Brownies

Ingredients

- 125g butter
- 1 cup (220g) caster sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 4 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup (60g) plain flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder

Icing

- 60g butter, softened
- 2 tablespoons cocoa
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 125g (3/4 cup) icing sugar

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180 degrees C. Grease and flour a 20cm square baking tin.
2. In a large saucepan, melt butter. Remove from heat and stir in sugar, eggs and vanilla essence.
3. Beat in cocoa, flour, salt and baking powder. Spread mixture into prepared tin.
4. Bake in preheated oven for 25 to 30 minutes. Do not overcook.
5. Icing: Combine together in a bowl, butter, cocoa, honey, vanilla essence and icing sugar until smooth. Ice brownies while they are still warm. When cool cut into 16 squares.

Christmas Cake

Ingredients

- Melted butter, to grease
- 800g dried mixed fruit
- 410g jar fruit mince
- 1 tablespoon finely grated orange rind
- 1/2 cup (125ml) orange juice
• 1/3 cup (80ml) brandy
• 250g Western Star Chef's Choice Unsalted Butter, melted, cooled
• 1 cup (200g) firmly packed brown sugar
• 2 cups (300g) plain flour
• 1 cup (150g) self-raising flour
• 2 1/2 teaspoons mixed spice
• 4 eggs, lightly whisked
• 1 cup (160g) blanched almonds
• 2 tablespoons apricot jam, warmed

Method

1. Preheat oven to 150°C. Grease a deep 22cm round cake pan with melted butter. Line the base and side with 3 layers of non-stick baking paper, extending 5cm above edge.

2. Combine the dried fruit, fruit mince, orange rind and orange juice in a large saucepan over medium low heat. Cook, stirring, for 10 minutes or until fruits soften. Remove from heat and set aside for 30 minutes to cool. Add the brandy and stir to combine.

3. Add butter and sugar to fruit mixture and stir to combine. Add the combined flours and mixed spice and stir to combine. Add the eggs and stir until well combined. Spoon into prepared pan and smooth the surface. Lightly tap pan on bench top to settle the mixture. Arrange the almonds over the top of the cake.

4. Bake in preheated oven for 3 hours 15 minutes or until a skewer inserted into centre comes out clean, covering cake loosely with foil if over browning. Remove from oven. Brush hot cake with apricot jam. Cover cake with foil. Wrap cake in a large tea towel and set aside overnight to cool completely.

5. Turn cake onto a serving platter to serve.

Fruit Mince Pies

Ingredients

• 2 tablespoons brown sugar
• 2 tablespoons brandy
• 1 small Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored, coarsely grated
• 85g raisins, coarsely chopped
• 85g currants
• 85g sultanas
• 60g glace cherries, coarsely chopped
• 115g (1/3 cup) breakfast marmalade
• 1/4 teaspoon mixed spice
• 600g (4 cups) plain flour
• 80g (1/2 cup) icing sugar mixture
• 300g chilled butter, chopped
• 2 egg yolks
• 4-5 tablespoons water
• White sugar, to sprinkle
• Icing sugar, to dust
**Method**

1. Combine the brown sugar, brandy, apple, raisins, currants, sultanas, cherries, marmalade and mixed spice in a bowl. Set aside, covered, stirring occasionally, for 1-2 days to macerate.
2. Place the flour, icing sugar and butter in the bowl of a food processor and process until it resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add the egg yolks and water, and process until the dough just comes together.
3. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead until smooth.
4. Preheat oven to 180°C. Roll out the pastry between 2 sheets of non-stick baking paper until 3mm thick. Use a round 6.5cm-diameter pastry cutter to cut 40 discs from the pastry. Line forty 30ml (1 1/2-tablespoon) capacity patty pans with the discs. Use a fork to prick the bases.
5. Re-roll leftover pastry between 2 sheets of non-stick baking paper until 3mm thick. Use a round 5cm-diameter pastry cutter to cut 40 discs from the pastry. Spoon 1 heaped teaspoon of fruit mixture into each pastry case. Top with pastry discs. Press edges to seal. Sprinkle with white sugar. Bake for 30-35 minutes. Set aside for 15 minutes to cool before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.
6. Dust the pies with icing sugar to serve.

**Sugar Cookies**

**Ingredients**

- 2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 1/2 cups white sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

**Method**

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). In a small bowl, stir together flour, baking soda, and baking powder. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in egg and vanilla. Gradually blend in the dry ingredients. Roll rounded teaspoonful’s of dough into balls, and place onto ungreased cookie sheets.
3. Bake 8 to 10 minutes in the preheated oven, or until golden. Let stand on cookie sheet two minutes before removing to cool on wire racks.
Caramel Slice

Ingredients
- 2 tablespoons golden syrup
- 1 cup self-raising flour
- 1 cup desiccated coconut
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 tin Australian Made Nestle sweetened condensed milk (395g)
- 1 cup of Milk chocolate melts
- 180g butter

Method
1. Mix the flour, coconut, 150g melted butter and sugar together. Press into a shallow, lined baking dish (approx 18cm x 28cm), and bake for 10 minutes at 180C.
2. Combine the sweetened condensed milk, golden syrup and 30g butter in a saucepan and mix on medium heat until nearly boiling, then stir constantly for 5 minutes.
3. Pour evenly over base and return to 180C oven for 10 minutes. Remove and allow to cool.
4. Melt the chocolate and pour over slice.
5. Pop the slice in the fridge to set, then slice and enjoy!

Carrot Cake

Ingredients
- Olive oil, to grease
- 2 (about 300g) carrots
- 1 cup (150g) self-raising flour
- 1/2 cup (75g) plain flour
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup (80g) brown sugar
- 3/4 cup (185ml) oil
- 1/2 cup (125ml) golden syrup
- 3 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence

Icing
- 250g spreadable cream cheese
- 1/2 cup (80g) icing sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla essence
Method

1. Preheat oven to 170°C. Grease a 20cm (base) round cake pan lightly with oil, and line with non-stick baking paper. Peel and grate the carrots, and set aside. Sift the flours, bicarbonate of soda and cinnamon into a large bowl.
2. Put the brown sugar, oil, golden syrup, eggs and vanilla in a separate bowl. Use a balloon whisk to mix until combined.
3. Pour the oil mixture into the dry ingredients. Use a wooden spoon to stir gently until just combined. Stir in the grated carrot.
4. Pour the mixture into the pan and bake for 1 hour. Set aside for 5 minutes, before turning out onto a wire rack to cool completely.
5. To make the icing, place the cream cheese, icing sugar and vanilla in a bowl. Use a wooden spoon to mix until well combined.
6. Spread the icing over the cake.

Banana Bread

Ingredients

- Melted low-fat dairy spread, to grease
- 265g (1 3/4 cups) self-raising flour
- 40g (1/4 cup) plain flour
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 140g (2/3 cup, firmly packed) brown sugar
- 125ml (1/2 cup) skim milk
- 2 eggs, lightly whisked
- 50g butter, melted, cooled
- 2 overripe medium bananas, mashed

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Brush an 11 x 21cm (base measurement) loaf pan with melted dairy spread to lightly grease. Line the base and 2 opposite sides with non-stick baking paper, allowing it to overhang.
2. Sift the combined flours and cinnamon into a large bowl. Stir in the sugar and make a well in the centre. Place the milk, eggs, melted butter and banana in a medium bowl, and stir until well combined. Add the banana mixture to the flour mixture and stir until just combined. Spoon the mixture into the prepared pan and smooth the surface.
3. Bake in preheated oven for 45-50 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Remove from oven and set aside in the pan for 5 minutes. Turn onto a wire rack to cool completely. Cut into slices to serve.
Red Velvet Cupcakes

Ingredients

- 350g (2 1/3 cups) plain flour
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 315g (1 1/2 cups) caster sugar
- 250ml (1 cup) buttermilk
- 185ml (3/4 cup) vegetable oil
- 2 eggs
- 3 teaspoons red food colouring
- 2 teaspoons white vinegar
- Dollar Sweets Fairy Fives sprinkles, to decorate frosting
- 250g pkt cream cheese, at room temperature
- 100g butter, at room temperature
- 195g (1 1/4 cups) pure icing sugar, sifted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Line eighteen 80ml (1/3-cup) capacity muffin pans with paper cases. Sift the flour, cocoa powder, bicarbonate of soda and baking powder into a large bowl. Stir in the sugar.
2. Whisk the buttermilk, oil, eggs, food colouring and vinegar in a jug until combined. Make a well in the centre of the flour mixture. Add the buttermilk mixture and stir until just combined.
3. Divide the mixture among the prepared pans. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centres comes out clean. Transfer the cupcakes to a wire rack to cool completely.
4. To make the cream cheese frosting, use an electric beater to beat the cream cheese, butter, icing sugar and vanilla in a bowl until smooth.
5. Pipe the icing over the cupcakes and top with the sprinkles.

Salted Caramel Macarons

Ingredients

- 200gm Almond Meal
- 200gm Pure Icing Sugar
- 65gm Day old Eggs Whites
- 65gm Fresh Egg Whites
- 160gm Caster Sugar
- 50ml Water
- Food Colouring
• Caramel Buttercream
• 200gm Caster Sugar
• 140gm Thickened Cream
• 6gm Seasalt
• 200gm Unsalted Butter

Ingredients

1. Preheat the oven to 160 degrees. Combine the almond meal and icing sugar together in a food processor and blend until well combined
2. Sift the almond meal mixture to ensure a smooth-ish shell
3. Beat the egg whites until soft peaks form
4. Meanwhile, put the sugar and water on the stove over medium to high heat, stir until it reaches 118 degrees (if you don’t have a candy thermometer - wait until the syrup is at a rolling boil, with no discolouration, approx 2 min post onset of boiling)
5. Slowly pour the sugar syrup in a thin stream down the side of the bowl into the egg whites while mixing on high speed. Beat until it forms firm peaks and the meringue has a glossy shine
6. Add the food colouring. Try not to add more than 5 drops as it will cause problems with the mixture
7. Add fresh egg whites to the almond meal mixture with 1/3 of the meringue and mix until well combined (this is hard work!)
8. Once combined add the remainder of the meringue and gently fold together. The final mixture should take a couple of seconds to slide off a spatula.
9. Place the mixture into a piping bag and pipe 3-4cm rounds onto trays lined with baking paper – a template is a great way to ensure a similar size and so they line up beautifully when paired together
10. Tap the tray on the bench a few times to remove any air bubbles (no need to be gentle). If the tip of piping mark (nipple) doesn’t flatten, then the mixture is too thick
11. Once a dry skin is formed (30-60 mins) put macarons in the oven, turn the temperature down to 130 degrees and cook for 16-18 mins. The macaron should have a hard shell.
12. Leave to stand on the tray until cool
13. Place the sugar on medium to high heat and cook until it becomes medium caramel in colour (continuous stirring)
14. Add warm cream to the sugar (place the cream in the microwave for 30 secs to warm)
15. This will foam instantly, stir continuously until well combined. Add the salt and mix well
16. Allow to cool to 45 degrees
17. Ensure butter is cut into small cubes. Slowly add butter to the caramel mixture mixing well between each addition.
18. Once combined (and cooled) beat until pale.
19. Putting Together:
20. Pipe immediately with a generous amount in the centre and gently sandwich together.
21. Allow to cool (in the fridge) for 2 hours.