

## **Strawberry Key-Lime Bars**

*from **In Our Grandmothers' Kitchens***

### *Ingredients:*

2 cups cut-up strawberries  
1/4 cup sugar  
1 smidgeon butter  
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter  
1/2 cup sugar  
2 cups crushed graham crackers or pretzels (If you choose to use the pretzels--which give the bars a nice salty crunch--be sure to crush these pesky critters in a food processor; you need to get them as fine as possible. I may actually have quit a little early!)  
1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk  
1/2 cup key-lime juice  
8 ounces whipped topping, cold but not frozen

### *Instructions:*

The day before you want to make the bars combine the strawberries and sugar in a saucepan. Let them sit until they juice up (an hour will probably do).

Bring the strawberry mixture to a boil, and stir in the butter. Reduce the heat and simmer until the strawberries are jam-like but not completely solid, stirring from time to time. The time needed will depend on the juiciness of your strawberries and the degree of heat your stove emits on "low"; my fairly firm berries and gas stove took about half an hour.

Remove the mixture from the heat and stir for five minutes, breaking up pieces of strawberry if they remain. Refrigerate the mixture overnight.

The next day line a 9-by-13-inch pan with foil. Melt the butter. Add the sugar and cracker or pretzel crumbs, and press the mixture into the pan. Set aside.

Beat together the strawberry mixture, condensed milk, and key-lime juice. Fold in the whipped topping. Mix thoroughly but gently.

Use a spatula to spread the strawberry mixture on top of the crumb crust. Cover the pan carefully (avoid hitting the top of the bars with your cover!) and freeze the mixture for 6 hours or overnight.

Let the bars stand at room temperature for 15 minutes before slicing and serving. Makes 24 or more bars, depending on how small you slice them.