Pumpkin Pie Shortbread Bars

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Ingredients

For the shortbread crust:
1 1/2 cups all purpose flour
1 Tablespoon cornstarch
3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) salted butter, room temperature
1/2 cup sugar
1 large egg
1 teaspoon vanilla

For the filling:
15 ounce can pumpkin puree (not pumpkin pie filling)
3 eggs
3/4 cup brown sugar, packed
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg, I use freshly grated
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1 (12 ounce) can evaporated milk (I used 2%)
Whipped cream for topping

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line a 9″ square pan with foil and spray with cooking spray.

Make the crust.
In a small bowl, whisk together the flour and cornstarch. Set aside. In a mixing bowl, beat butter and sugar until well combined, about 2 minutes. Add the egg and vanilla, mixing until combined. Add the flour mixture in and mix until well combined. Scrape bowl and beaters as necessary and don’t over beat. You don’t want to whip too much air into the mixture as you might for a cake. Just mix until thoroughly combined.

Press dough evenly into the bottom of prepared pan. Prick dough all over with a fork and bake for 13-15 min or until set and there’s just a hint of light golden edge forming. Remove from oven and prick dough again to release air if any bubbles have formed. Set aside to cool completely.

Make the filling.
In a large bowl beat the eggs. Using a spoon, stir in the pumpkin and spices, then gradually stir in the milk until all is combined. Pour into cooled crust and bake for 45-50 minutes or just until filling looks set in the middle. If you over bake it, the filling may crack.
Allow to cool. Cut into squares and top with fresh whipped cream, if desired.