



## Pretzel Turtle Bars

**Prep: 25 minutes plus cooling**

**Bake: 18 minutes • Makes: 24 bars**

Nonstick cooking spray

- 2 cups packed light brown sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  sticks) plus 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup half and half
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$  (16-ounce) bag pretzel sticks (about 5 cups)
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups pecan pieces

**1.** Preheat oven to 350°. Spray 13 x 9-inch glass or ceramic baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.

**2.** In medium saucepot, cook  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups brown sugar, 6 tablespoons butter and half and half over medium heat 10 to 12 minutes or until mixture has thickened, whisking frequently. Whisk in vanilla; cook 2 minutes longer. Cool caramel in saucepot 15 minutes.

**3.** Meanwhile, in medium microwave-safe bowl, heat remaining  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup butter in microwave oven on high  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 minutes or until melted; let cool slightly.

**4.** Place pretzels in large zip-top plastic bag; seal bag pressing out excess air. Cover bag with towel; with rolling pin or dull side of meat mallet, coarsely crush pretzels (pieces should be about  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch long). You should have about 3 cups. Add remaining  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup brown sugar and crushed pretzels to melted butter; stir with wooden spoon until combined. With hands, evenly press pretzel mixture firmly into bottom of prepared dish. Evenly sprinkle chocolate chips and pecans over pretzel mixture; evenly pour caramel over top.

**5.** Bake 18 to 20 minutes or until top is golden brown. Cool in pan at least 2 hours before cutting into approximately  $2\frac{1}{4}$ -inch squares.

*Approximate nutritional values per serving (1 bar):*

*333 Calories, 19g Fat (10g Saturated), 25mg Cholesterol,  
137mg Sodium, 39g Carbohydrates, 1g Fiber, 2g Protein*