. **Swap half the butterscotch chips for chocolate chips** for a marble effect. **Sprinkle a tiny bit of sea salt** on the glaze before it sets. Which one would you try first? Comment below!

Serving & Pairing Ideas

Serve these squares on a pretty plate. A dollop of whipped cream makes them fancy. They are also wonderful with a scoop of vanilla ice cream. For a drink, a glass of cold milk is the classic choice. For the grown-ups, a sweet sherry pairs beautifully. It's like a cozy holiday hug in a glass. Which would you choose tonight?



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Keeping Your Holiday Squares Happy

These bars stay fresh for a week in an airtight container. Just keep them at room temperature. You can also freeze them for a month. Wrap them tightly in plastic wrap first.

I like to bake a double batch. I freeze one for a surprise treat later. It makes busy days feel special. A ready-made dessert is a lovely gift.

I once left a pan uncovered overnight. They were dry and sad the next day. I learned my lesson about airtight lids! Storing food well shows care for your effort.

Have you ever tried storing it this way? Share below!

Three Little Hiccups and How to Fix Them

First, your bars might be too crumbly. This often means you baked them too long. Pull them out when the edges are just golden. The center will look soft but set.

Second, the glaze could be too thick. Just add a few more drops of warm water. Whisk it until it pours easily. I remember my first glaze was like cement!

Third, the butter might burn instead of brown. Swirl the pan constantly and use medium heat. Watch for a nutty smell and golden color. Getting the butter right builds your cooking confidence. It also gives the bars a wonderful, deep flavor.

Which of these problems have you run into before?

Your Quick Questions, Answered

Q: Can I make these gluten-free? A: Yes! Use your favorite gluten-free flour blend. Make sure your oats are certified gluten-free too.

Q: Can I make them ahead? A: Absolutely. Bake them a day or two before you need them. The flavor gets even better.

Q: What if I don't have butterscotch chips? A: Chocolate chips work beautifully. The bars will be different, but still delicious.

See also Frosted Apple Snowdrop Cookies

Q: Can I make a half batch? A: You can. Just use an 8-inch square pan. Watch the baking time, it may be less.

Q: Any optional tips? A: A pinch of cinnamon in the dough is lovely.
Fun fact: Old-fashioned oats give the best chewy texture.

Which tip will you try first?

From My Kitchen to Yours

I hope you love making these squares. They always remind me of my grandchildren's happy faces. Baking is about sharing joy and making memories.

I would love to see your creations. Sharing food connects us all. **Have you tried this recipe? Tag us on Pinterest!** Use the handle @ElowensKitchenNook.

Happy cooking! —Elowen Thorn.



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Butterscotch Oatmeal Holiday Squares

Author: Elowen Thorn



Cooking Method: [Baking](#)



Cuisine: [American](#)



Courses: [Dessert Snack](#)



Difficulty: **Beginner**



Prep time: **20 minutes**



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Cook time: **19 minutes**



Cooling time: **1 hour 45 minutes**



Total time: **2 hours 24 minutes**



Servings: **36 bars**



Butterscotch Oatmeal Holiday Squares | 24

Calories: **115 kcal**

Best Season: **Summer**

Description

Chewy, nutty, and rich, these Butterscotch Oatmeal Bars are a perfect

holiday treat. Browned butter and a sweet butterscotch glaze make them irresistible.

Ingredients

- ☐ 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups (6 $\frac{1}{4}$ ounces/177 grams) all-purpose flour
- ☐ 2 cups (6 ounces/170 grams) old-fashioned rolled oats
- ☐ $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda
- ☐ $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- ☐ $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (4 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces/128 grams) butterscotch chips
- ☐ 16 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ☐ 1 cup packed (7 ounces/198 grams) packed dark brown sugar
- ☐ 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- ☐ 1 large egg

Glaze

- ☐ $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces/43 grams) butterscotch chips
- ☐ 2 tablespoons packed dark brown sugar
- ☐ 1 tablespoon water
- ☐ $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt

Instructions

1. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Make foil sling for 13 by 9-inch baking pan by folding 2 long sheets of aluminum foil; first sheet should be 13 inches wide and second sheet should be 9 inches wide. Lay sheets of foil in pan perpendicular to each other, with extra foil hanging over edges of pan. Push foil into corners and up sides of pan, smoothing foil flush to pan. Grease foil.

2. Whisk flour, oats, baking soda, and salt together in bowl. Place butterscotch chips in large bowl. Melt butter in 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Continue to cook, swirling skillet constantly, until butter is dark golden brown and has nutty aroma, 1 to 5 minutes. Add browned butter to butterscotch chips and whisk until smooth. Whisk in sugar until dissolved, then whisk in vanilla and egg until combined. Stir in flour mixture in 2 additions until combined.
3. Transfer mixture to prepared pan and spread into even layer. Bake until edges are golden brown and toothpick inserted in center comes out with few crumbs attached, 17 to 19 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Transfer pan to wire rack.
4. Place butterscotch chips in small bowl. Bring sugar, water, and salt to simmer in small saucepan. Pour hot sugar mixture over butterscotch chips and whisk until smooth. Drizzle glaze over warm bars and let cool until warm to touch, about 1½ hours.
5. Using foil overhang, lift bars from pan and transfer to wire rack; let cool completely. Cut into 36 pieces before serving.

Notes

For clean cuts, use a sharp knife and wipe it clean between slices.
Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 5 days.

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