



## Strawberry Basil Bars

### Ingredients

#### For the crust:

- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 sticks plus 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature, divided

#### For the crumb topping:

- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup old-fashioned oats
- 1/2 cup toasted pecans, finely chopped

#### For the filling:

- 2 cups fresh strawberries, coarsely chopped
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 cup fresh basil, finely chopped
- Zest of 2 lemons
- 1 1/4 cups strawberry jam

### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a 9 by 13-inch pan with foil and spray the foil with nonstick cooking spray.
2. Combine the flour, 2/3 cup granulated sugar, and salt in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment. Mix together on low speed until well combined. Add 2 sticks of the softened butter, a tablespoon at a time, to the mixer and mix on low until the crust mixture starts to hold together and has the texture of wet sand.
3. Set aside 1 cup of the flour mixture in a medium bowl, then press the remaining mixture into the prepared pan to form an even layer. Bake the crust for 16-18 minutes until it becomes golden brown.

4. While the crust is baking, prepare the crumb topping: add the brown sugar, oats, and pecans to the reserved flour mixture and stir together. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter, working it into the flour/sugar mixture until you have a pebbly texture. Refrigerate until ready to use.
5. Stir together the chopped strawberries, 2 tablespoons of granulated sugar, lemon juice and zest, and chopped basil in a large bowl. Let them sit at room temperature for about 10 minutes until the strawberries start to release their juice. Add the strawberry preserves and gently mash together to break up the strawberries a bit.
6. When the bottom crust is done baking, spread the strawberry mixture on top of the crust and top with the crumble mixture. Increase the oven temperature to 375 degrees Fahrenheit and bake for 25-30 minutes until golden brown and the filling is bubbling out.
7. Cool the bars at room temperature for several hours, then use the foil to lift the bars from the pan. Cut them into squares, serve and enjoy!