

PB CARAMEL CRISPERS

- 3-4 cups (~ 102 grams) crisp rice cereal (such as Rice Krispies)*
 - 4 - 6oz Cara-Sel Salted Caramel Sauce*
 - ½ cup (~ 132grams) peanut butter, any style*
 - ½ cup (85 grams) chopped white chocolate or peanut butter chips (such as Reese's)*
 - heaping ½ cup or more (~ 100 grams) dark chocolate chips*
 - 1 teaspoon coconut oil or vegetable shortening
 - flaky salt (optional but highly recommended)
1. Line an 8x8" baking pan with a parchment paper sling, no greasing needed. (A single large piece of parchment is fine. It will fit into the corners when you press the cereal mixture down.)
 2. Measure the cereal into a large bowl.
 3. Measure the caramel into a medium saucepan and place over medium heat until bubbling. (I bet you could use a microwave for this step and will give instructions in the notes at the bottom.)
 4. Off heat, add your white chocolate or peanut butter chips to the saucepan and stir until mostly incorporated.
 5. Add the peanut butter and stir until it is fully incorporated.
 6. Pour the warm mixture into your rice cereal and mix with a rubber spatula until completely combined.
 7. Pour the mixture into the prepared pan and press it firmly until the top is even/ smooth, taking care to get it into the corners. Helpful pressing tools include wax paper, butter wrappers, or a piece of the cereal bag (my personal favorite).
 8. Set pan aside until completely cool. (You can speed this up in the fridge or freezer if you are in a rush.)
 9. When the base is cool, place the chocolate chips and coconut oil (or shortening) in a small heavy-bottomed saucepan set over low heat. Melt together, stirring often to prevent scorching, until smooth.

10. Pour the chocolate over the cooled bars and use a spatula to spread it evenly over the entire pan.
11. Set aside until cool and set. (This step can also be sped up in the fridge or freezer.)
12. Once set, sprinkle the top with flaky salt before lifting the bars out by the parchment sling. Cut with a sharp knife into whatever size pieces you like. My preference is to go small, as a little goes a long way.

The bars can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for a week or more (as if they would last that long). However, if your kitchen is very warm, like mine in the summer, you should keep the container in the fridge.

NOTES:

- The ranges aren't meant to stress you out. In fact, it's the opposite. But, if you really want "rules" I would suggest matching the amounts of caramel and cereal (so you are using either the low end or high end numbers for both).
- Regarding white chocolate vs peanut butter chips: If pressed, I would say I prefer using white chocolate because I feel like the bars are a little less sweet, but both options are great.
- I have used a wide variety of peanut butters for this recipe and all work perfectly (both crunchy & smooth, natural & regular). That being said, I do prefer peanut butters that do not have any sugar added (no longer relegated to "natural" varieties, as national brands like Jif now have "no added sugar" options).
- I like using bittersweet chocolate for the top layer (70% or more), but you can use whatever you have on hand (semi-sweet, bittersweet, or even milk chocolate).
- I like a fairly thin layer of chocolate on top so I tend to stick with the heaping half cup. Should you want a thicker top layer, simply use more chocolate and increase the oil a smidge.
- Can you use a microwave instead of the stovetop for steps 3 and 9 (warming the caramel and melting the chocolate, respectively)? I bet you can! And, if you use a large enough bowl to warm the caramel in step 3 you can switch up the order of steps 2-6 to make this an almost one bowl recipe. (3. Warm the caramel until bubbly. 4&5. Incorporate white choc or pb chips & peanut butter. 6. Measure cereal into caramel mixture and proceed with the recipe.