Pecan Pie Bars Recipe
Serves 12

BOTTOM LAYER
Butter (for the baking pan)
2 cups flour
3 tablespoons light brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
1 egg yolk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 tablespoon water

1 Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Butter the bottom and sides of a 9-by-13-inch baking pan. Line the bottom and 2 sides with parchment paper, leaving a 2-inch overhang on the 2 long sides.

2 In the bowl of a food processor, process the flour, brown sugar, salt, butter, egg yolk, vanilla and water until medium clumps form and the dough does not look dry. Pulse the machine toward the end of mixing to stop short of allowing the mixture to form a ball. (Alternatively, mix together with your fingers.)

3 Spread the crumbs loosely and evenly over the bottom of the pan. With your fingertips, press the dough into the sides of the pan to make a 1 1/4-inch-high border. Press the remaining crumbs evenly over the bottom. Place a piece of plastic wrap over the dough and use a dry 1-cup measuring cup to smooth it all around. Press the dough into the corners so it is not too thick. Remove the plastic. If you like, use the tines of a fork to make a pattern all along the edges.

4 Bake for 20 minutes, or until light golden. If the dough puffs in places, flatten it with the back of a fork.

TOP LAYER
4 eggs
1 cup lightly packed dark brown sugar
1 1/3 cups dark corn syrup (Karo)
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
2 teaspoons vanilla
1 teaspoon salt
2 cups pecan halves
Lightly sweetened whipped cream (for serving)

1 In a bowl, whisk together the eggs, brown sugar, corn syrup, butter and vanilla until combined. Stir in the pecans.

2 Pour the filling over the baked crust. Return the pan to the oven and bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until the filling is set. Cool completely in the pan.

3 When the bars are completely cool and set, run a knife along the edges to loosen the crust from the pan. Grasp the overhanging parchment and carefully lift the whole piece out of the pan and transfer it to a cutting board. With the long edge parallel to the cutting board, make a vertical cut with a sharp knife to divide it into two 9 by 6 1/2-inch pieces.
4 Cut each half into bars: Make 2 horizontal cuts and 1 vertical cut to make 6 bars. Repeat with the second piece. Serve with lightly sweetened whipped cream.

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