

SPRING GREENS WITH **FEAST**

STRAWBERRY-ALMOND CRUMBLE BARS

BY CATHERINE NEVILLE



Yield: 8-by-8-inch pan

- $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 cup all-purpose **flour**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup **rolled oats** (not instant)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup **sugar**, divided
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup **dark brown sugar**
- pinch of **salt**
- 2 tsp **cinnamon**, divided
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup unsalted **butter**, melted
- 2 cups chopped **strawberries**
- 2 Tbsp **strawberry preserves**
- 2 Tbsp fresh **lemon juice**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp freshly grated **nutmeg**
- 2 tsp **corn starch**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sliced **almonds**

| Preparation | Preheat oven to 350°F. In a medium bowl, mix flour, oats, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar, brown sugar, salt and 1 teaspoon cinnamon thoroughly. Gradually add in melted butter, mixing until clumps form when you squeeze some of the mixture in your hand. Set aside while you make the filling.

In another medium bowl, evenly toss strawberries with the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar and then stir in preserves, lemon juice, remaining 1 tsp cinnamon, nutmeg and corn starch. Mix until well combined.

Grease an 8-by-8-inch baking dish with butter. Pour all but about a cup of the oat mixture into the dish and press firmly to form a crust. Don't be shy! Press hard and evenly to ensure that a good crust will form. Next, top evenly with the strawberry mixture. Add the almonds to the reserved cup of oat mixture and then crumble on top of the strawberries.

Bake for about 20 to 30 minutes, until the top is golden and bubbly. Cool the bars completely before slicing - if you try to slice into the bars before they're entirely cool, the filling won't be set and the crust will not be firm. It will taste good, but it won't hold together, so try to be patient and allow enough time to cool before cutting into bars. Store in an airtight container.