

# Samoa Cookie Bars

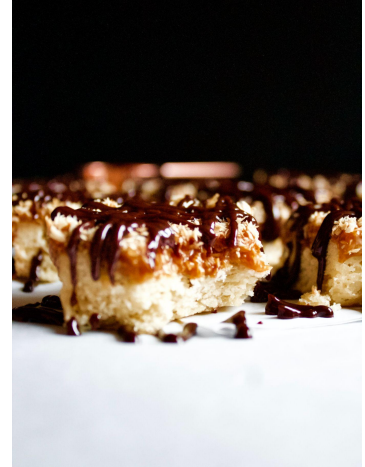
Poetry & Pies

**prep time:** 25-30 minutes

**bake time:** 15-20 minutes

**total time:** 50 minutes *(plus 1-2 hours cooling time)*

**servings:** 16



## Ingredients

### for the shortbread

- 1 cups (136g) flour, spooned and leveled then sifted
- ¼ teaspoon (2g) finely ground sea salt
- ½ cup (113g) unsalted European style butter, softened
- ⅓ cup (43g) powdered sugar
- ½ tablespoon (6g) vanilla extract

### for the filling

- 1 batch [easy caramel sauce](#)\*
- 2 cups (200g) flaked coconut (sweetened is most authentic)

### for the chocolate drizzle

- ⅔ cup (113g) semisweet or dark chocolate chips (or chopped baking chocolate)
- ¼ cup (56g) heavy whipping cream

## Instructions

### make the shortbread

1. Preheat oven to 350F/175C. Prepare your baking pan/sheet. If you want to make traditional bars, line an [8x8 pan](#) with a strip of [parchment](#) that overhangs off two sides (trim it one direction to be the width of the pan).
2. In a medium bowl (or the bowl of a stand mixer--I couldn't use mine because it does best with larger quantities), whip the butter with a handheld electric mixer on high until creamed, about 30 seconds. Add the sugar and mix on high until light and fluffy, about 1 minute. Add vanilla extract and salt then mix, starting on low then increasing to high to fully incorporate.

3. Scrape the bowl then sift in the flour and mix on low until fully incorporated, scraping the bowl if necessary. It will be crumbly at first then will suddenly start to stick to the beaters and pull away from the sides of the bowl. At this point, stop mixing.
4. Press the dough gently into the prepared pan. Be sure it's completely even.
5. Bake for 15-20 minutes, until the top is entirely matte in appearance and begins to brown along the edges. It will puff up a bit but will settle once cooled. Let cool completely in the pan.

### **make the filling**

6. While the cookies cool, use the still-hot oven to toast the coconut. Spread it on a [rimmed baking sheet](#) and cook for 5-10 minutes, stirring halfway. Watch carefully, as it goes from golden to burnt quickly. Let cool on the pan.
7. Once the shortbread is completely cooled, reheat the caramel until a stirrable consistency. You can either heat it in the microwave at  $\frac{1}{2}$  power in 15 second increments, stirring in between, or place the opened jar in a pot of gently simmering water that reaches the same level as the sauce but does not get near the rim (water will ruin it), letting it warm until a stirrable consistency.

*Note: if you didn't make the caramel ahead of time, you can make it while the shortbread cools. By the time it's cool enough to mix with the coconut, the shortbread should be cooled as well.*

8. In a medium bowl, stir about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the coconut with the caramel sauce. You can adjust the ratios to your liking, but it should be dough-like and not runny.
9. Drop spoonfuls on top of the fully cooled shortbread and gently spread it out until even.
10. Sprinkle remaining coconut on top and press gently into the caramel.
11. Let cool on the counter until fully set, about an hour.

### **make the chocolate drizzle**

12. Once the caramel layer is set, remove the bars from the pan and cut into 16 squares. Leave the squares on the parchment, but separate them a bit so the chocolate can get down the sides of each bar.
13. Melt the chocolate and heavy cream (omit making or serving in warm weather). You can either melt these in the microwave at half power in 15 second increments, stirring

in between, or over a pot of simmering water on low heat, stirring constantly until smooth.

14. Place the melted chocolate in a [decorating bottle](#), piping bag with a [#4 writing tip](#), or a plastic baggie with a small hole snipped off the corner.
15. Drizzle chocolate across the bars, going a few different directions so that it drips down all of the sides of the bars. Optionally, you can dip the bottoms of the bars in some chocolate (still in the bowl) *before* drizzling.

*Enjoy! Cookies will last in an airtight container for 3-5 days.*

*\*You could use a more old-fashioned caramel, like my [vanilla salted caramel sauce](#), which is less likely to burn but does require a candy thermometer. Or, use your favorite recipe or jarred sauce as long as it's very thick at room temperature. You should not be able to drizzle it without heating it up first. You could also use Kraft caramels (either the [wrapped kind](#) or the [little caramel bits](#)). You'd need about 200g of either type (about 24 wrapped candies or 1 cup of the bits) and would melt those with 2 tablespoons (28g) water and 2 tablespoons (28g) butter, until smooth.*