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WINTER 2015

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Baking

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Welcome



Although I had seen marshmallows used in interesting ways a few times before, it wasn't until I saw Nadiya transforming them into fondant on this year's series of *The Great British Bake Off* that I really started to consider their potential. We all have fond memories of covering them in chocolate, or just enjoying pink and white Flumps straight from the packet as children, but there is actually so much more you can do with them! This issue we meet Amy Nelson and Ross

O'Brien, the inspirational couple behind the London Marshmallow Company, to discover why the sweet fluffy treat inspires them so much, plus they share some of the mouthwatering ways they use it in their own baking from page 12. The white chocolate teacakes and lemon curd tart are particularly delicious!

Also this issue, we have a masterclass in creating comforting winter puddings with step-by-step guides to whipping up steamed puddings and perfect meringues and Pavlovas – turn to page 46 to get started. We go behind the scenes at Luminary Bakery on page 78 – a social enterprise set up to help vulnerable women build a new future for themselves – and catch up with leading baker Lily Jones (aka Lily Vanilli) on page 114. I hope you enjoy this issue and find lots of delicious recipes to keep you baking through the winter. Please do send us photos via our Facebook and Twitter pages! See you next issue.

Sally

Sally FitzGerald Senior Editor



Cover design
Chocolate and peanut layer cake © iStockPhoto, recipe on page 17.

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PRIMROSE BAKERY

We catch up with Martha Swift, founder of Primrose Bakery on page 18 to discover her top baking tips and try some of her recipes.



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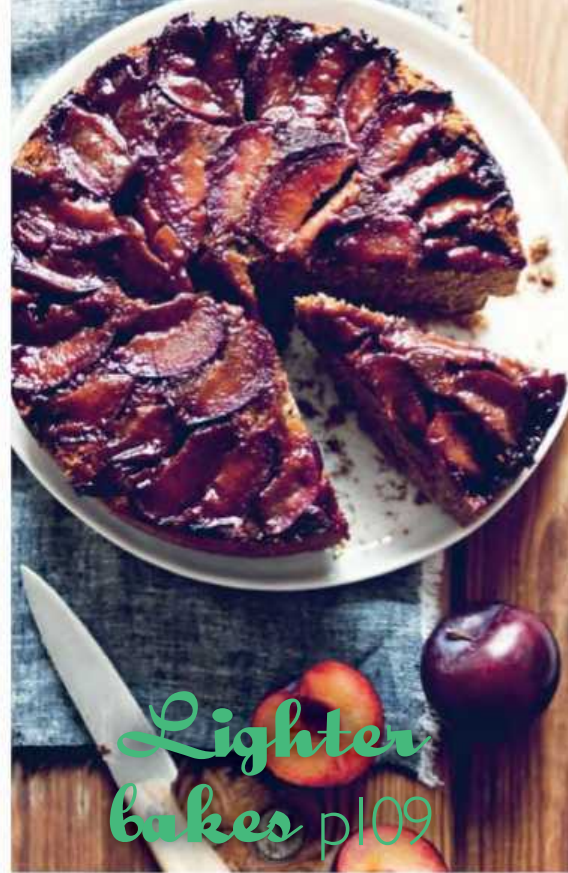
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Fresh from the oven..

Discover the latest news from the world of baking – including new baking tools, ingredients, classes and more...

NEW FEATURE

It's A Baking Thing

New home-baking website It's A Baking Thing launched in April this year with the aim of making life easier for home bakers across the UK. The website gives users the chance to buy hundreds of industry standard baking products at the click of a mouse, and as well as providing this range of essential items, itsabakingthing.com is constantly adding new products, most recently including professional bulk pack sized products suited to the expert baker. The website also offers expert advice, recipe ideas and hints and tips, plus interviews with some of the UK's leading home bakers, who share their own ideas and techniques. New bakers registering to the site will be given 10% off their order, plus there are plenty of competitions on the website's Twitter and Facebook profiles. Andy Hodgson, Head of Trading at It's A Baking Thing said, "We're delighted to offer a website specifically created for the thousands of expert home bakers in the United Kingdom. Our community eats, breathes and dreams baking and itsabakingthing.com is here to help them achieve bakes they can be proud of." To explore the site for yourself, head over to itsabakingthing.com



Decorated with love

Brush up your icing skills in time for Valentine's Day this year with one of the special themed classes at Biscuiteers' School of Icing. There are two classes to choose from – Valentine's Collection and Valentine's Love Birds – both lasting two hours, where you will learn how to ice beautiful love-themed biscuits, then get to take them home along with a 100% cotton Biscuiteers apron. The workshops are priced at £78 per person – find out all you need to know at www.biscuiteers.com



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Tempting treats for Christmas

In need of a last-minute gift idea for a fellow baking fan? Honeybuns, producers of delicious gluten-free treats, has launched a Christmas collection, ideal for those with a gluten intolerance, but good for anyone who loves great tasting bakes. From gift bags filled with delights to mugs sporting colourful knitted warmers, and delicious gluten-free cake mixes, these gifts are perfect for hard-to-buy-for friends, plus Honeybuns will gift wrap and post direct to the recipient. Find out all at www.honeybuns.co.uk





Cutting edge

Get creative with your bakes this Christmas with the help of two new cutter sets from Cake Craft World. The Christmas Cookie Tree Kit is great for making a striking centrepiece for your festive table, complete with 10 plastic star cutters, 2 piping tubes, 3 disposable decorating bags, plus baking recipes and how to decorate the tree, all for just £9.45. The 3D Cookie Cutter & Stencil Set is a fantastic kit that enables you to bake and decorate 3D cookies to create an adorable gingerbread house and is available for £9. To get yours, visit www.cakecraftworld.co.uk



Fun for kids

Award-winning BKD launched in Summer 2014, when founder Adelle Frejus went from baking at home with her kids to running classes and baking events in London. After the success of the events, Adelle decided to launch a range of kids' baking kits to allow children to join in the fun at home. Whether you want to bake and decorate raspberry unicorn biscuits or get creative with vanilla bean little monster cupcakes, the kits fuel kids' imaginations and make baking easy, tasty and fun! The range is stocked in Harvey Nichols (all UK stores), Fenwicks (multiple stores), Harrods, the Design Museum, Southbank Centre, Amara Living and lots of smaller boutiques like Kidsen and We Built This City on Carnaby Street, or you can buy kits online at www.bkd-london.com with prices at £9.99 for the mini kits and £19.99 for the standard kits.

Festive inspiration

Keep the kids entertained this Christmas with Curious Chef's new range of cooking kits created specifically for children. The range features everything a budding chef could need, including a 16 piece Cutter Set, filled with plenty of shapes to keep them going over the holidays, plus each set comes with its very own shopping list designed to engage little minds from the start. Available online from Amazon. You can see more of the Curious Chef's gift sets and tools by visiting curiouschef.com, where you can also buy products in US\$.



Retro elegance

If you're looking for some elegant new accessories to brighten up your kitchen, look no further than the new Ella's Kitchen range from Premier Housewares. With stylised florals in a geometric design, the collection will definitely bring a fun and funky look to your kitchen. Bright yellows and greens contrast perfectly with cool white and dark backgrounds, and the range features tea towels, aprons, double and single oven gloves and more. Prices range from £5.49 for the single oven glove to £10.99 for the apron. To locate your nearest Ella's Kitchen stockist, visit www.premierhousewares.co.uk

New baking club launches

The Bakedin Baking Club is a first of its kind monthly subscription service from award-winning home baking company Bakedin, with every kit featuring exclusive recipes from Michel Roux Snr! If you're struggling to find the perfect gift this Christmas, the Baking Club is a terrific present for any of the keen bakers in your life. Or, if you've got a tricky Secret Santa this year, why not opt for a Bakedin Kit or Mug Baking Mix? A Baking Club subscription is also a super gift (even self-gift!) for someone looking to start home baking in the New Year, as it will supply everything needed to bake cakes from scratch at home – with just a few extra fresh ingredients needed to get started. Michel Roux Snr said: "I'm delighted to be part of such an exciting revolution in home baking. The Bakedin Baking Club is a great service for bakers of all ages to develop a passion for cooking from scratch and honing their skills – all while having fun in the kitchen!" Club subscribers get exclusive baking kits including dry ingredients, recipes and baking tips each month. The Baking Club costs £9.99/month with subscribers offered 6 or 12 month options to extend their baking skills. For more information, visit www.bakedin.co.uk



BAKING WITH
Marshmallows





IN THE KITCHEN
WITH...

The London Marshmallow Company



Amy Nelson and Ross O'Brien are the creative force behind putting marshmallows in the spotlight and here they share the secret that it's all about the egg white...

Q What inspired you to make your own marshmallows?

We were first inspired almost three years ago. Amy had always been fascinated by the idea of making homemade marshmallows, we made some vanilla ones one Sunday afternoon – they came out perfect and the taste and texture was amazing!

Q How did The London Marshmallow Company come into existence?

That first Christmas we gave vanilla and gingerbread marshmallows away as Christmas presents and they went down a storm. Ross also made some to sell at his work Christmas craft fair. They sold out really quickly and we knew we were on to something then, so we thought we'd try market trading. Over the next few months we developed a few more

freeze dried fruits and chocolate to balance the flavours. Also, because of our unique egg white recipe, our mallows are super fluffy and not too sweet, which always surprises people.

Q Which are the most popular flavours you do?

The 'Primrose Hill' – lemon and blueberry – it has a really striking look and the flavours are very punchy. Also, the 'Stokey' swirled peanut butter with milk chocolate – always a winner!

Q How do you go about developing new flavours?

To begin with it was just anything we fancied – we were inspired by things we had eaten in London or when travelling. Now it's all about our range and seeing where we need additions or changes. We also get bespoke flavour requests

Q Can you tell us about your first book?

Our first book *All Things Marshmallow* is a collection of recipes developed by Ross, not only marshmallow recipes but also other cakes, desserts and treats that all use marshmallow in some way. For example there are cocoa whoopee pies with coffee marshmallow filling, which are very indulgent and truly scrummy. For a more sophisticated dessert, try our citrus marshmallow mousse cups.

Q How do you make your mallows so light and fluffy?

It's all about the egg white – it makes the lightest, fluffiest mallows!

Q How do you colour your marshmallow?

Some are coloured with the natural fruit we use or sometimes we add natural colours to heighten the look. Colour is important to us – our flat is colourful and we joke that our marshmallows are inspired by it!

Because of our unique egg white recipe, our mallows are super fluffy and not too sweet...

flavours and had our logo designed. We then launched at Old Spitalfields market in April 2013.

Q What kind of reaction have you got?

It has been a fantastic reaction from day one really. I think people really like our mallows, because they look so beautiful and taste even better! The look and the taste has always been of equal importance to us. It's why we use natural ingredients and real fruit and then take care to layer or swirl our flavours and add special extras like chopped nuts,

from private clients, which gives us the chance to get creative. For example, in the summer we were asked to develop cocktail flavoured marshmallows. We created an 'Amaretto Sour' mallow, which was divine. It was so good we served it as our own wedding favours!

Q What inspired you to use marshmallow in your baking?

Marshmallow is a great base for other flavours, so we thought it could be used in other dishes. It's also light, so it makes a good alternative to rich buttercream icing or heavy cream-cheese frosting.

Q What are your top 5 tips for marshmallow success?

- 1 – Use egg white for a fluffier mallow.
- 2 – Use powdered gelatine for more accurate measurements.
- 3 – Get yourself a sugar thermometer.
- 4 – Don't even think about using a hand whisk – a stand mixer is a must.
- 5 – Have fun and experiment!

Q What's next for you guys?

We've just launched into Harrods' Food Hall and into Fenwick, so that's very exciting as it broadens our visibility. We're in talks about filming some recipes next year too... So watch this space!

To find out more, visit www.londonmarshmallows.co.uk. The recipes on pages 12-16 are taken from *All Things Marshmallow* by Amy Nelson and Ross O'Brien, published by Jacqui Small, RRP £20.





Mini lavender and rose whoopee pies

By Amy Nelson and Ross O'Brien

Makes 30 mini pies

FOR THE COOKIES

275g (9¾oz) plain flour
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
1 tsp salt
1 medium free-range egg
150g (5¼oz) caster sugar
75g (2¾oz) unsalted butter, melted
150ml (5fl oz) buttermilk
1 tsp lavender extract
2 tsp natural pink food colouring
3 tsp natural blue food colouring
edible lavender buds (optional)

FOR THE ROSEWATER MARSHMALLOW BUTTERCRÈME

1 quantity of marshmallow crème (see page 15)
100g (3½oz) icing sugar
150g (5¼oz) unsalted butter, softened
1 tsp rose water
1 tsp natural pink food colouring
1 tsp natural blue food colouring
rose petal jam

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6 and line two large baking trays with greaseproof paper. Sift together the flour, bicarbonate of soda and salt into a medium bowl and set aside.
- 2 Whisk the egg and sugar for 3-4 minutes with an electric stand mixer until light and fluffy. Add the melted butter, buttermilk, lavender extract and colourings and whisk until combined. Fold in the flour mixture.
- 3 Spoon a teaspoonful of the dough for each cookie onto the baking trays. They need to be spaced about 2.5cm (1in) apart, so you should fit about 30 onto each baking tray. Sprinkle the tops of the cookies with edible lavender buds, if using.
- 4 Bake for 6-7 minutes or until the cookies spring back when lightly touched. Transfer from the sheets to wire racks and leave to cool.
- 5 To make the rose water marshmallow buttercrème, make the marshmallow crème and set aside. Cream together the icing sugar and butter using an electric stand mixer. Once smooth and fluffy, add the rose water and food colourings and mix until completely combined. Beat in the marshmallow crème.
- 6 Brush the flat side of each cookie with a little rose petal jam and allow it to sink into the cookie. Spoon the mallow filling into a piping bag fitted with a wide nozzle and use it to pipe the filling onto the flat sides of half the cookies. Sandwich with another cookie to make 30 whoopee pies.

Chocolate, jam and marshmallow biscuits

By Amy Nelson and Ross O'Brien

Makes 12 large biscuits

FOR THE BISCUITS

160g (5½oz) icing sugar

170g (6oz) unsalted butter, softened

2 tsp runny honey

½ tsp bicarbonate of soda

1 medium free-range egg

335g (11½oz) plain flour

1 tsp baking powder

200g (7oz) good-quality strawberry jam

1 tsp vanilla bean paste

FOR THE MARSHMALLOW FLUFF

1 medium free-range egg white

50ml (2fl oz) boiling water

12g (½oz) powdered gelatine

135g (4¾oz) white granulated or caster sugar

15g (½oz) golden syrup

50ml (2fl oz) cold water

FOR FILLING/TOPPING

1 quantity marshmallow fluff, with ½ tsp vanilla extract added (above)

600g (1lb 6oz) good-quality dark chocolate, chopped

- 1 Beat the butter, sugar and vanilla together using an electric mixer for 5 minutes or until pale and fluffy. Scrape down the side of the bowl with a silicone spatula, add the honey and egg and beat until well combined. Scrape down again and add the flour, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda and beat on a low speed until well combined.
- 2 Divide the mixture into two and roll out each half in between two sheets of greaseproof paper until it is 5mm (¼in) thick. Lift off the top sheet of paper and use an 8cm (3¼in) biscuit cutter to cut out as many rounds as you can. Remove the dough trimmings, slide the paper covered in biscuits onto a flat baking tray and pop into the fridge to chill for 15 minutes. Repeat with the other half of the dough, and with all of the excess dough, until you have made at least 24 biscuits.

- 3 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Remove the biscuits from the fridge. Ensure there's a gap of at least 3cm (1¼in) between biscuits before baking for 5-6 minutes until just golden. Leave to cool on a wire rack. Once cooled, spread the underside of half the biscuits with strawberry jam.

FOR THE MARSHMALLOW FLUFF

- 1 Whisk the egg white to stiff peaks using an electric stand mixer and set aside. Pour the boiling water into a bowl, evenly sprinkle over the powdered gelatine and gently whisk until fully dissolved.
- 2 Use the sugar, golden syrup and cold water to make a soft-ball sugar syrup, add the gelatine and combine with the egg white until it turns glossy. Keep mixing on full speed for 6-7 minutes until the mixture is the consistency of lightly whipped double cream.
- 3 Once made, transfer the soft mallow to a piping bag and use immediately.

FOR THE FILLING AND TOPPING

- 1 Make the marshmallow fluff, adding the vanilla extract for the final 30 seconds of mixing. Spoon into a piping bag fitted with a plain wide nozzle and pipe a spiral on top of the jam layer. Top with another plain biscuit.
- 2 Melt 150g (5½oz) of the chocolate. Use a palette knife to spread one side of the biscuit with the chocolate. Place on some greaseproof paper, then completely coat the top and sides with chocolate. Leave to cool again and, once set, enjoy. These biscuits will keep for 3 days.



White chocolate teacakes

By Amy Nelson and Ross O'Brien

Makes 6

FOR THE CHOCOLATE SHELL

300g (10½oz) white chocolate, chopped

1 tsp natural green food colouring (optional), plus a few extra dashes

FOR THE BISCUIT

50g (1¾oz) wholemeal flour

**50g (1¾oz) plain flour, plus extra for dusting
a pinch of salt**

1 tsp baking powder

25g (1oz) caster sugar

25g (1oz) unsalted butter

2 tbsp semi-skimmed milk

FOR THE MARSHMALLOW CRÈME

150g (5½oz) white granulated or caster sugar

3 medium free-range egg whites

30g (1oz) golden syrup

FOR THE ROSE MARSHMALLOW FILLING

1 quantity of marshmallow crème (above)

1 tsp natural pink food colouring

1 tsp rose water

TO DECORATE

1 tbsp finely chopped pistachios

1 tsp edible dried rose petals, to decorate

- 1 First make the biscuits. Put the flours, salt, baking powder and caster sugar in a bowl and rub in the butter with your fingertips until it resembles breadcrumbs. Add the milk and stir everything together to form a smooth ball.
- 2 On a floured work surface, roll out the dough to about 4mm thick. Cut out six rounds with a 7.5cm (3in) round cutter; place them on a flat surface and chill in the fridge for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5.
- 3 Transfer the chilled biscuits to a baking tray and bake for 10-12 minutes. When they're done, remove from the oven and leave to cool on a wire rack.

- 4 Next melt the chocolate. Put approximately 1 litre (35fl oz) of water in a large saucepan and place a large heatproof bowl over the pan. Bring the water up to a steady simmer; then turn off the heat. Place 200g (7oz) of the chopped chocolate into the bowl and leave for 5-10 minutes, stirring occasionally, allowing the residual heat to melt the chocolate. Melting chocolate at a lower temperature results in a glossier finish. Stir in the green colouring, if you're using it.
- 5 Using a silicone 6 teacake mould, coat the inside of each mould with the melted chocolate – we find it's best using a tablespoon's worth of chocolate in each half-sphere. Use the back of a spoon to work the chocolate up and around the sides of the spheres, adding more chocolate if necessary. The chocolate needs to be thick enough to hold the shape of the teacake, but not so thick that you end up with a chocolate-heavy teacake.
- 6 You should have some melted chocolate leftover. Take the cooled biscuits and dip one side in the remaining melted chocolate and set aside on a tray to harden.

FOR THE MARSHMALLOW CRÈME

- 1 Set a large heatproof bowl over a saucepan of just simmering water, making sure the water is not touching the base of the bowl. Add all of the ingredients and whisk with a handheld electric whisk for 12-14 minutes.
- 2 Once the mixture forms stiff, glossy peaks, transfer to a sterile jar or bowl and cover the mallow surface with clingfilm or parchment to prevent a skin from forming. The crème can be enjoyed straightaway or kept in the jar in the fridge for 3 days.

FOR THE ROSE MARSHMALLOW FILLING

- 1 Now, make the marshmallow filling – follow the marshmallow crème recipe above. Once the crème is made, add the pink colouring and rose water; mixing them in for 30 seconds.
- 2 Spoon the mallow filling into a piping bag with a plain wide nozzle and pipe the mallow into each of the six chocolate-coated moulds, remembering to leave a 4mm gap at the top so the biscuit will sit flush. Carefully place the cooled biscuits on top of the mallow, chocolate side down. The chocolate will stop the biscuit going soft.
- 3 Melt the remaining 100g (3½oz) chocolate and add a little green colouring, if using. Transfer to a piping bag with a small nozzle. Carefully pipe around the circumference of the biscuit and pipe a small amount on top of each biscuit. Spread the chocolate evenly over the biscuit using a palette knife. Leave the teacakes to cool and set overnight or for at least 8 hours; do not refrigerate, as the chocolate will lose its glossy shine.
- 4 Carefully remove the teacakes from the moulds, trying not to handle them too much as fingerprints will mark the glossy dome. Decorate with the chopped pistachios and dried rose petals.



Lemon curd tart

By Amy Nelson and Ross O'Brien

Serves 10

FOR THE CRUST

85g (3oz) Hobnob biscuits, crushed

75g (2½oz) unsalted butter, melted

65g (2¼oz) plain flour

65g (2¼oz) organic desiccated coconut

1 tbsp caster sugar

FOR THE LEMON CURD

5 medium free-range egg yolks (retain 1 egg white)

300ml (10½oz) sweetened condensed milk

juice of 3-4 lemons

1 tbsp grated lemon zest

FOR THE MARSHMALLOW

1 quantity of marshmallow fluff (see page 13)

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. First, make the tart crust. Combine the crust ingredients in a mixing bowl, then press it in an even layer into the bottom of a 20cm (8in) round springform tin sprayed with cake-release spray and lined with greaseproof paper. Bake the crust for 12 minutes, remove from the oven and leave to cool. Turn the oven down to 170°C/Gas Mark 3.
- 2 Next, make the lemon curd. Whisk all the ingredients, except the lemon zest, in a bowl until smooth. Stir in the lemon zest. Pour the lemon curd over the baked crust and bake for 20-25 minutes until just set. Remove from the oven and leave to cool. Once cool, chill in the fridge for 1 hour.
- 3 For the marshmallow layer, make the marshmallow fluff as on page 13. Spoon the soft mallow into a piping bag fitted with a wide nozzle and pipe over the set, chilled lemon curd layer. Use the back of a spoon or a palette knife to create a smooth surface.
- 4 Put the pie back in the fridge for 1 hour until the marshmallow is set. Remove from the fridge and release from the tin onto a serving plate. When ready to serve, use a kitchen blowtorch to lightly brûlée the marshmallow layer before slicing into portions.



Earl Grey tea and lemon marshmallow biscuits

By Amy Nelson and Ross O'Brien

Makes 40 small biscuits

FOR THE BISCUITS

260g (9¼oz) plain flour

1 tbsp Earl Grey tea leaves (loose or from bags)

65g (2¼oz) icing sugar

75g (2½oz) lemon curd

1 tbsp unwaxed grated lemon zest

a pinch of salt

225g (8½oz) unsalted butter, softened

200g (7oz) white chocolate, melted

1 quantity of marshmallow fluff (see page 13)

- 1 Mix together the flour, tea and salt and set aside.
- 2 Using a stand mixer set to medium, cream the butter, sugar and lemon zest until pale and fluffy. After 3 minutes, reduce the speed to low and add the flour and tea mixture. Mix until combined.
- 3 Divide the dough into two and transfer each piece onto sheets of greaseproof paper (about 30x30cm (12x12in)). Use the paper to shape the dough into two even logs, about 4cm (1½in) diameter. Wrap the paper neatly around each log, then wrap again with clingfilm. Pop each log into the freezer for about 1 hour.
- 4 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Take the logs out and unwrap them. Cut into 4mm slices and space 4cm (1½in) apart on a baking sheet lined with greaseproof paper. Bake for 10-12 minutes or until the edges just turn golden. Leave to cool on wire racks.
- 5 Once cool, dip the flat edge of each biscuit in the melted white chocolate, then pop them in the fridge to set hard.
- 6 Once set, you can assemble – take half the biscuits and spoon a small amount of lemon curd into the middle of the chocolate sides.
- 7 Make the marshmallow fluff as on page 13 and pipe a small blob on top of the lemon curd. Take another biscuit and sandwich together, with both chocolate sides facing together.



Chocolate and peanut butter layer cake

Makes a 23cm (9in) cake

FOR THE MARSHMALLOW FILLING AND COATING

- 900ml (32fl oz) double cream**
- 500g (18oz) mini marshmallows**
- 200g (7oz) icing sugar**
- ¼ tsp salt**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract, optional**

FOR THE CAKE

- 225g (8oz) unsalted butter**
- 675g (24oz) light brown sugar**
- 4 free-range eggs**
- 2 tsp vanilla extract**
- 75g (2½oz) cocoa powder**
- 1 tbsp bicarbonate of soda**
- ½ tsp salt**
- 350g (12oz) plain flour**
- 300ml (11fl oz) soured cream**
- 335ml (12fl oz) hot strong black coffee**

FOR THE PEANUT BUTTER FILLING

- 225g (8oz) unsalted butter**
- 225g (8oz) peanut butter**
- 300-350g (11-12oz) icing sugar**

TO DECORATE

- 100g (3½oz) plain chocolate, melted**
- roasted peanuts, mini marshmallows, chocolate chips**

- 1** For the marshmallow filling and coating, heat the cream, marshmallows, icing sugar and salt in a large, deep pan, stirring frequently, until the marshmallows melt completely. Remove from the heat, then stir in the vanilla. Pour into a bowl and chill overnight.
- 2** For the cake, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease three 23cm (9in) cake tins and line the bases with non-stick baking paper.
- 3** Beat the butter in a bowl until smooth. Add the sugar, eggs and vanilla and beat until fluffy. Mix in the cocoa, bicarbonate of soda and salt.
- 4** Sift in half the flour; then add half the soured cream and mix well. Repeat with the remaining flour and soured cream. Drizzle in the hot coffee and mix. The mixture will be thin. Divide the mixture evenly between the tins. Bake for 30-35 minutes, until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out with a few moist crumbs attached. Cool in the tins for 20 minutes, then place on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** Whisk the marshmallow mixture with an electric whisk until smooth and glossy. If the mixture becomes thin, set aside to rest at room temperature for 30-45 minutes until thickened.
- 6** For the peanut butter filling, beat the butter and peanut butter with an electric whisk until smooth. Sift in the icing sugar and beat until thick and very smooth.
- 7** Cut the cakes in half horizontally to make six cake layers. You will have one cake layer leftover; or you can leave one cake intact and have a thicker layer. Invert one layer onto a plate and spread with a quarter of the marshmallow filling. Place another cake on top and spread with half the peanut butter filling. Repeat the layers ending with a layer of cake. Spread the remaining marshmallow over the top and sides of the cake.
- 8** Spoon the melted chocolate around the edges of the cake, allowing it to run down the sides. Decorate with peanuts, mini marshmallows and chocolate chips.



IN THE KITCHEN WITH...

Primrose Bakery

More than 10 years after setting up her first bakery, **Martha Swift** now has three of them and a new book that has a recipe for *Everyday*...

Q When and why did you set up Primrose Bakery?

I started in 2004 with a friend of mine – we wanted to set up a business, loved cake and felt there was not a good selection of cupcakes and cakes available in London at the time.

Q What made it different to other bakeries around?

There weren't many cupcakes available back then, hard as that is to believe now, so immediately we were doing something different. Plus, we wanted to make cakes that both tasted and looked good, not just one or the other.

We are constantly coming up with new recipes and are careful to use ingredients that are in season.

Q How do you develop your new recipes?

Through trial and error – tasting and altering ingredients and thinking up flavours we would all like to eat.

Q What was the inspiration behind your new book *Primrose Bakery Everyday*?

As we are constantly coming up with new recipes at the bakery and are also very careful to use ingredients that are in season, I thought it would be nice to do a collection of more recipes from the bakery and divide them into seasons.

Q What are your favourite recipes in the book?

I love the salted caramel cake and the sweet potato cake. In fact, it is hard to pick out a few because I really like them all! I would never include any recipe in any of my books that I didn't like or wouldn't be happy to sell in the bakery.

Q What are your favourite bakes for winter?

I think we all feel we can indulge a bit more in winter, rightly or wrongly. From the new book *Everyday* I love the gluten-free salted caramel brownie, which is amazing! And the chocolate and mint slice – I love dark chocolate and mint combined together.

Q What's the key to achieving cupcake perfection?

Following the recipe is key and mixing the batter for the right amount of time, not too much or too little. Every oven is different, so know your own oven!

Q Have you ever tried any flavour combinations that really didn't work?

We mostly don't try stuff if we don't like the sound of it! There are too many nice flavours to get through first.

Q What are your top tips for anyone that's new to the world of baking?

Read the recipe carefully, weigh all ingredients well and get all ingredients to room temperature before starting.

Q Can you tell us about your cupcake classes?

Our classes are held in our Covent Garden shop, usually every second Sunday of the month. They are based around learning to ice and decorate cupcakes and then learning how to pipe on cakes. We also offer private classes and can even go out to people's houses to hold classes.



Q What do you think will be the next big baking trend?

I don't really follow particular trends, as I think it is important to be able to consistently produce the long established, delicious cakes that have been around for years already and for years to come. You can't really beat a fresh Victoria sponge cake. Having said that, doughnuts seem to be very popular at the moment, which I totally agree with!

Q You have a few gluten-free recipes in your book and sell a quinoa cupcake – does free-from baking interest you?

Yes, I think free-from is a very important area of baking, but I also think it is a shame to get too far away from classic cake ingredients unless people have a real food intolerance. Cake is meant to be enjoyed and is a treat, but eaten in moderation is absolutely fine and not something to be worried about. What would the world be without cake?!

Q What's coming next for Primrose Bakery?

I have just opened the third Primrose Bakery in Kensington in West London, so I am hoping to spend the next year establishing that and then perhaps look to open a fourth one.

The recipes on pages 19-21 are taken from *Primrose Bakery Everyday* by Martha Swift, published by Square Peg, RRP £25.



Gluten-free Black Forest cake

Makes one 20cm (8in) triple-layer cake, serving 10-12

FOR THE CHOCOLATE SPONGE

9 large free-range eggs

275g (9½oz) light brown sugar

120g (4oz) cocoa powder

cherry juice or cherry liqueur, for soaking the sponges

FOR THE BLACK CHERRY COMPOTE

1 x 410g (14oz) tin pitted black cherries (in juice)

2 tsp cornflour

2 tbsp water

FOR THE ITALIAN BUTTERCREAM

300g (10½oz) granulated sugar

5 tbsp water

3 free-range egg whites

1 tsp vanilla extract

400g (14oz) unsalted butter, cut into cubes and softened

TO DECORATE

dark chocolate shavings

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease three 20cm (8in) sandwich tins and line with parchment paper.
- 2 Using an electric hand mixer, beat the egg yolks and sugar together in a bowl until light and fluffy. Gradually add the cocoa powder and mix until it is all incorporated.
- 3 In a separate bowl and using a clean beater, whisk the egg whites until they form stiff peaks.
- 4 Gently fold a quarter of the whisked egg whites into the batter to loosen it. Add the remaining egg whites and gently fold through until just combined. Be careful not to overmix as it will knock out the air from the egg whites.
- 5 Divide the batter between the three sandwich tins and bake for 15-20 minutes, or until an inserted skewer comes out clean.
- 6 Remove from the oven and leave the cakes to cool in their tins. They will shrink slightly and come away from the edge of the tins.
- 7 If any of the cakes are domed, trim the tops to ensure a flat surface for stacking. Make several holes in the cooled sponge with a skewer, then brush some of the cherry juice or liqueur over the top of the cakes. Repeat two or three times, until all the juice or liqueur is used up.

FOR THE BLACK CHERRY COMPOTE

- 1 Place the cherries and their juice in a pan and bring to the boil.
- 2 In a small bowl, mix the cornflour with the cold water, then pour into the pan of boiling cherries, stirring continuously to combine. Turn the heat down to medium and continue stirring until the mixture thickens and reaches a thick compote consistency. Pour into a heatproof bowl and leave to cool.

FOR THE ITALIAN BUTTERCREAM

- 1 Pour the sugar and water into a pan over a medium heat and bring to the boil without stirring. Allow to boil for 3-5 minutes until a thick syrup forms.
- 2 Meanwhile, whisk the egg whites in a clean metal bowl until stiff peaks form. With the mixer on a low or medium speed, slowly pour the syrup in a thin stream into the egg whites until it is all used up. Add the vanilla extract and continue whisking until cool.
- 3 Once the mixture has cooled, continue whisking and add the butter a cube at a time until it is all incorporated. The buttercream should be smooth and thick with a consistency similar to that of whipped cream.

TO ASSEMBLE

- 1 Take a third of the buttercream and place in a separate bowl. Add 2 heaped tbsp of the black cherry compote and gently fold it in.
- 2 Place the first cake on a cake board or serving plate and spread half of the plain buttercream on top, followed by some black cherry compote. Gently place the second cake on top and spread the cherry-coloured buttercream over the top. Then place the third cake on top and spread the remaining plain buttercream over the top. Pour any remaining black cherry compote on top of the icing and sprinkle dark chocolate shavings around it.



Banoffee loaf

Makes one loaf, serving 8-10

FOR THE LOAF

- 190g (6¾oz) plain flour**
- 1½ tsp baking powder**
- 95g (3¼oz) unsalted butter, softened**
- 190g (6¾oz) golden caster sugar**
- 2 large free-range eggs**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**
- 3 ripe bananas, mashed**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Lightly grease a 900g (2lb) loaf tin and line with parchment paper or a loaf tin liner. Combine the flour and baking powder in a bowl and set aside.
- 2** In a separate bowl, cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy, using an electric hand mixer. Add the eggs one at a time, making sure the first one is well incorporated before adding the second egg. Add the vanilla extract with the second egg. Add the

FOR THE SALTED CARAMEL BUTTERCREAM ICING

- 75g (2¾oz) unsalted butter**
- 75g (2¾oz) salted caramel sauce**
- 150g (5¼oz) icing sugar**
- TO DECORATE**
- banana chips**

mashed bananas and mix until they are well incorporated (the riper the banana the better the end result).

- 3** Finally, add the flour mixture and beat until well incorporated and you have a smooth batter.
- 4** Pour the batter into the lined loaf tin and bake for 45-60 minutes, or until the loaf is golden brown and an inserted skewer comes out clean. Allow the loaf to cool in its tin before turning it out onto a wire rack to cool completely. While the loaf is cooling, make the salted caramel icing.

TO MAKE THE SALTED CARAMEL BUTTERCREAM ICING

- 1** In a bowl, beat the butter and caramel sauce together until smooth, using an electric hand mixer. Add the icing sugar and beat on a low speed until fully incorporated, then beat for a further 30-60 seconds on a medium speed until the mixture is smooth and lump-free.

ASSEMBLE

- 1** Ice the top of the cooled loaf with the salted caramel buttercream icing and decorate with a line of dried banana chips along the centre.
- 2** Keep any uneaten loaf in an airtight container at room temperature for 3-4 days.

Espresso martini cupcakes

Makes 15 regular-sized cupcakes

FOR THE ESPRESSO SPONGE

- 2 tsp espresso powder
- 50ml (1¾fl oz) hot water
- 225g (8oz) golden caster sugar
- 335g (12oz) self-raising flour
- 25g (1oz) cornflour
- 225g (8oz) unsalted butter, softened
- 4 large free-range eggs
- 45 shop-bought, chocolate-coated coffee beans

FOR THE VODKA SOAK

- 2 tbsp espresso powder
- 4 tbsp granulated sugar
- 4 tbsp water
- 4 tbsp vodka

FOR THE KAHLÛA BUTTERCREAM ICING

- 130g (4½oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 500g (1lb 2oz) icing sugar
- 60ml (2fl oz) Kahlûa liqueur
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

TO DECORATE

- a little espresso powder

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line two 12-hole muffin tins with 15 muffin cases and set aside.
- 2 Put the espresso powder in a cup or small jug, add the hot water and stir to dissolve. Set aside to cool.
- 3 Add the sugar, flour and cornflour to the bowl of a food processor and pulse for 30 seconds or until the ingredients are well combined. Add the butter, eggs and cup of cooled coffee and process for 10-20 seconds, then scrape down the bowl sides and continue processing until the ingredients are thoroughly combined.
- 4 Spoon the batter evenly into the muffin cases, filling them to about two-thirds full. Drop three chocolate coffee beans into each case.
- 5 Bake for 15-20 minutes, until an inserted skewer comes out clean.
- 6 Leave the cakes to cool in their tins for about 10 minutes, then transfer to wire racks to cool completely.

FOR THE VODKA SOAK

- 1 Put the espresso powder, sugar and water into a small pan and bring to the boil on the hob. Turn down the heat and leave to simmer until the mixture has a thick syrup-like consistency. This will take 1-2 minutes. Set aside and leave to cool. When the syrup is cool, stir in the vodka.
- 2 Pierce each cooled cupcake several times with a skewer, then brush with the vodka soak until it is all used up.

FOR THE KAHLÛA BUTTERCREAM ICING

- 1 Place all the ingredients in a large bowl. Using an electric hand mixer, beat on a low speed until all the ingredients are combined. Scrape down the sides of the bowl, then beat on a medium-high speed for a further 20-60 seconds until the icing is smooth.

TO DECORATE

- 1 Ice each soaked cupcake with the Kahlûa icing and top with a light sprinkling of espresso powder.

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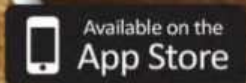
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Christmas snowmen cupcakes

By Nielsen-Massey, courtesy of www.bakingmad.com

Makes 12

FOR THE CAKE

150g (5¼oz) butter (unsalted)

150g (5¼oz) Billington's Unrefined Golden Caster Sugar

3 free-range eggs

150g (5¼oz) self-raising flour

½ tsp baking powder

a few drops of Nielsen-Massey Vanilla Extract

FOR THE DECORATION

500g (1lb 2oz) icing sugar

160g (5¼oz) unsalted butter

50ml (1¾fl oz) whole milk

1½ tsp Nielsen-Massey Vanilla Extract

50g (1¾oz) desiccated coconut

white sugarpaste icing

black sugarpaste icing

red sugarpaste icing

orange sugarpaste icing

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place paper cases in a 12-hole bun tin.
- 2** Beat the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and creamy.
- 3** Gradually beat in the eggs, then stir in the flour, baking powder and vanilla extract until smooth.
- 4** Spoon into the paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes until well risen and golden. Place on a wire rack to cool.
- 5** To make the buttercream, beat together the butter, icing sugar, milk and vanilla extract until smooth. Spread on top of the cupcake and sprinkle with desiccated coconut.
- 6** To make the snowman, shape two balls of white sugarpaste, one slightly larger than the other; to form the head and base. Roll out a small amount of red sugarpaste in a small sausage shape and wrap it around the neck of the snowman to form the scarf.
- 7** Roll out small balls of black sugarpaste and stick to the snowman shape to form the eyes, mouth and buttons.
- 8** To finish, roll out a small amount of orange sugarpaste into a cone shape and attach to the snowman for the carrot nose.
- 9** Secure the snowman onto the top of the cupcake.



Giant Christmas cupcake

By Nielsen-Massey, courtesy of www.bakingmad.com

Serves 12

FOR THE SPONGE

340g (12oz) unsalted butter
290g (10¼oz) self-raising flour
50g (1¾oz) cocoa powder
340g (12oz) Billington's Unrefined Golden Caster Sugar
2 tsp baking powder
6 free-range eggs

FOR THE FILLING

75g (2¾oz) unsalted butter
180g (6¼oz) icing sugar
70g (2½oz) cocoa powder
1 tsp Nielsen-Massey Peppermint Extract

FOR THE TOPPING

150g (5½oz) unsalted butter
500g (11lb 2oz) icing sugar
1 tsp Nielsen-Massey Vanilla Extract

FOR THE DECORATION

3 packs of chocolate finger biscuits
1kg (2lb 3oz) white sugarpaste
25g (1oz) desiccated coconut
green sugarpaste
sweets
sprinkle decorations

- 1 Preheat the oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 3 and grease and lightly flour a giant cupcake mould, shaking off any excess flour.
- 2 Cream the butter and sugar together and gradually add in the eggs one by one, mixing between each egg. Sieve the flour, cocoa and baking powder into the mix and whisk until fully incorporated.

Transfer to the cupcake mould, then bake for 1 hour or until the cake is cooked throughout. Remove from the oven and leave to cool on a wire rack.

- 3 While the cake cools, roll out the white sugarpaste and use to cover a thick 23cm (9in) cake board. Trim the excess paste with a knife.
- 4 For the chocolate buttercream filling, beat together the butter, icing sugar, cocoa powder and peppermint extract until smooth. You may need to add a splash of mix to loosen it up.
- 5 Spread a small amount (about a tsp) of the buttercream onto your iced cake board where you would like to position your cake and put the cupcake base on top to fix in place.
- 6 Carefully carve out a shallow indent in the centre of the cupcake base and gently spread over the buttercream. Place the top cupcake sponge on top of the buttercream.
- 7 For the vanilla buttercream topping, beat together the butter, icing sugar and vanilla extract. Spread a thin layer of buttercream around the outer side of the cupcake base and stick chocolate fingers around the base. Pipe or spread the remaining vanilla buttercream onto the roof of the cupcake and sprinkle with desiccated coconut.
- 8 For the Christmas tree, roll a ball of green sugarpaste into a cone shape and coat with coloured sprinkles. Secure the tree to the cake board using a small dab of water on the base of the tree.
- 9 Use coloured sugarpaste to make additional decorations or use pre-bought cake toppers and get creative with your decorating.



Chocolate cupcakes

By Nielsen-Massey

Makes 24

FOR THE CUPCAKES

200g (7oz) unsalted butter, softened

100g (3½oz) Billington's Golden Caster Sugar

100g (3½oz) Billington's Light Muscovado Sugar

1 tsp Nielsen-Massey Chocolate Extract

4 medium free-range eggs, lightly beaten

150g (5¼oz) self-raising flour

50g (1¾oz) cocoa powder

2 tbsp whole milk

FOR THE CHOCOLATE SYRUP

50g (1¾oz) golden caster sugar

4 tbsp water

1 tsp Nielsen-Massey

Chocolate Extract

FOR THE FROSTING

100g (3½oz) cream cheese

50g (1¾oz) unsalted butter, softened

300g (10½oz) Billington's

Golden Icing Sugar

1 tsp Nielsen-Massey

Chocolate Extract

150ml (5fl oz) single cream

150g (5¼oz) dark chocolate, broken into small pieces

FOR THE CHOCOLATE SUGAR SYRUP

1 Place 50g (1¾oz) golden caster sugar in a pan with 4 tbsp water.

2 Simmer for a few minutes until dissolved, then take off the heat and set aside to cool. Once cool, stir in 1 tsp chocolate extract.

FOR THE CUPCAKES

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place 24 paper cases in two bun tins. Using either an electric mixer or mixing bowl and whisk, beat the butter and sugars together until pale and fluffy, then whisk in the chocolate extract. Reduce the whisk speed and slowly add the eggs, along with a tbsp of the flour to prevent curdling.

2 Once combined, add the remaining flour, cocoa and milk. Using either a piping bag or ice cream scoop, divide the batter between the cupcake cases and place in the oven for 20 minutes, or until lightly golden and firm to the touch. Leave the cakes to cool a little on a wire rack then add some sugar syrup to the top of each one.

3 Once completely cooled, remove from the tins. To ice, put the cream cheese, butter, chocolate extract and golden icing sugar in a mixing bowl and slowly mix together until light and fluffy. Warm through the cream and then in a bowl, slowly pour over the chocolate and stir until it has completely melted. Let it cool to allow it to set a little before mixing into the cream cheese frosting. Place in a piping bag and ice accordingly.



Peppermint cupcakes

By Nielsen-Massey

Makes 24

FOR THE CUPCAKES

200g (7oz) unsalted butter, softened

100g (3½oz) Billington's Golden Caster Sugar

100g (3½oz) Billington's Light Muscovado Sugar

1 tsp Nielsen-Massey Peppermint Extract

4 medium free-range eggs, lightly beaten

150g (5¼oz) self-raising flour

50g (1¾oz) cocoa powder

2 tbsp whole milk

FOR THE SYRUP

50g (1¾oz) golden caster sugar

4 tbsp water

1 tsp Nielsen-Massey Peppermint Extract

FOR THE FROSTING

200g (7oz) cream cheese

100g (3½oz) unsalted butter, softened

600g (1lb 5oz) Billington's Golden Icing Sugar

1 tsp Nielsen-Massey Peppermint Extract

- 1 For the syrup, follow the instructions for the chocolate syrup on page 26, using peppermint extract in place of chocolate.
- 2 For the cakes, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place 24 paper cases in two bun tins. Using an electric mixer or mixing bowl and whisk, beat the butter and sugars together until pale and fluffy, then whisk in the peppermint extract. Reduce the whisk speed and slowly add the eggs, with a tbsp of the flour to prevent curdling.
- 3 Once combined, add the remaining flour, cocoa and milk. Using a piping bag or ice cream scoop, divide the batter between the cases and place in the oven for 20 minutes, or until lightly golden and firm to the touch. Leave the cakes to cool a little on a wire rack, then add sugar syrup to the top of each one.
- 4 Once cooled, remove from the tins. For the frosting, put all the ingredients in a mixing bowl and slowly mix together until light and fluffy. Place in a piping bag and ice accordingly.



Spiced chai latte cake

By Chetna Makan for Spiced Chai Latte (www.drinkmechai.co.uk)

FOR THE CAKE

180g (6¼oz) unsalted butter, softened

180g (6¼oz) golden caster sugar

180g (6¼oz) self-raising flour

50g (1¾oz) ground almonds

½ tsp baking powder

3 large free-range eggs

3 tbsp milk

3 tbsp Drink Me Spiced Chai Latte powder

2 tbsp water

2 tbsp toasted chopped hazelnuts

FOR THE ICING

80g (2¾oz) unsalted softened butter

250g (9oz) icing sugar

1 tbsp Drink Me Spiced Chai Latte powder

2 tbsp milk

2 tbsp toasted chopped hazelnuts

a small piece of chocolate

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Butter and line two 20cm (8in) round cake tins with baking parchment.
- 2 In a large mixing bowl, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. In a separate bowl, mix the flour, almonds and baking powder.
- 3 Beat the eggs into the butter mix one at a time, adding a spoonful of the flour mix after every egg. Now add the rest of the flour mix.
- 4 In a small cup, put the chai latte powder with the water and mix well. Add this to the cake mix with the milk. Whisk it all together for a minute. Add the hazelnuts and fold them all in.
- 5 Pour into the two tins equally. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until done. Leave to cool on a wire rack. Once cool, remove them from the tin.
- 6 In a large bowl, whisk the butter and icing sugar. Now add the chai latte powder and the milk. Whisk it well until it forms a lovely butter icing. The more you mix it the fluffier it will get. Place one cake on the serving plate. Put half the icing on and spread evenly. Sprinkle the hazelnuts on. Place the other cake on top and spread the remaining icing over it. Grate chocolate on top and serve.



Darkly divine vegan chocolate fudge cake

By The Vegetarian Society (www.vegsoc.org)

Serves 16

FOR THE CAKE

240g (8½oz) self-raising flour

1½ tsp bicarbonate of soda

35g (1¼oz) cocoa powder

75g (2¾oz) ground almonds

240g (8½oz) granulated sugar

150g (5¼oz) hard 100% vegetable margarine

260ml (9¼fl oz) soya milk

150ml (5fl oz) natural soya yoghurt

1-2 tsp vanilla extract

1-2 drops of almond extract (optional)

FOR THE FILLING

50g (1¾oz) soya margarine

3 tbsp water

200g (7oz) icing sugar

50g (1¾oz) cocoa powder

1 tsp vanilla extract

TO DECORATE

icing sugar

200g (7oz) vegan plain chocolate, melted

- 1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Grease and base line two springform 20cm (8in) cake tins or 20cm (8in) deep sandwich tins.
- 2 To make the cake, sift the flour, bicarbonate of soda and cocoa together into a large bowl.
- 3 Mix the ground almonds and sugar with the flour and cocoa mixture until evenly blended.
- 4 Melt the margarine and then cool slightly. Put soya milk, soya yoghurt and melted margarine in a blender and blend until smooth and well combined. Mix in the vanilla and almond extracts.
- 5 Mix the wet ingredients with the dry ingredients until incorporated, but do not beat.
- 6 Divide the mixture between the two tins, level the tops and bake in the oven for about 25 minutes, until firm to the touch. Do not worry if the top cracks, this is quite normal. Cool in the tins – overnight is fine.
- 7 To make the filling, heat the water and margarine together until the margarine is just melted. Do not let them boil or get too hot. Let cool slightly.
- 8 Sift the icing sugar with the cocoa into a large bowl. Add the vanilla extract to the margarine and water, then tip into the bowl with the icing sugar and cocoa. Mix well – the mixture will end up quite stiff. If it is runny, the margarine mixture was too hot – just leave it to cool down and set for a while.
- 9 Turn the cakes out of the tins. To make one large cake, carefully spread the filling over one of the halves and place the other on top.
- 10 Sprinkle the cake with icing sugar and decorate with drizzles of melted chocolate.

Sticky orange polenta cake

By John Torode

Makes 1 cake

FOR THE CAKE

2 Seville oranges

2 lemons

180g (6½oz) blanched almonds

4 free-range eggs

a big pinch of salt

170g (6oz) caster sugar

80ml (3fl oz) olive oil, plus extra for greasing

150g (5¼oz) polenta

10g (¼oz) baking powder

FOR THE SYRUP

juice of 2-3 Seville oranges (about 150ml (5fl oz))

75g (2¾oz) caster sugar

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease a 23cm (9in) springform cake tin.
- 2 Put an orange and a lemon into a large pan, cover with water, and place a circle of greaseproof paper over the top so the fruit sits under the water. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for about 30 minutes. Take off the heat.
- 3 Toast the blanched almonds in a dry frying pan. Put them in a food processor and blitz until finely ground.
- 4 Take the cooked orange and lemon out of the pan. Cut them in half and pick out the seeds. Juice the other fresh orange and lemon (throw away the shells). Put the cooked fruit (skins and all) and extra freshly squeezed juice in the food processor and blend to make a paste.
- 5 In a large bowl, beat the eggs with the salt until foaming. Add the sugar and beat again, then add the orange paste, almonds and olive oil. Beat again.
- 6 In a separate bowl, mix the polenta and baking powder, then gently fold this into the orange mixture until it is all mixed together.
- 7 Pour the mixture into the greased tin and bake for 50 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.
- 8 Meanwhile, make the syrup. Put the orange juice and sugar in a pan and simmer over a low heat until you have a glossy syrup.
- 9 Turn the cake out of the tin onto a serving plate and pour the syrup over it while it's warm.

TIP If you wrap up the cake (without its syrup) in a sheet of greaseproof paper and a clean tea towel it will stay moist, become stickier and last for about a week.



The recipes on pages 29-30 are taken from *My Kind Of Food: Recipes I Love To Cook At Home* by John Torode, published by Headline, RRP £25. Photography © Yuki Sugiura.



Pistachio and cardamom cake

By John Torode

Makes 1 cake

FOR THE CAKE

115g (4oz) self-raising flour

1 tsp baking powder

115g (4oz) golden caster sugar

2 tsp cardamom powder

1 tsp ground cinnamon

115g (4oz) butter, plus extra for greasing

2 free-range eggs

1 tsp rose water

1 tsp vanilla extract

150ml (5fl oz) soured cream

75g (2¾oz) pistachio nuts, chopped

25g (1oz) walnuts, chopped

FOR THE WHIPPED CREAM

70g (2½oz) double cream

3 tsp vanilla extract

1 tsp orange blossom water (be careful – different brands, different strengths)

3 tsp caster sugar

- 1 Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease a 23cm (9in) cake tin. Sift the flour, baking powder and half the sugar into a large bowl. Add the cardamom and cinnamon and mix well.
- 2 Use an electric whisk to beat the butter with the remaining sugar until white, break an egg into the mixture and beat well, then do the same with the other egg. Fold in the flour mixture and then add the rose water, vanilla extract, soured cream and chopped nuts and beat until fluffy.
- 3 Pour the mixture into the tin. Cover with kitchen foil and bake for 25 minutes. Take the foil off and bake for a further 5 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Take it out of the oven, leave it in the tin for 5 minutes to cool a little, then turn it out onto a wire rack to cool.

FOR THE WHIPPED CREAM

- 1 Put the cream, vanilla extract, orange blossom water and caster sugar in a small bowl and whip it until thick and peaky. Serve the cake with big dollops of cream.

Peach upside-down cake

By John Torode

Makes 1 cake

FOR THE CAKE

5-6 peaches, cut in half and stones removed

400g (14oz) caster sugar

1 vanilla pod, split in half lengthways, seeds scraped out

200g (7oz) plain flour

1½ tsp baking powder

200g (7oz) butter

4 free-range eggs

30ml (1fl oz) milk

icing sugar, for dusting

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line the base of a 23cm (9in) springform cake tin with baking parchment.
- 2 Pop the peaches in a large pan with 200g (7oz) of the sugar and the vanilla seeds and pod, cover with water – just enough to cover the fruit – and bring to the boil. Turn off the heat and cover with a lid and leave them for 20 minutes.
- 3 For the cake batter, sift the flour and the baking powder together into a bowl three times to aerate.
- 4 Beat the butter and the remaining sugar until white and doubled in size (an electric whisk is good for this). Add the eggs one at a time, beating until well mixed, then add the flour and milk and mix well.
- 5 Lift the peaches out of their cooking liquid and arrange them, cut-side down, over the base of the cake tin. Pour the cake batter over the peaches and bake in the oven for 25-30 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Allow the cake to cool in the tin a little – about 10-15 minutes – then gently turn out onto a plate and carefully peel off the paper.
- 6 Leave to sit for 30 minutes. Dust with icing sugar and serve warm.

Gluten-free courgette cake

By Gemma Johnson from The Clandestine Cake Club
Serves 12-14

FOR THE CAKE

- 200g (7oz) soft light brown sugar
- 180ml (6¼fl oz) vegetable oil
- 60g (2oz) Greek yoghurt
- 3 large free-range eggs, at room temperature
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 500g (1lb 2oz) gluten-free plain flour
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- ½ tsp ground mixed spice
- ½ tsp salt
- 260g (9oz) courgettes, grated, plus 20g (¾oz) to decorate
- 100g (3½oz) mixed raisins

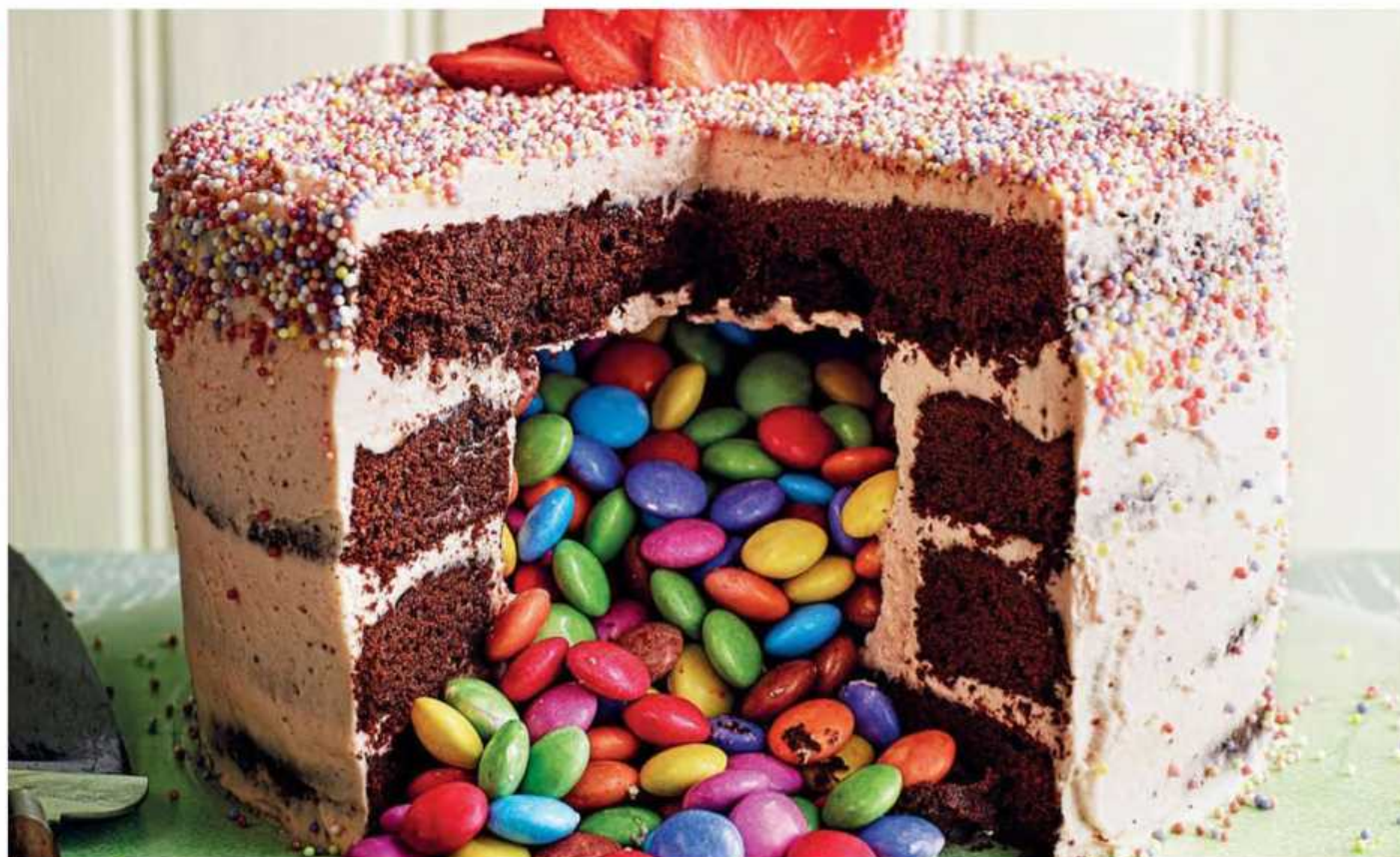
FOR THE CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

- 115g (4oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 225g (8oz) cream cheese, at room temperature
- 300g (10½oz) icing sugar, sifted
- 2 tbsps double cream
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- a pinch of salt

- 1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Grease and line the base of a 23cm (9in) cake tin.
- 2 Using an electric whisk, mix the brown sugar and oil in a bowl on a medium speed until well combined. Add the yoghurt and mix for a further minute until the ingredients come together. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Just before adding the last egg, mix in the vanilla extract. Set this bowl aside.
- 3 Sift the flour, bicarbonate of soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, mixed spice and salt into another large bowl and stir to combine. Fold the grated courgette into the wet ingredients, then add the dry ingredients to the bowl and mix in using a low speed on the electric whisk. Lastly fold in the dried raisins.
- 4 Pour the batter into the cake tin and bake for 40-50 minutes on the middle oven shelf, until a skewer inserted in the centre of the cake comes out clean. Leave in the tin for 10 minutes, then turn out on to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 To make the frosting, use an electric whisk to beat the butter on a slow speed until creamy. Add the cream cheese and continue to beat on a medium speed for 2-3 minutes until creamy, fluffy and combined. Add the icing sugar and beat until the mixture is thick. Add the double cream, vanilla extract and salt and beat on a medium speed for 2 minutes. Once the cake is cool, spread the cream cheese frosting thickly over the top. Decorate with a scattering of grated courgette.



The recipes on pages 31-33 are taken from *The Clandestine Cake Club: A Year Of Cake* by Lynn Hill, published by Quercus, RRP £20.



Piñata cake

By Sally Biggs from The Clandestine Cake Club

Serves 16-20

FOR THE CAKE

340g (12oz) unsalted butter, softened

340g (12oz) caster sugar

225g (8oz) self-raising flour

115g (4oz) cocoa powder

6 medium free-range eggs

a splash of milk

FOR THE FILLING AND FROSTING

900ml (32fl oz) double cream

118g (4oz) strawberry flavour Angel Delight (or choose your favourite flavour)

250g (9oz) sugar-coated chocolate beans

multi-coloured sprinkles, to decorate

sliced strawberries, to decorate (optional)

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease and line four 20cm (8in) sandwich tins.
- 2** Beat the butter and sugar using a wooden spoon or electric mixer, until light and fluffy. Sift the flour and cocoa powder together into a separate bowl.

- 3** Add one egg and a tbsp of the flour mixture to the butter and beat briefly until combined. Repeat this step until all the eggs, flour and cocoa have been added. Add the splash of milk with the final addition of flour and cocoa and fold until thoroughly combined.
- 4** Divide the mixture between the tins. Bake for 20-25 minutes, until the tops spring back when lightly pressed and a skewer inserted in the centre of the cakes comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tins for 5-10 minutes, before turning out on to wire racks to cool completely. When cool, cut a 15cm round hole in the centre of two of the cakes.
- 5** To make the filling and frosting, beat the double cream and Angel Delight with an electric whisk, until it has a spreadable consistency.
- 6** To assemble, spread a layer of frosting over one of the whole sponges then top with one of the sponges with the hole. Spread more frosting around the ring of sponge and place the other sponge with the hole on top of that and spread more frosting over it. Pour the sugar-coated chocolate beans into the hole. Finally, top with the last whole sponge. Spread the remaining frosting over the top and down the sides of the cake. Decorate the top with the sprinkles and strawberries (if using). This cake is best stored in the fridge and eaten within 3 days.



Ultimate tiramisu cake

By Becky Barton from The Clandestine Cake Club

Serves 12

FOR THE CAKE

25ml (1 fl oz) strong black coffee

100ml (3½ fl oz) milk

½ tsp vanilla extract

225g (8oz) unsalted butter, softened

105g (3¾oz) demerara sugar

120g (4¼oz) dark muscovado sugar

175g (6oz) self-raising flour

100g (3½oz) plain flour

½ tsp baking powder

4 medium free-range eggs, lightly beaten

FOR THE SYRUP

2 tbsp Marsala wine

40ml (1½ fl oz) hot water

a few drops of cappuccino extract

70g (2½oz) caster sugar

FOR THE FROSTING

150ml (5¼ fl oz) double cream

60g (2oz) unsalted butter, softened

125g (4½oz) mascarpone

350g (12½oz) icing sugar

a few drops of custard flavouring

cocoa powder, to decorate

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line the base of two 20cm (8in) sandwich tins with baking parchment, then grease the sides of the tin and lightly dust with flour.
- 2 Combine the coffee, milk and vanilla extract and set aside. Using an electric whisk, beat the butter and both sugars until creamy. In a separate bowl, sift together both flours with the baking powder and set aside.
- 3 With the whisk running at a low speed, slowly add the eggs to the butter and sugar mixture with a tbsp of flour to prevent curdling.
- 4 Stop the whisk and, using a wooden spoon, mix in a third of the milk and coffee mixture, then a third of the flour. When fully combined, repeat the process until all of the coffee, milk and flour are mixed in.
- 5 Divide the mixture between the two tins and bake for 25-30 minutes until they spring back when pressed.
- 6 While the cakes are in the oven make the soaking syrup by putting all of the ingredients in a small saucepan and bringing to a simmer. Stir gently over a medium heat for 5 minutes until reduced slightly.
- 7 As soon as the cakes come out of the oven, brush the tops liberally with the warm syrup, then leave to cool completely in the tins. Meanwhile, make the frosting.

FOR THE FROSTING

- 1 Whip the double cream in a bowl until it forms soft peaks, then set aside. Beat the butter and mascarpone, then gradually add the icing sugar until everything is combined. If the mixture is too dry, add a little of the whipped cream to soften. Once the frosting is smooth, add the custard flavouring and carefully fold in the whipped cream.
- 2 To assemble, sandwich the two cakes with a thin layer of the frosting, then spread it liberally over the top. When ready to serve, sprinkle a generous coating of cocoa powder on the top. This cake is best kept in the fridge for up to 3 days, because of the cream and mascarpone in the frosting.

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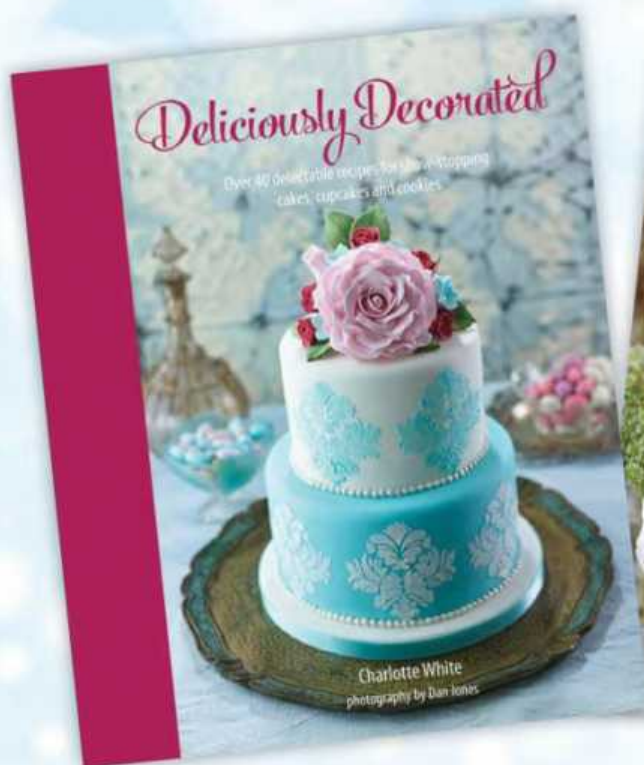
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Biscuits & Cookies

HEAVEN





Convent Cookies – © Phaidon: Edward Park

Biscotti allo zenzero – ginger shortbread cookies

By The Silver Spoon Kitchen

Makes 18

FOR THE BISCOTTI

125g (4oz) butter, softened

2 tsp finely grated fresh ginger

50g (2oz) icing sugar

200g (7oz) plain flour, plus extra for dusting

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4 and line a baking sheet with baking paper. In a large bowl, beat the butter and ginger until creamy, then add the sugar. Stir in the flour a little at a time, then add a little lukewarm water, if necessary, to make a soft dough.
- 2 Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface into a disk, 1cm (½in) thick, then cut the dough into small disks 5cm (2in) in diameter. Place on the baking sheet and chill until firm. Bake for 10–15 minutes, until lightly browned.
- 3 Remove and let cool before serving. They will also keep well for several days in an airtight container.

Biscotti del convento – convent cookies

By The Silver Spoon Kitchen

Makes 40

FOR THE BISCOTTI

500g (1lb 2oz) plain flour

125g (4½oz) caster sugar

1 free-range egg, plus 1 yolk

100g (3½oz) butter or lard, softened

50g (2oz) cream of tartar

a pinch of bicarbonate of soda

grated zest of 1 lemon

TO DECORATE

1 free-range egg white

a few drops of lemon juice

100g (3½oz) icing sugar

- 1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Line a baking sheet with baking paper. Sift the flour into a bowl, make a well in the centre and add the sugar, whole egg, egg yolk, butter, cream of tartar, bicarbonate of soda mixed with a little water, and lemon zest and mix well.
- 2 Taking small pieces of dough at a time, make little rolls, then flatten them and cut into diamond shapes. Put them on the prepared baking sheet and bake for about 15 minutes, until light golden brown. Remove from the oven and reduce the temperature to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 3 For the icing, whisk the egg white with the lemon juice in a bowl, then stir in the icing sugar and mix well. Turn off the oven heat. Dip the cookies in the icing, put them on a baking sheet and dry them in the oven with the door ajar.



Ginger Cookies – © Domus: Archivio Cucchiato d'Argento

Biscotti alle nocciole – hazelnut cookies

By The Silver Spoon Kitchen

Makes 30

FOR THE BISCOTTI

200g (7oz) plain flour

1 free-range egg, lightly beaten

160g (5½oz) caster sugar

100g (3½oz) hazelnuts, coarsely chopped

100g (3½oz) chocolate chips

80g (3oz) butter, melted and cooled

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4 and line a baking sheet with baking paper.
- 2 Sift the flour into a large bowl and make a well in the centre. Add the egg, then add the sugar, hazelnuts and chocolate chips. Slowly pour in the melted butter and mix gently with a fork.
- 3 Take a little of the dough at a time and shape into flattened balls. Arrange them on the baking sheet and bake for 10 minutes. Remove and let cool, then place on a serving dish and serve or store for a few days in an airtight container.



Cantuccini – © Phaidon: Liz and Max Haaraala Hamilton

Cantuccini al caffè – coffee and almond cantuccini

By The Silver Spoon Kitchen

Makes 32

FOR THE CANTUCCINI

butter, for greasing

400g (14oz) plain flour

1½ tsp baking powder

4 free-range eggs

100g (3½oz) acacia honey

5 tsp strong black coffee

a few drops of vanilla extract

100g (3½oz) unskinned almonds

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6 and grease a baking sheet. Sift the flour and baking powder into a large bowl and make a well in the centre. Break the eggs into it and add the honey, coffee, vanilla and almonds. Combine all the ingredients to form a dough.
- 2 Shape the dough into cylinders, 3cm (1¼in) in diameter, flatten them slightly, and arrange on the baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes, until golden brown. Cut into lozenge-shaped slices while still hot. Let cool before serving.
- 3 For even crisper cookies, after cutting the slices, toast them lightly in the oven, turning them once.



© Phaidon Press: Liz and Max Haaraala Hamilton



The recipes on pages 38-39 are taken from *Italian Cooking School: Desserts* by The Silver Spoon Kitchen, published by Phaidon Press, RRP £9.95.



Spice cookies

By Bernard Laurance

Makes about 40

FOR THE SPICE MIX

2½ tsp cinnamon

¼ tsp ground ginger

¼ tsp gingerbread spice mix

⅛ tsp ground cardamom

⅛ tsp ground aniseed

FOR THE DOUGH

2 tsp spice mix

170g (6oz) dark brown sugar

150g (5oz) butter, at room temperature

2 tbsp milk

260g (9oz) plain flour

- 1 For the spice mix, it's a good idea to double the quantities and store half for future use. All you need to do is combine them well in a small bowl.
- 2 For the dough, place the sugar in a large mixing bowl. Add the spices, stir well and enjoy the fragrance.
- 3 Ensure the butter is very soft. Add it to the sugar with the milk and mix until creamy.
- 4 Add all the flour and stir quickly until just combined – do not overwork if you want to achieve the best texture. Shape the dough into a ball and place it on a sheet of clingfilm. Shape it into an elongated brick by beating it on the work surface. Wrap tightly in clingfilm and chill for a minimum of 2 hours and up to 12 hours.
- 5 Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- 6 Cut the dough block into fine slices, 5mm (¼in) thick. Place on the prepared sheet, 2.5cm (1in) apart and bake for 13-15 minutes, until lightly browned. Cool on a rack and store in an airtight container.



Strawberry and black pepper biscuits

By The Vegetarian Society

Makes 15 sandwiched biscuits

FOR THE BISCUITS

100g (3½oz) Tomor hard vegan margarine or butter

50g (1½oz) caster sugar

zest and half the juice of 1 lemon

100g (3½oz) plain flour

1 tsp cracked black pepper

2 tsp freeze-dried strawberry powder

50g (1½oz) ground almonds

a pinch of salt

FOR THE JAM

4 tbsp icing sugar, extra for dusting

3 tbsp freeze-dried strawberry powder

3 tbsp water

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 2 Cream together the margarine and sugar.
- 3 Add all the remaining biscuit ingredients and mix until thoroughly combined.
- 4 Allow the mixture to chill for 20 minutes.
- 5 Lightly dust your work surface and rolling pin with a little icing sugar. Carefully roll out half of the dough to about 3mm.
- 6 Cut out the dough with a circular cutter, then place onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
- 7 Roll out the remaining dough and cut out circles as before. This time take a small cutter and carefully cut out the centre leaving a ring. Place the rings onto the baking sheet.
- 8 With any remaining dough, cut into biscuit shapes and place onto a baking sheet.
- 9 Bake for 13-15 minutes. When cooked, allow to cool before transferring to a cooling rack.
- 10 To make the jam, simply mix all of the ingredients together. (No need to heat.)
- 11 Finally, fill your biscuits by placing a little jam in the centre of the base biscuit and carefully sit the ring on the top. With a few biscuits, simply place a blob of jam in the centre with no ring and leave the remaining biscuits plain.
- 12 Place your biscuits into an air tight container. The jam will harden overnight enabling easier transportation.

Giant walnut sandwich cookies

By Bernard Laurance

Makes 12 filled cookies

FOR THE PASTRY

1 batch of sweet pastry (see recipe for giant praline sandwich cookies)

FOR THE FILLING

240g (8½oz) sugar

60g (2oz) corn syrup

50ml (1¾fl oz) water

150ml (5¼fl oz) double cream, slightly warmed

150g (5oz) unsalted butter, diced, at room temperature

300g (10½oz) walnuts, chopped

- 1 Prepare the sweet pastry and bake as for the giant praline sandwich cookies.
- 2 For the walnut caramel filling, place the sugar, corn syrup and water in a heavy saucepan over medium heat. Make sure that there are no grains of sugar on the sides of the saucepan. If there are, brush them down with a pastry brush dipped in water.
- 3 Cook until the mix reaches a pronounced caramel colour, but don't let it burn.
- 4 Remove from the heat and stir in the cream and butter. Return to low heat. The caramel may have hardened and needs to melt again. Heat to 112°C.
- 5 Remove from the heat, stir in the nuts and transfer the mixture to a bowl to cool.
- 6 Pour all of the walnut-caramel over the less attractive sheet of pastry on the undecorated side, spreading it out evenly with a spatula.
- 7 Carefully set the other sheet of pastry over the filling. Chill for 2 hours, until the filling sets, so that you can cut the cookies easily.
- 8 Trim the sides and cut the slab into twelve 9cm (3½in) squares.
- 9 You can store these cookies in an airtight container for about a week.



Giant praline sandwich cookies

By Bernard Laurance

Makes 12 filled cookies

FOR THE SWEET PASTRY

85g (3oz) finely ground almonds

240g (8½oz) icing sugar

580g (11b 4oz) plain flour

400g (14oz) unsalted butter, well chilled and diced

135g (4¾oz) free-range eggs, beaten

1 free-range egg, lightly beaten, for the glaze

FOR THE PRALINE FILLING

120g (4oz) unsalted butter

120g (4¼oz) milk chocolate

720g (11b 8oz) praline paste

- 1 For the sweet pastry, place the ground almonds, icing sugar, flour and butter in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the flat beater attachment. (You can also rub the mix together using your fingertips.) Beat until the mixture reaches a sandy texture.
- 2 Incorporate the eggs, mixing until just combined. Do not overwork the pastry.
- 3 Shape it into a ball, cover with clingfilm and chill for 1 hour.
- 4 Cut it into two equal pieces. On a work surface covered with parchment paper, roll one piece to a thickness of about 4mm to fit onto a 30x40cm (12x16in) baking sheet. (You'll need a baking sheet with a rim.) If necessary, trim off any excess dough. Place the dough on the baking sheet and chill for at least 1 hour.
- 5 Repeat with the second piece of dough.
- 6 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 7 For the first stage of baking, bake the first sheet for 15 minutes. Remove it from the oven and brush the top with the beaten egg. (If you do this before baking, the egg wash will shrink during baking and create unnecessary pressure on the surface.) Using a fork, trace diagonal lines over the surface to make a pattern. Return to the oven and bake for 10-15 minutes, until golden all over.
- 8 Repeat the process for the second pastry sheet. Allow both sheets to cool on racks.
- 9 Meanwhile, make the filling. Melt the butter and milk chocolate together over a hot water bath or in the microwave oven, working in short bursts.
- 10 Add the praline paste and mix until thoroughly combined.
- 11 Pour all the chocolate praline mixture over the less attractive sheet of pastry, inverted, spreading it evenly with a spatula.
- 12 Carefully set the other sheet of pastry over the filling. Chill for 20 minutes, until the praline filling sets.
- 13 Trim the sides and cut the slab into twelve 9cm (3½in) squares.
- 14 Store in an airtight container.

Shortbread three ways

By Bernard Laurance

PLAIN SHORTBREAD

Makes 600g (1lb 5oz) of cookies

FOR THE PLAIN SHORTBREAD

180g (6½oz) salted butter, at room temperature

100g (3½oz) sugar

325g (11½oz) plain flour

MILLIONAIRE'S SHORTBREAD

Makes a 21cm (8in) square pan

FOR THE 1-2-3 SHORTBREAD DOUGH

120g (4¼oz) salted butter, at room temperature

60g (2oz) sugar

180g (6½oz) plain flour

FOR THE CARAMEL TOPPING

150g (5oz) light brown sugar

¼ tsp salt

25g (1oz) honey

175g (6oz) butter

397g (14oz) can of sweetened condensed milk

200g (7oz) milk chocolate

PECAN CARAMEL SHORTBREAD

Makes a 21cm (8in) square pan

FOR THE 1-2-3 SHORTBREAD DOUGH

120g (4¼oz) salted butter, at room temperature

60g (2oz) sugar

180g (6½oz) plain flour

FOR THE CARAMEL TOPPING

150g (5oz) dark brown sugar

¼ tsp salt

25g (1oz) honey

175g (6oz) butter

397g (14oz) can of sweetened condensed milk

250g (9oz) pecans

FOR THE PLAIN SHORTBREAD

- 1 Place the butter and sugar in a bowl and cream together.
- 2 Add all the flour and beat in just until the dough is smooth.
- 3 Roll the dough out on a sheet of parchment paper to a thickness of just under 1cm (½in) and then chill for 30 minutes, until it is firm to the touch.
- 4 Preheat the oven to 150°C/Gas Mark 2.
- 5 Using a knife, cut the dough into rectangles.
- 6 To score the typical shortbread indentations, I use the end of a small wooden paintbrush, but you can use any slightly pointed small object, like a toothpick.
- 7 Bake for about 20 minutes, keeping a careful eye on them, until the shortbread is barely coloured. It's fine if they are a very light biscuit colour, but they should be no darker.
- 8 This dough spreads less than the version using the 1-2-3 proportions, and can be made in shortbread moulds. These are often round or eight-sided with floral patterns. Put the raw dough into them, remove any excess, turn the mould over and tap them to get the dough out.

FOR THE MILLIONAIRE'S SHORTBREAD

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Line a 21cm (8in) square cake pan with parchment paper.
- 2 Place the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl. If you have a stand mixer, use the flat beater attachment to mix until the texture is creamy.
- 3 Stir or beat in the flour just until it is incorporated.
- 4 Scrape the dough into the prepared pan and spread it out with your hands. Use the back of a large spoon to even the top.
- 5 Bake for 25 minutes, until golden on the top. Unlike my method for plain shortbread, where I bake until the dough is only pale, here I prefer it to colour a little. Set aside to cool slightly in the pan.
- 6 For the caramel, place the sugar, salt, honey and butter in a heavy saucepan over low heat. Bring to a boil and simmer for 3-4 minutes.
- 7 Stir in the condensed milk, mixing well. Bring back to a simmer over low heat. Continue to simmer, stirring constantly, for 8-10 minutes, until thickened.
- 8 Pour the caramel over the baked shortbread and allow to cool completely. Chill for 2 hours.
- 9 Melt the chocolate over a hot water bath or in short bursts in the microwave oven. Pour it over the set caramel, spreading it evenly. You can use a spatula and draw wavy patterns or tilt the pan to make a smooth surface.
- 10 After about 10 minutes, when the chocolate begins to set but is not yet firm, cut into 16 portions using a sharp knife dipped into hot water after each cut. Store the shortbread in an airtight container.

FOR THE PECAN CARAMEL SHORTBREAD

- 1 To make the dough, follow the recipe for millionaire's shortbread above. Bake until golden.
- 2 Meanwhile, prepare the caramel following the recipe for millionaire's shortbread, substituting dark brown sugar for light brown sugar. Pour the caramel, still hot, over the top of the baked shortbread.
- 3 Immediately scatter the pecans over the caramel topping and press them in lightly. Allow to cool completely. As the caramel will be rather soft, chill for 1 hour before cutting it into 16 portions.



The recipes on pages 41-43 and the spice cookies on page 40 are taken from *Baklava to Tarte Tatin* by Bernard Laurance, published by Flammarion, RRP £19.95. Photography by Amélie Roche.





Cinnamon sugar donuts

By Ashley Wittig and Kevin MacAllister
Makes 12

FOR THE DONUTS

- 500g (11lb 2oz) Bob's Red Mill gluten-free plain flour**
- 200g (7oz) organic sugar**
- 2¼ tsp gluten-free baking powder**
- ¾ tsp xanthan gum**
- ¾ tsp sea salt**
- 200ml (7fl oz) rice milk**
- 115g (4oz) unsweetened apple sauce**
- 1 tbsp canola (rapeseed) oil**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**
- ½ tsp lemon extract**

FOR THE CINNAMON SUGAR

- 115g (4oz) organic sugar**
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon**



The recipes on page 44 and the s'more cookies on page 45 are taken from *Bunner's* by Ashley Wittig and Kevin MacAllister, published by HarperCollins, RRP £14.99.

- 1** Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Spray two 6-mould donut pans or one 12-mould donut pan with canola oil.
- 2** In a large bowl, sift the flour; then add the sugar, baking powder, xanthan gum and salt. Whisk to combine. In a medium bowl, whisk together the milk, apple sauce, oil and vanilla and lemon extracts. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and mix well. The batter should be smooth, with no lumps, so that your donut is less craggy and more puffy. Use the batter immediately, as the donuts will be dense if the batter sits too long.
- 3** Scoop 60g (2oz) batter into each donut mould – it should be full. Bake for 11-13 minutes, until a light golden brown. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from the pans.
- 4** For the cinnamon sugar, in a medium bowl, whisk together the sugar and cinnamon.
- 5** After turning the slightly cooled donuts out of the pans, spray the side of the donut that was exposed in the oven with a bit of canola spray – the other side should already be slightly moist. Using your hands, toss both sides of each donut in the cinnamon sugar. Eat the same day.

Choc-chip cookies

By Ashley Wittig and Kevin MacAllister
Makes 18

FOR THE COOKIES

- 400g (14oz) brown rice flour**
- 175g (6oz) unsweetened cocoa powder**
- 115g (4oz) potato starch**
- 2 tbsp arrowroot starch**
- 1 tsp each of gluten-free baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, xanthan gum and sea salt**
- 190g (6¾oz) organic sugar**
- 175g (6oz) agave nectar**
- 95g (3¼oz) melted coconut oil**
- 2 tsp vanilla extract**
- 1 tsp organic blackstrap molasses**
- 155g (5½oz) vegan semi-sweet chocolate chips**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Line two baking sheets with baking paper.
- 2** In a large bowl, sift together the flour, cocoa powder, both starches, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, xanthan gum and salt. Whisk to combine. In a medium bowl, whisk together the sugar, agave nectar, oil, vanilla and molasses.
- 3** Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and mix well using a spatula. Fold in the chips until evenly distributed.
- 4** Using your hands, roll the dough into golf-ball-size pieces and place on the prepared baking sheets. Press down to flatten each cookie to about 1cm (¼in) thick and 6cm (2½in) diameter, being mindful to keep them spaced about 2.5cm (1in) apart.
- 5** Bake for 12-15 minutes or until the cookies begin to look more matte than glossy. Let sit on the baking sheets for at least 20 minutes, to firm up. Transfer to a cooling rack to cool completely.



S'more cookies

By Ashley Wittig and Kevin MacAllister
Makes 18

FOR THE COOKIES

570g (1lb 4oz) brown rice flour

115g (4oz) potato starch

2 tbsp arrowroot starch

1 tsp each of xanthan gum, gluten-free baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, sea salt and ground cinnamon

190g (6¾oz) organic sugar

175g (6oz) agave nectar

95g (3¼oz) melted coconut oil

2 tsp vanilla extract

1 tsp organic blackstrap molasses

230g (8oz) vegan semi-sweet chocolate chips

230g (8oz) vegan mini marshmallows or quartered full-size ones

- 1 Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Line two baking sheets with baking paper.
- 2 In a large bowl, sift together the flour; both starches, xanthan gum, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, salt and cinnamon. Whisk to combine.
- 3 In a medium bowl, whisk together the sugar, agave nectar, oil, vanilla and molasses. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and mix well using a spatula, hand mixer or stand mixer. Fold in the chocolate chips to evenly distribute. Fold in the marshmallows.
- 4 Using your hands, roll the dough into golf-ball-size pieces and place on the prepared sheets. Flatten each ball to about 1cm (¼in) thick and 6cm (2½in) diameter, spaced about 2.5cm (1in) apart. Bake for 12-15 minutes, until warm, golden brown and the marshmallows look somewhat melted. Let sit for at least 20 minutes, to firm up, then transfer to a rack to cool completely.



Sparkly Christmas tree cookies

By Rainbow Dust Colours
(www.rainbowdust.co.uk)

FOR THE BISCUITS

250g (9oz) Stork margarine

110g (4oz) caster sugar

360g (12¾oz) plain flour

Rainbow Dust ProGel colours – Pink, Sky Blue and Purple

TO DECORATE

Rainbow Dust Edible Glue

Rainbow Dust Edible Glitter – Purple, Cerise and Turquoise

Rainbow Dust Metallic Food Paint –

Light Gold

white dragees

royal icing

flowerpaste

- 1 Cream together the margarine and sugar, being careful not to over mix. Add your flour, a little at a time, until the mix has combined into dough. Divide the mix into three parts, adding a small amount of colour into each one and knead in well. Wrap in clingfilm and chill in the fridge for one hour or overnight if preferred.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Flour your work surface and roll out the dough to approximately 4mm thick. Cut out shapes with a Christmas tree cookie cutter and transfer onto a greased baking tray. Bake for 10-15 minutes. Don't worry if they are still soft, they harden as they cool down.
- 3 To decorate, brush each cookie with edible glue, then cover each one with their corresponding colour of edible glitter. Tap any excess glitter onto a piece of kitchen roll and put back into the pot for next time.
- 4 Using white flowerpaste, roll and cut out stars and leave to dry.
- 5 Finally, add swirls of piping work using royal icing, then secure the dragees and stars in place. Leave to dry. Add the finishing touch by painting over the dragees and stars with a light gold food paint.

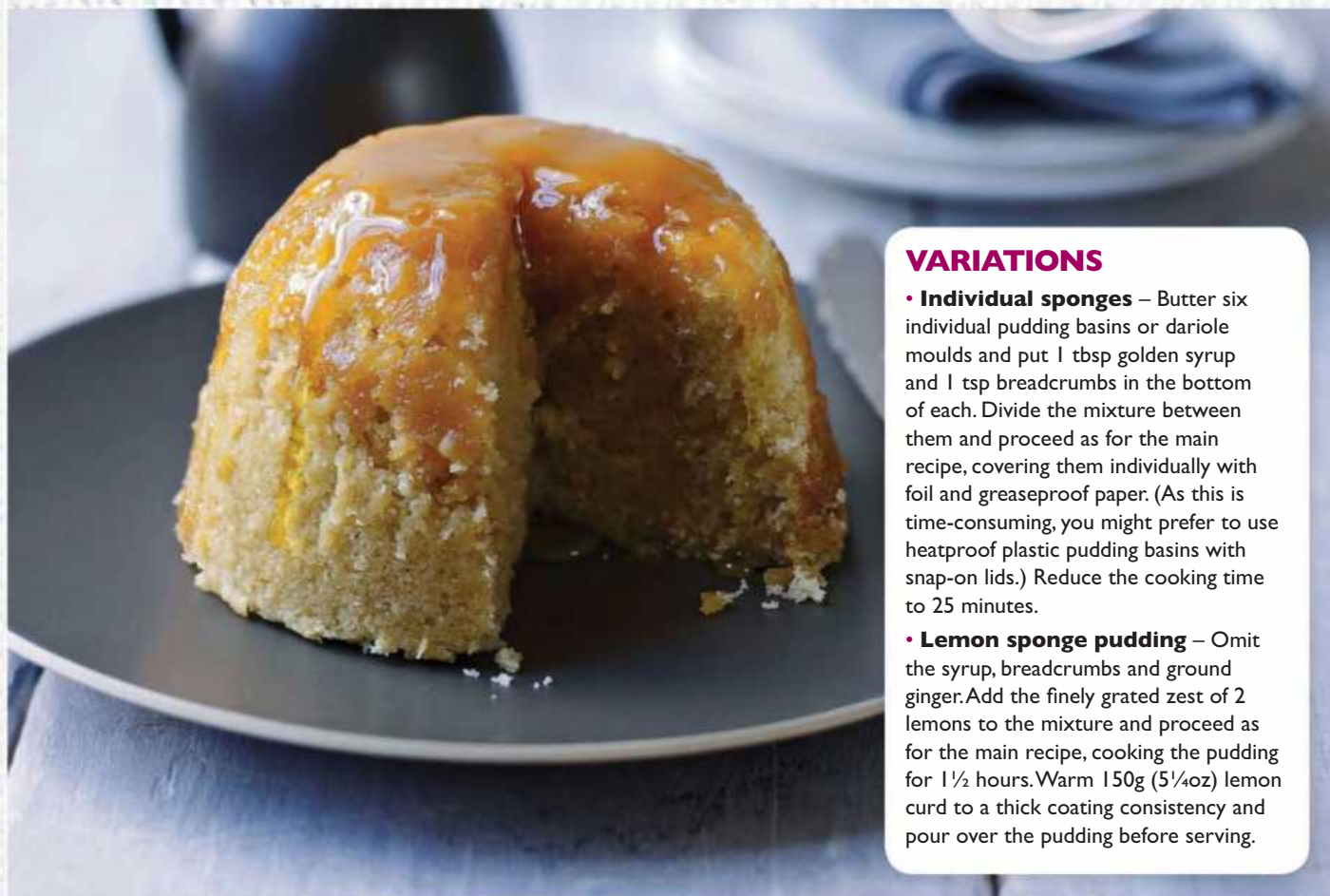


BAKING MASTERCLASS

Perfect winter puddings

Take the mystique out of meringues and don't get hot and bothered by steaming, just follow Leiths' masterclass to learn the skills needed to make classic desserts and create perfect winter puddings...





VARIATIONS

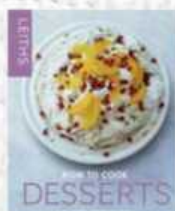
- **Individual sponges** – Butter six individual pudding basins or dariole moulds and put 1 tbsp golden syrup and 1 tsp breadcrumbs in the bottom of each. Divide the mixture between them and proceed as for the main recipe, covering them individually with foil and greaseproof paper. (As this is time-consuming, you might prefer to use heatproof plastic pudding basins with snap-on lids.) Reduce the cooking time to 25 minutes.
- **Lemon sponge pudding** – Omit the syrup, breadcrumbs and ground ginger. Add the finely grated zest of 2 lemons to the mixture and proceed as for the main recipe, cooking the pudding for 1½ hours. Warm 150g (5¼oz) lemon curd to a thick coating consistency and pour over the pudding before serving.

Treacle sponge

By Leiths
Serves 4-6

FOR THE SPONGE

- 120g (4oz) butter, softened, plus extra to grease**
- 75g (2¾oz) golden syrup**
- 3 tsp fresh white breadcrumbs**
- 120g (4oz) caster sugar**
- 1 lemon**
- 2 large free-range eggs, at room temperature**
- 120g (4oz) self-raising flour**
- 1 tsp ground ginger**



The recipes and step-by-steps on pages 47-52 are taken from *How To Cook Desserts* by Leiths School of Food and Wine, published by Quadrille, £15. Photography by Peter Cassidy.

- 1** This all-time traditional favourite is best served with crème anglaise or thick vanilla custard. You will need an 850ml (1½pt) pudding basin.
- 2** Grease the pudding basin well with butter. Prepare the saucepan for steaming and the cover for the pudding (see 'Preparing a Pudding for Steaming' on page 48). Weigh the golden syrup into the bowl and sprinkle over the breadcrumbs.
- 3** Cream the butter and sugar in a large bowl until pale and fluffy. Finely grate the zest from half of the lemon and stir the zest into the mixture.
- 4** Beat the eggs lightly in a separate bowl to loosen and gradually add them to the creamed butter and sugar, beating well after each addition.
- 5** Sift the flour and ginger together and carefully fold into the mixture with a large metal spoon.
- 6** Spoon the mixture into the pudding basin and level the surface. Cover with the greaseproof paper and foil and secure under the rim (see 'Preparing a Pudding for Steaming' on page 48).
- 7** Place the pudding basin on the trivet in the steamer and pour in enough boiling water to come at least halfway up the sides of the basin (not touching the foil). Place the pan over a medium heat and ensure the water is bubbling gently, but still not coming into contact with the foil. Put the lid on the saucepan and steam the pudding for 1¼-1½ hours, checking the water level in the saucepan frequently and topping up with hot water to ensure it doesn't burn dry and no heat is lost.
- 8** Lift the pudding out of the steamer and remove the string, foil and greaseproof paper. Wearing oven gloves, invert a serving dish over the bowl and turn both over together. Give the pudding basin a sharp shake, which should release the pudding, then carefully remove the basin.

STEAMED PUDDINGS

The method for making a delicious steamed pudding is the same as that for the most basic of sponge cakes. The mixture is then cooked slowly in moist, steamy heat and, when made well, will have a lightness that will certainly surprise those who suffered heavy school steamed puddings.

Steamed puddings can be prepared well before you sit down to eat, gently steaming until you are ready to serve: a stress-free but indulgent end to the meal. Just remember to top up the water in the pan occasionally so that it doesn't boil dry.

You don't need any special equipment to steam a pudding; we use a large pan with a lid, a piece of egg box to keep the pudding basin off the base of the pan, and greaseproof paper, foil and string as a lid to cover the pudding basin.

To test if a steamed pudding is cooked, insert a skewer into the middle, through the foil and paper cover. As you remove the skewer, check that there is no raw mixture clinging to it, only crumbs. If it is not ready, cover the hole in the cover with a sticky label and continue to steam the pudding until cooked.

Preparing a pudding for steaming

- 1 Put a trivet into a large saucepan (big enough to easily hold the pudding basin) that has a tight-fitting lid. Alternatively, use a folded piece of thick cardboard or a cardboard egg carton (trimmed to fit). This will keep the base of the pudding basin off the bottom of the saucepan, which is its hottest part.
- 2 Cut out one sheet of foil and two sheets of greaseproof paper, at least twice the diameter of the top of the pudding basin. Make a small pleat, about 3cm (1 1/4in) wide, in the middle of the foil.
- 3 Put one sheet of greaseproof paper on top of the other and make a similar pleat. Lightly butter one side of the double greaseproof paper. Cut a piece of string, the length of your open arms.
- 4 Spoon the mixture into the pudding basin and level it out. Place the greaseproof paper buttered side down on top of the pudding basin.
- 5 Cover with the sheet of foil and push it down and around the top rim of the pudding basin.
- 6 Fold the string in half and place the doubled string around the pudding basin under the lip, over the foil. Feed the cut ends between the folded end and tighten the string. Separate the two cut ends and bring each string around the pudding basin, still under the lip, then tie tightly in a knot.
- 7 Hold the two strings together; take them over the pudding basin to the other side and tuck them through the string on the other side, leaving the ends loose to create a handle for lifting the pudding. Tie the string securely.
- 8 Lift up the foil around the string to expose the greaseproof paper and trim the paper fairly close to the string. Trim the foil to leave a 3-4cm (1 1/4-1 1/2in) border.
- 9 Tuck the foil around the greaseproof paper towards the lip of the pudding basin, ensuring all the greaseproof paper is enclosed in the foil. Your pudding is now ready for steaming.



A makeshift trivet in place, to keep the base of the basin off the bottom of the saucepan.



Pleating the foil that will cover the pudding.



Buttering the doubled greaseproof paper.



Covering the pudding with the buttered greaseproof paper.



Covering the top of the pudding basin with the sheet of foil.



Tying the string under the rim of the basin to hold the foil cover firmly in place.



Creating a handle from the excess string to make it easier to lift the pudding out from the pan.



Trimming away the excess greaseproof paper, before tucking the foil border up over the paper (main image opposite).

TYPES AND USES OF *Meringue*

SWISS MERINGUE

This is the easiest type of meringue to master and the one most often made at home. It is commonly used for traditional teatime meringues. Egg whites are whisked to stiff peaks (see 'Stiff Peak Stage' on page 51), caster sugar is incorporated and the resulting meringue is cooked until it is crisp and dry throughout.

With the addition of a little cornflour and acidity in the form of vinegar or lemon juice, the centre of Swiss meringue will remain soft and mallowy, as in a classic Pavlova. This mallowy centre is perfectly complemented by a topping of fruit and cream.

Swiss meringue can be piped or spooned onto baking sheets lined with baking parchment in a variety of shapes and sizes. Once cooked, it tends to soften quickly on contact with a moist filling, so ideally you should assemble a Swiss meringue pudding no more than half an hour before serving, to keep it crisp. Swiss meringue mixture is not very stable, so make it, shape it and bake it straight away.

ITALIAN MERINGUE

A little more complex than Swiss meringue, this is made using granulated sugar in the form of a sugar syrup that is poured over the stiff whisked egg whites, cooking them as the hot syrup is whisked in. Italian meringue is very crisp and dry once baked but, when uncooked, the soft mixture is used in ice cream and mousse recipes to give them airy volume, stability and sweetness. Italian meringue mixture is more stable than Swiss meringue and so can be left for an hour or so before being piped or shaped.

MERINGUE CUITE

For this, the liquid whites are whisked with icing sugar over heat, to cook and thicken the egg whites, resulting in a dry and chalky-textured cooked meringue. Meringue cuite is the most stable of all meringues and is the best type for piping intricate patterns and designs, as it holds its shape well even once cooked. The uncooked meringue is so stable that it can be kept, covered, in the fridge for 24 hours before being piped and baked.

TECHNIQUE Whisking egg whites

- Egg whites must be whisked in clean bowls just before you need to use them – if left to sit for any length of time they will separate and begin to collapse.
- Egg whites are whisked to different extents for different purposes, so it

SOFT PEAK STAGE

As the egg whites are whisked and stiffen, test them by lifting the balloon whisk up vertically, then turning the whisk upside down. If the whites cling to the whisk and start to create a 'peak', but the peak falls over on itself, the egg whites have reached the soft peak stage.



Making meringues

- All of the types of meringue described above work by trapping thousands of tiny air bubbles into the egg whites as they are whisked. Whisked egg whites create rather an unstable foam, so to make sure they whisk up well and don't collapse, always use a scrupulously clean bowl to whisk them in.
- Traditionally cooks would wipe out a copper bowl with lemon juice and salt to clean the oxidised surface, then the egg whites react with that cleaned copper as they are whisked, producing the best possible volume and stability in the whisked whites. As not many home cooks now have a copper bowl, and whisking by hand with a balloon whisk is exhausting to many, we suggest using a clean metal or glass bowl, and a hand-held electric whisk.
- China bowls are also fine, but plastic bowls tend to trap fat and other

impurities in any scratches and it is these that can prevent the egg whites whisking to the necessary stiffness and volume. A stand-alone kitchen mixer is ideal for making meringues, allowing the cook a free hand with which to add sugar, etc.

- When making meringues, the ratio of egg whites to sugar is generally 1:2 by weight. So for a meringue made using 100g (3½oz) egg whites you would need 200g (7oz) sugar. The weights given in our recipes assume you will use medium-sized eggs, where each white will weigh between 25 and 30g (once separated from the yolk and shell).
- Unusually, the freshest whites are not the best for making meringues. When the whites have become more of a thick liquid than a gel mass, they break down and trap the air bubbles more easily. So save leftover whites when other recipes

require just the yolks and freeze them in small pots labelled with the number of whites they contain. Defrost overnight in the fridge before using them. When using very fresh egg whites, add a pinch of salt to help them break down.

- You can now buy cartons of pasteurised egg whites, which means you don't have to find a use for all those leftover yolks when you make meringues. We find they work well, but take a little longer to whisk up than whites from fresh eggs.



helps to recognise the consistency at the various stages. For meringues, they are whisked until stiff. For most other puddings, egg whites are whisked to a similar texture to the mixture that they are to be combined with.

MEDIUM PEAK STAGE

For firmer egg whites, whisk for a little longer, then test again by lifting the whisk – the whites will cling to the whisk and, as it is pulled up vertically and turned upside down, they will start to fall over onto themselves, then stop halfway. This is the stage that is used for making soufflés and mousses.



- As you start to whisk the egg whites they will increase in volume, becoming white and foamy. Continue to whisk and the whites will become paler and progressively stiffer, passing through the following recognisable stages.

STIFF PEAK STAGE

Continue to whisk and the whites will become very stiff. When tested, the peak will hold its vertical position. This is the stiff peak consistency required for meringue. At this stage there is still some elasticity in the whites. Avoid over-whisking, or they will lose this and break on the whisk.



Baking meringue

- Meringues are essentially just a network of bubbles surrounded by sugar and held together with egg whites, so the oven temperature needs to be kept very low, as sugar burns so easily. The normal temperature for cooking meringues of all kinds is between 120°C/Gas Mark ½ and 140°C/Gas Mark 1. What also works well is to start meringues cooking in the evening, then turn the oven off and leave them overnight; they cook and dry out in the residual heat. This also applies to Agas or similar ovens – leave meringues in the warming oven overnight to dry and crisp.
- To achieve perfectly white meringues, you need to cook them in an electric oven. In a gas oven, meringues – being porous – act as a filter and take on some colour from the gas itself, but this is harmless to eat. If you are using a gas oven, cook meringues on the lowest shelf.

- Meringues should be cooked on non-stick baking parchment (or silicone paper) and not greaseproof paper, to which they stick fast when cooked. While greaseproof paper can be lightly greased, this grease can cause the meringue mixture to lose air and collapse and so is not ideal.
- To test if meringues are ready, try to peel the parchment from the bottom of them; it should come away cleanly and easily.

Storing meringues

- When the weather is wet and the air damp, meringues absorb moisture and become soft, so wrap them well as soon as they've cooled completely after baking.
- Meringues can be made well in advance, which makes them the perfect choice when entertaining for large numbers.

Wrapped well in clingfilm or sealed in an airtight tin or plastic box, they can be made up to a week in advance.

- Meringues assembled with sweetened cream can be frozen (although they do lose some crispness), so this is a good use for leftover meringues after a party.

TECHNIQUE

Shaping meringues

- Meringues should be piped (or spooned) onto baking sheets lined with non-stick baking parchment.
- If the meringue is to be piped, put it into a piping bag fitted with a 1-2cm (½-¾in) plain or fluted nozzle. Pipe a small dot of meringue onto each corner of the baking sheet before positioning the baking parchment on top of it, this will anchor the baking parchment in place and make piping easier.

PIPING MERINGUES

Using a piping bag fitted with a plain nozzle, pipe three squeezes of the bag on top of each other to shape these simple 'beehive' meringues.



INDIVIDUAL VACHERINS

Using a piping bag fitted with a plain or fluted nozzle, pipe tight coils of meringue, about 10cm (4in) in diameter. Once cooked, lift the vacherins from the baking parchment. They will be released easily if they are cooked through.





Pistachio Pavlova with oranges and pomegranate

By Leiths

Serves 8

FOR THE MERINGUE

125g (4½oz) unsalted pistachios, shelled

200g (7oz) caster sugar

4 free-range egg whites

1 tsp cornflour

2 tsp orange blossom water

1 tsp white wine vinegar or lemon juice

TO ASSEMBLE

4 oranges (blood oranges, if in season)

1 pomegranate

200ml (7fl oz) double cream

200g (7oz) mascarpone

2 tbsp runny honey

- 1 Preheat the oven to 140°C/Gas Mark 1. Line a baking sheet with non-stick parchment.
- 2 Put 100g (3½oz) of the pistachios into the small bowl of a food processor with 1 tbsp of the sugar and process until the texture of coarse breadcrumbs. Do not over-process or the nuts will become greasy.
- 3 Using an electric whisk, whisk the egg whites in a medium bowl to stiff peaks (see 'Whisking Egg Whites' on page 51). With the beaters still running, add 4 tbsp sugar, sprinkling in 1 tbsp at a time and whisking
- 4 Fold the remaining sugar into the ground nuts along with the cornflour. Fold the orange blossom water and vinegar into the meringue, then fold in the nuts and sugar very carefully, until just combined.
- 5 Pile the meringue into a mound on the baking sheet and spread it into a circle. (You can draw an 18-20cm (7-8in) diameter circle on the parchment to help, turning the parchment over before covering with meringue if you like.) Make a shallow dip with the back of a metal spoon in the centre of the meringue mixture (for the cream and fruit).
- 6 Bake in the oven for 1-1½ hours, or until the shell is firm to the touch and the parchment can be peeled away from the meringue. Remove from the oven and leave to cool completely.
- 7 Segment the oranges (see right). To remove the seeds from the pomegranate, roll it on the work surface to loosen the seeds, cut it in half and bash the rounded end with a wooden spoon over a bowl to catch the seeds.
- 8 Mix the cream, mascarpone and honey in a large bowl and whisk until the mixture is just holding its shape. Pile into the middle of the Pavlova and decorate with the orange segments, pomegranate seeds and remaining pistachios.

the mixture back to stiff peaks after each addition.

TECHNIQUE Segmenting citrus fruit

- Citrus fruit is an essential ingredient in many puddings. The aromatic zest adds depth and contrast, particularly to rich dishes. The juice can be used to make jellies and the segmented flesh is lovely in fruit salads.
- Removing the segments cleanly from citrus fruit, leaving behind the core and membrane, makes the segments much more attractive and more palatable. To catch any juice as you segment the fruit, you can place the board over a lipped tray.



Top and tail the fruit, to remove just the ends and no more.



Stand the fruit on its end. Using a small, serrated knife, cut off the remaining zest and pith, following the natural curve of the fruit, then trim away any pith left on the fruit.



Put the fruit on its side on a board. Carefully cut on either side of the membrane dividing the segments to release them and place in a bowl. Once all the segments are removed, squeeze the core and membrane over a bowl, to extract the juice.

Desserts

HEAVEN





White chocolate crème brûlée

By Victoria Glass

Makes 8

FOR THE CRÈME BRÛLÉE

1 vanilla pod, seeds scraped out

600ml (1pt) double cream

8 free-range egg yolks

50g (1¾oz) caster sugar, plus extra for sprinkling

100g (3½oz) white chocolate, melted

a cook's blowtorch

1 Preheat the oven to 150°C/Gas Mark 2.

2 Put the vanilla seeds and pod in a saucepan with the cream, set over a gentle heat and warm until it just comes to the boil. In the meantime, whisk the egg yolks and sugar together until pale, then set a fine mesh sieve over the bowl. Pour the hot cream through the sieve into the egg mixture and whisk together. Discard the vanilla pod. Whisk the melted white chocolate into the custard and divide the mixture between eight 200ml (7fl oz) ramekins set inside a roasting pan.

3 Pour boiling water into the roasting pan until it reaches halfway up the ramekins and carefully put in the oven. Bake for 35-40 minutes, or until the custards are just set, with a slight wobble in the middle.

4 Transfer the ramekins onto a wire rack and leave to cool. Once cold, pop the custards in the fridge for at least 4 hours, or overnight.

5 Sprinkle a fine layer of caster sugar over the top of each crème brûlée (about 1 tsp per custard). Caramelize the sugar using a cook's blowtorch or under a hot grill. Leave the caramel to harden and serve.



The recipes on pages 54-56 are taken from *Deliciously Chocolatey* by Victoria Glass, photography by Dan Jones, published by Ryland Peters & Small. *Deliciously Chocolatey* is available to buy for the special price of £11.99 including P&P (RRP £16.99) by calling Macmillan Direct on 01256 302 699 and quoting code GLR EB8.



Kladdkaka – Swedish chocolate mud cake

By Victoria Glass

Serves 6-8

FOR THE KLADDKAKA

2 free-range eggs

300g (10½oz) caster sugar

65g (2¼oz) plain flour

40g (1½oz) cocoa powder

a pinch of salt

2 tsp vanilla extract

1 tbsp dark rum

115g (4oz) butter, melted

ice cream or whipped cream, to serve

1 Preheat the oven to 150°C/Gas Mark 2.

2 Crack the eggs into a mixing bowl and add the sugar. Sift in the dry ingredients and whisk. Add the vanilla, rum and melted butter and whisk to combine.

3 Pour the batter into a greased 20cm (8in) round pie plate and bake in the oven for 30-35 minutes. The cake will still be very gooey in the middle. Serve hot with ice cream or leave to cool and serve with whipped cream.



Black Forest pavlova

By Victoria Glass

Serves 8

FOR THE PAVLOVA

6 free-range egg whites

a pinch of salt

335g (12oz) caster sugar

1 tsp white wine vinegar

75g (2¾oz) dark chocolate, grated

20g (¾oz) cocoa powder, sifted

600ml (1pt) double cream

FOR THE KIRSCH-SOAKED CHERRIES

600g (1lb 5oz) stoned cherries

3 tbsp caster sugar

5-6 tbsp kirsch (or other cherry liqueur)

- 1 Preheat the oven to 150°C/Gas Mark 2.
- 2 Whisk the egg whites with the salt until stiff peaks form. Gradually, 1 tbsp at a time, add the sugar, whisking between each addition. The meringue should be very stiff and glossy. Whisk in the cocoa and vinegar and fold in the chocolate with a large metal spoon.
- 3 Spoon generous dollops of meringue in a ring shape about 25cm (10in) across onto a large baking sheet lined with baking parchment. Spoon more of the mixture in the middle and build up the sides slightly higher. Make swirls in the meringue using a fork for an attractive finish. Pop the meringue in the oven, close the oven door and immediately reduce the temperature to 140°C/Gas Mark 1. Bake for 1 hour.
- 4 Turn the oven off, but leave the meringue inside, with the oven door shut, until the oven is completely cold. It's easiest to make the meringue in the evening and leave it in the oven overnight to cool.
- 5 For the kirsch-soaked cherries, put the cherries in a bowl and sprinkle the sugar over the top. Pour in the kirsch and toss until all the cherries are completely coated. Cover the bowl with clingfilm and leave to macerate for a few hours or even overnight, while the meringue is also cooling.
- 6 Whip the cream until stiff but not dry and whisk in 3-4 tbsp of the macerating liquor from the cherries. Place the meringue on a cake stand and spread the cream thickly over the top, before piling on the drained cherries.





Orchard lattice pie

By The Vegetarian Society (www.vegsoc.org)

Serves 6

FOR THE PIE

- 150g (5oz) margarine**
- 275g (9¾oz) wholemeal plain flour**
- 1 free-range egg, separated (optional if vegan)**
- grated zest and juice of 1 lemon**
- ½ level tsp fresh ground cinnamon**
- 1 level tbsp semolina**
- 700g (1½lb) cooking apples**
- 225g (8oz) blackberries**
- 125g (4½oz) soft brown sugar**
- a little caster sugar, for dusting (optional)**

- 1** Rub the butter or margarine into the flour until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Stir in 60g (2oz) of the brown sugar; then bind to a soft dough with the egg yolk and 3 tbsp water. (Use about 1 tbsp more water if omitting the egg yolk.)
- 2** Knead the mixture, then roll out on a floured surface to an oblong about 25x10cm (10x4in). Fold in three, then half turn clockwise. Repeat the rolling and folding process twice. Wrap and chill.
- 3** Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. In a bowl, place the grated zest of the lemon, 2 tbsp lemon juice, 60g (2oz) brown sugar; the cinnamon and semolina. Stir well. Peel, core and chop the apples into large pieces. Stir into the bowl with the blackberries.
- 4** Roll out two-thirds of the pastry and use to line a 20cm (7½in) pie plate. Pile the fruit mixture into the dish, then decorate with a lattice made from the remaining pastry.
- 5** Place the dish on a baking sheet. Bake for 15 minutes or until tinged with colour. (Optional: remove from the oven, brush the pastry with beaten egg white and sprinkle with caster sugar.) Bake for a further 25 minutes, covering lightly with foil when well browned.



Mamma Moore's apple cake

By Abel & Cole (www.abelandcole.co.uk)

Serves 9-12

FOR THE CAKE

- 225g (8oz) self-raising flour (or 220g (7¾oz) plain white flour plus 1 tsp baking powder)**
- ¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda**
- a pinch of sea salt**
- a pinch of ground cardamom seeds**
- a grating of fresh ginger (or use ground)**
- 100g (3½oz) cold butter, cut into small cubes**
- 450g (1lb) cooking or dessert apples**
- a little lemon juice**
- 100g (3½oz) sugar**
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten**
- 50g (1¾oz) soft brown or demerara sugar (or caster sugar)**
- a sprinkling of ground cinnamon**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Sift the flour; bicarbonate of soda, salt and spices (if using) into a mixing bowl. Mix thoroughly.
- 2** Cut the butter into the flour and rub into breadcrumb consistency.
- 3** Peel the apples and cut them into small, thin pieces. Toss the cut apples in a little lemon juice to keep them from browning.
- 4** Mix in the apples, caster sugar and eggs into the butter/flour mix. Gently fold through until everything is thoroughly mixed. Turn into a lightly oiled cake tin – a round or square tin 23cm (9in) in diameter.
- 5** Level off the top of the batter. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon.
- 6** Bake in the oven for 30-40 minutes. Test with skewer.
- 7** Remove from the oven. Allow to shrink slightly before turning out onto a serving plate. Serve hot with clotted cream, yoghurt, crème fraîche, or warm and buttered.

Recipe and photography © Abel & Cole (www.abelandcole.co.uk)



Recipe and photography on pages 58-60 © Abel & Cole (www.abelandcole.co.uk)

Plum and basil custard tart

By Abel & Cole (www.abelandcole.co.uk)

Serves 6

FOR THE TART

185g (6½oz) plain flour,
plus 1 tsp for the filling and
extra for dusting

120g (4oz) caster sugar
sea salt and freshly
ground pepper

115g (4oz) butter

125ml (4½fl oz) whole milk

1 free-range egg, plus 3 free-
range egg yolks

1 tbsp cold water

125ml (4½fl oz) double cream

½ a vanilla pod

a handful of basil

10-11 plums

icing sugar, for dusting

- 1 Make the pastry first. Sift the flour into a bowl with 75g (2¾oz) caster sugar and a pinch of salt. Add the cold butter and rub in with your fingertips to make fine crumbs. Whisk the egg with 1 tbsp cold water. Set 1 tbsp of the egg wash aside for later. Add the rest to the flour, 1 tbsp at a time, and gently stir with your hands until the pastry comes together. Wrap the pastry in clingfilm and chill for 1 hour.
- 2 Make the custard by pouring the milk and cream into a pan. Scrape the seeds out of half a vanilla pod. Finely chop the basil leaves. Chuck the chopped basil, vanilla seeds and pod half into the pan. Bring the milk to the boil, stirring now and then. Take the milk off the heat and leave to infuse for 30 minutes.

- 3 Strain the infused milk and gently reheat so it's steaming hot but not boiling.
- 4 Whisk the 3 egg yolks, 40g (1½oz) sugar and 1 tsp flour together. Slowly whisk in the hot milk, a little at a time, until you have a thick smooth custard.
- 5 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 6 Carefully roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface and line a 23cm (9in) circular tart tin – the pastry will be quite soft. Add more flour if it's too soft to work with. Chill in the fridge for 30 minutes.
- 7 Line the pastry tin with baking paper and fill it with baking beans or rice. Bake for 20 minutes until the pastry feels firm. Take out the paper and beans. Brush the pastry with the saved egg wash and bake for another 15 minutes until pale golden.
- 8 Turn the oven down to 160°C/Gas Mark 2. Quarter 5-6 plums and scoop out the stones. Arrange the plums in the pastry case. Pour in the custard and bake for 30-40 minutes until the tart is just set, but wobbles a little when shaken. Leave to cool.
- 9 Halve, stone and roughly chop the rest of the plums for the sauce. Pop them in a pan with the remaining sugar and plenty of black pepper. Cook and stir for 10 minutes until they break down and make a thick sauce. Press through a sieve, so that you have a thin, clear sauce. Serve slices of the tart with the sauce, a dusting of icing sugar and some basil leaves.

Baked orange and cardamom cheesecake

By Abel & Cole (www.abelandcole.co.uk)

Serves 6-8

FOR THE CHEESECAKE

olive or sunflower oil

24 digestive biscuits

125g (4½oz) butter

100g (3½oz) dark chocolate

6 cardamom pods

grated zest and juice of 1 orange

4 free-range eggs

150g (5¼oz) caster sugar

500g (1lb 2oz) ricotta

250g (9oz) mascarpone

2 tbsp plain flour

50g (1¾oz) dried cranberries

- 1 Preheat your oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Lightly grease a 23cm (9in) loose-bottomed cake tin with olive or sunflower oil. Pop 24 digestive biscuits in a freezer or sandwich bag. Seal it. Bash them with a rolling pin to make crumbs.
- 2 Roughly chop half the chocolate. Melt the butter in a pan over a low heat. Stir the biscuit crumbs into the melted butter. When they're well mixed, stir in the chopped chocolate. Spoon into the cake tin. Press down and smooth with the back of a spoon. Bake for 10 minutes.
- 3 Pop the cardamom pods in a pestle and mortar. Crack them open. Separate out the black seeds. Grind the seeds to a fine powder. Finely grate or pare the zest from the orange. Juice it.
- 4 Crack the eggs into a large bowl and add most of the sugar, putting 1 tbsp to one side. Whisk together for 2-3 minutes until the eggs are pale and thick. Add the cardamom, zest, ricotta, mascarpone and flour. Whisk together until smooth – don't over-beat.
- 5 Spoon the cheese mixture into the baking tin. Turn the oven down to 160°C/Gas Mark 3 (low and slow is the rule for cheesecakes). Bake for around 55 minutes, until the cheesecake is just set with a slight wobble in the middle. Cool in the tin.
- 6 When you're ready to serve, loosen the cake tin. Lift the cheesecake up and out. Pop on a serving plate. Melt the rest of the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering water.
- 7 Drizzle the melted chocolate over the cheesecake. Tip the dried cranberries in a pan with the orange juice and the spoonful of sugar you saved earlier. Warm over a lowish heat until the sugar dissolves. Spoon over the cheesecake and serve.





Ginger and apricot bread and butter pudding

By Abel & Cole (www.abelandcole.co.uk)

Serves 6-8

FOR THE PUDDING

6 apricots	3 free-range eggs
75g (2½oz) softened butter	35g (1¼oz) caster sugar plus 1 tbsp
1½ tbsp crystallised ginger	500ml (18fl oz) bottle Court Lodge Apricot Pouring Yoghurt
9 thick slices of white bread	100ml (3½fl oz) full cream milk
1 tsp ground ginger	single cream, to serve

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 2 Slice the apricots in half and remove the stone. Roughly chop the apricots and the crystallised ginger.
- 3 Lightly butter a 2 litre ovenproof dish with some of the butter. Butter the slices of bread and slice each one into four triangles. You can cut off the crusts, or leave them on to give texture.
- 4 Line the bottom of the dish with a third of the bread, butter side up. Scatter a third of the apricots, crystallised ginger and ground ginger over the bread. Use another third of the bread to make another layer and keep repeating the layers until you've used up the bread, apricots, crystallised ginger and ground ginger. Lightly push down as you add each layer to squash everything together.
- 5 Crack the eggs into a bowl. Give them a whisk to break them up a little. Add the sugar and whisk them together. Whisk in the yoghurt and the milk. Pour the yoghurt mix all over the pudding.
- 6 Leave the bread and butter to soak for 30 minutes. When you're ready to bake, sprinkle 1 tbsp caster sugar over the top and pop it in the oven. Bake for 30-40 minutes until golden and crusty on top.
- 7 Serve warm from the oven with single cream. It's also fantastic cold – leave to cool, then chill for a few hours. It'll come away from the dish edge, so you can slide a knife round and slice it into squares.



Spiced date brownie cake

By Abel & Cole (www.abelandcole.co.uk)

Serves 16-20

FOR THE CAKE

300g (10½oz) stoned dates, finely chopped	4 tbsp black treacle
grated zest of 2 lemons	250g (9oz) dark brown sugar
500ml (18fl oz) freshly brewed strong black coffee	150g (5¼oz) unsalted butter
crushed seeds from 12 cardamom pods	3 free-range eggs
2 tsp cinnamon	150g (5¼oz) mixed nuts
2 tsp mixed spice	4 tbsp seeds (sesame, pumpkin and/or sunflower)
4 tbsp honey	400g (14oz) plain wholemeal or spelt flour
	1 tbsp baking powder
	4 tbsp apricot jam (optional)

- 1 Line a large rectangular baking dish (about 30x24cm (12x10in)) with baking paper.
- 2 In a large saucepan, add the dates, lemon zest, coffee, spices, honey, black treacle, sugar and butter. Simmer and stir until combined. Let it cool fully.
- 3 Preheat your oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 4 Beat the eggs in a large bowl. Add the flour, baking powder and the cooled coffee/date mix. Chop half the nuts and add them to the mix. Stir everything together.
- 5 Pour into the lined dish. Scatter the seeds and remaining nuts evenly over the top.
- 6 Bake for 1 hour, or until a skewer poked in comes out with just a few tiny moist crumbs stuck to it. Cover with a large layer of baking paper or foil after 30 minutes, to stop the nuts from burning.
- 7 To give it a stunning gloss, warm 4 tbsp apricot jam until syrupy. Brush over the top.
- 8 Once cool, remove from the dish and cut into squares.



Almond spirals

By Anissa Helou

Makes 20 large or 40 dainty pastries

FOR THE FILLING

500g (1lb 2oz) blanched almonds

150g (5¼oz) icing sugar

60ml (2fl oz) orange blossom water

2 tbsps unsalted butter, at room temperature

6-8 grains mastic, finely ground in a small mortar with a pestle to yield ½ tsp powdered mastic

FOR THE PASTRY

one 400g (14oz) packet of filo pastry – the sheets I used measured 29x42cm (11½x16¾in)

150g (5¼oz) plus 2 tbsps unsalted butter, melted

1 To make the filling, place the almonds in a heatproof bowl, pour in enough boiling water to cover and let sit for 1 hour. Drain the almonds well and dry them with a clean kitchen towel.

2 Combine the almonds with the icing sugar in a food processor. Process until very finely ground, about 2 minutes. Add the orange blossom water, butter and mastic powder and process until well blended. Transfer the paste to your work surface and roll into a sausage shape. Divide into 20 equal pieces and shape each piece into first a ball and then into a thin cylinder measuring about 22.5cm (9in) long. Cover with clingfilm.

3 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.

4 Lay one sheet of filo on your work surface and brush with a little melted butter. Lay one almond cylinder about 12mm (½in) away from the edge nearest you, and about 2cm (¾in) away from the edges of the filo. Flap the filo over the almond cylinder and roll, keeping the filo very close to the filling as you roll the pastry over it. Brush with butter and, with the seam side down, fold one empty end over the almond roll and roll into a spiral, sliding the other empty end under the spiral.

5 Transfer the spiral to the prepared baking sheet and press lightly on it to make sure it doesn't unroll during baking. Make the remaining spirals the same way. When you have finished them, poke each one here and there with a toothpick to keep the pastry from puffing.

6 Bake until golden, 25 minutes. Let cool on a wire rack.



The recipes on pages 61-62 and the Arabian sponge cake on page 63 are taken from *Sweet Middle East* by Anissa Helou, published by Chronicle Books, RRP £15.99. Photographs © Linda Pugliese

Pistachio-filled semolina pastries

By Anissa Helou

Makes about 15

FOR THE PASTRY

175g (6oz) semolina (regular, not fine)

2 tbsp unbleached plain flour

2 tbsp caster sugar

1/8 tsp fast-acting (instant) yeast

75g (2 3/4oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature

1 1/2 tbsp orange blossom water

1 1/2 tbsp rose water

FOR THE FILLING

100g (3 1/2oz) hulled unsalted pistachios

2 tbsp caster sugar

3/4 tsp orange blossom water

3/4 tsp rose water

icing sugar

- 1 To make the pastry, mix the semolina, flour, sugar and yeast in a mixing bowl. Add the butter and, with the tips of your fingers, work it in until fully incorporated. Add the orange blossom water and rose water and knead until the pastry is smooth and elastic. (Add a drop more rose water if you find the pastry a little dry.) Place in a lightly floured bowl. Cover with clingfilm and let rest in a cool place for 1 1/2 hours.
- 2 To make the filling, using a spice grinder or small food processor, grind the pistachios to a medium-fine texture. Mix the ground pistachios and sugar in a mixing bowl. Add the orange blossom water and rose water and mix well.
- 3 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.
- 4 Pinch off a small piece of pastry and roll it into a ball the size of a walnut. Place it in your palm and flatten with your fingers, until you have an oval about 7.5cm (3in) long, about 5cm (2in) wide in the middle, and about 6mm (1/4in) thick. Place 1 tsp pistachio filling in a line down the middle lengthwise and pinch the dough together to close it over the filling.
- 5 Carefully shape the filled pastry into a finger with a fat middle and if you have a *tabe'*, lightly press the pastry into it, leaving the pinched side on the outside (so that when you invert the moulded pastry, it is on the bottom). Place the fingers of your other hand under a work surface with your palm protruding. Invert the mould over your hand and tap the mould lightly against the work surface to release the pastry into your palm. Slide the pastry onto the prepared baking sheet. Fill and shape the remaining pastry in the same way. You may have to scrape the inside of the mould every now and then in case some pastry sticks to it. If you don't have a *tabe'*, gently shape the pastry between the palms of your hands to create a flat oval bottom, mounding the *ma'mul* into a rounded sloping shape. You should end up with about 15 pastries, each measuring about 7.5cm (3in) long, 2.5cm (1in) wide in the middle and 3cm (1 1/4in) high.
- 6 Bake the pastries until cooked and barely coloured, 12-15 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack.
- 7 Let cool and then sprinkle with icing sugar before serving.



Arabian sponge cake

By Anissa Helou

Serves 6

FOR THE CAKE

150g (5½oz) unbleached plain flour

1 tbsp ground cardamom

¼ tsp saffron threads

60ml (2fl oz) rose water

6 green cardamom pods

6 large free-range eggs, beaten

90g (3oz) icing sugar

1½ tsp baking powder

¼ tsp fine sea salt

1 tbsp sesame seeds

- 1 Toast the flour in a skillet over medium heat until light golden, 8-10 minutes. Add the ground cardamom and mix well. Let cool.
- 2 In a small bowl, combine the saffron with the rose water and let sit for 15 minutes to infuse.
- 3 Open the cardamom pods and extract the seeds inside. Coarsely crush the seeds in a small mortar using a pestle.
- 4 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Butter and flour a 15cm (6in) round cake pan.
- 5 Whisk the eggs with the icing sugar and keep whisking until the mixture has increased in volume. Mix in the saffron mixture, and then fold in the flour mixture, baking powder and salt and mix until completely blended. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and sprinkle the sesame seeds and crushed cardamom all over the top.
- 6 Bake until completely dry in the middle, 25-30 minutes. Insert a skewer and if it comes out with no crumbs attached, the cake is ready. Let cool completely before serving. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 days.



Baked cream cheesecake

By Dairy Diary (www.dairydiary.co.uk)

Serves 10

FOR THE CHEESECAKE

50g (2oz) butter, melted

150g (5oz) digestive biscuits, crushed

¼ tsp ground cinnamon

500g (1lb 2oz) full fat soft cheese

125g (4½oz) caster sugar

3 free-range eggs, beaten

grated zest of 1 lemon

2 tbsp lemon juice

1½ tsp vanilla extract

150ml (¼ pint) soured cream

grated lemon and lime zest, to decorate

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 2 Mix together the melted butter, biscuits and cinnamon. Press into the base of a greased, loose-bottomed 20cm (8in) cake tin. Bake in the oven for 10 minutes.
- 3 Beat together the soft cheese and 110g (4oz) caster sugar; then gradually beat in the eggs. Stir in the lemon zest, lemon juice and vanilla extract.
- 4 Pour into the cake tin and bake for 1 hour or until the centre is firm to touch.
- 5 Remove from the oven and allow the cheesecake to cool.
- 6 Mix together the remaining sugar and soured cream. Spread the mixture over the cheesecake.
- 7 Remove from the tin and chill until ready to serve. Decorate with lemon and lime zest.

Recipe and photography © www.dairydiary.co.uk



Blueberry crumble

By Dairy Diary (www.dairydiary.co.uk)

Serves 6

FOR THE CRUMBLE

450g (1lb) blueberries

150g (5oz) caster sugar

grated zest and juice of 1 lemon

75g (3oz) breadcrumbs

75g (3oz) ground almonds

110g (4oz) butter

25g (1oz) slivered or flaked almonds

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Mix the fruit, 75g (3oz) sugar, lemon zest and juice in a shallow baking dish.
- 2 Make the crumble by mixing the breadcrumbs, ground almonds and remaining sugar in a large bowl. Rub in, or cut in, the butter roughly and spoon the mixture evenly over the fruit. Scatter with slivered or flaked almonds.
- 3 Bake the crumble for about 30 minutes, turning the oven heat down to 180°C/Gas Mark 4 after 15 minutes when the top has browned. Serve warm or cold with plenty of cream – either clotted or double!

Cherry bread pudding

By Dairy Diary (www.dairydiary.co.uk)

Makes 16 squares

FOR THE PUDDING

225g (8oz) 2-3 day old white bread, crust removed, torn into small pieces

375ml (13fl oz) milk

grated zest of 2 oranges, juice of 1

1 tbsp mixed ground spice

175g (6oz) seedless raisins

150g (5oz) sultanas

50g (2oz) mixed chopped peel

75g (3oz) ready-to-eat prunes, chopped

75g (3oz) ready-to-eat dried apricots, chopped

75g (3oz) glacé cherries, quartered

3 free-range eggs, beaten

150g (5oz) butter, melted

1-2 tbsp black treacle

granulated sugar

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4 and grease a 23cm (9in) square shallow baking dish.
- 2 Soak the bread with the milk in a bowl for 10 minutes. Add the rest of the ingredients, except the sugar, and mix well.
- 3 Transfer to the baking dish, spread evenly and bake for 45-50 minutes until the pudding is lightly browned and set in the centre.
- 4 Sprinkle with the granulated sugar and serve hot with custard. Or leave to cool, cut into squares, cover and refrigerate.



Kent plum pudding

By Dairy Diary (www.dairydiary.co.uk)

Serves 8

FOR THE PUDDING

50g (2oz) butter plus a little extra

50g (2oz) clear honey

1 small cooking apple –

110g (4oz) prepared weight, peeled, cored and diced

110g (4oz) dried figs (about 6), de-stalked, diced

110g (4oz) raisins

50g (2oz) sultanas

50g (2oz) currants

50g (2oz) mixed peel

50g (2oz) muscovado sugar

100g (3½oz) blanched almonds, finely chopped

25g (1oz) hazelnuts, Brazil or macadamia nuts, chopped

75g (3oz) stale white breadcrumbs

generous ½ tsp mixed spice

grated zest and juice of ½ a lemon

2 free-range eggs, beaten

1 tbs rum

3 tbs brandy

- 1 Butter a 900ml (1½pt) pudding basin and have a pan with a steamer and tight-fitting lid ready.
- 2 Put the butter and honey in a small pan and warm through over a low heat until the butter melts. Set aside.
- 3 Mix the apple with the dried fruits, sugar, nuts, breadcrumbs, spice, lemon zest and juice.
- 4 Add the butter and honey mixture, eggs, rum and brandy and mix well. Spoon into the bowl and press the mix down. Cover with a piece of greaseproof paper, then foil, both containing a pleat to allow for expansion during steaming. Tie with string.
- 5 Put the basin in the steamer with boiling water underneath. Cover and steam for 3 hours, topping up with boiling water every so often. Let the pudding cool without the foil and paper.
- 6 Cover and keep chilled for a few days. Put fresh bakewell and foil on top and steam for 1 hour to reheat the pudding. Turn it out, decorate with a sprig of holly and flame with warmed brandy if you like. Serve with cream or custard.



Ripe tart

By Dairy Diary (www.dairydiary.co.uk)

Serves 8

FOR THE TART

175g (6oz) plain flour

a pinch of salt

25g (1oz) cornflour

110g (4oz) icing sugar, plus 2 tsp and a little for decorating

75g (3oz) butter

2 free-range eggs, plus 1 yolk

450g (1lb) cherries, stoned

75g (3oz) ground almonds

a few drops of almond essence

25g (1oz) flaked almonds

- 1 Sift the flour, salt, cornflour and 2 tsp of the icing sugar into a bowl. Rub in the butter until it resembles fine breadcrumbs.
- 2 Add the egg yolk and a little water to bind together. Knead lightly on a floured surface and roll out. Place a 23cm (9in) diameter loose-bottomed fluted flan ring on a baking tray and line with the pastry. Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6 and chill the flan case while the oven warms up.
- 3 Bake the pastry case blind for 15 minutes. Remove the baking beans and cook for 5 minutes more. Turn down the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3.
- 4 Arrange the cherries in the flan case. Mix the icing sugar, eggs, almonds and essence and pour over. Bake in the oven for 50-60 minutes, until the top is firm and golden. Halfway through cooking, sprinkle flaked almonds over the top. Serve hot or cold dusted with sifted icing sugar and with pouring cream.

Apple and caramel mug crumble

By Christell Huet-Gomez

Makes 1 mug

FOR THE FRUIT

2 apples, peeled, cored and diced

1 tbsp caster sugar

1 tsp natural vanilla extract

a knob of butter

FOR THE CRUMBLE

1 slice of butter 5mm (¼in) thick (15g (½ oz))

1 tbsp soft brown sugar

2 tbsp liquid caramel or 1 tbsp dulce de leche

3 heaped tbsp plain flour

a pinch of salt

- 1 In a mug, mix the apple with the sugar, vanilla and butter. Cover the mug with clingfilm, pierced several times.
- 2 Cook in the microwave for 1 minute at 800 watts or 50 seconds at 1000 watts. Pour off any excess liquid and stir again.
- 3 In a bowl, mix the butter, soft brown sugar, 1 tbsp of the caramel, the flour and salt with your fingertips to form a dough.
- 4 Crumble it into the mug and cook in the microwave for 2 minutes at 800 watts or 1 minute 30 seconds at 1000 watts. Pour the remaining caramel over the crumble before eating.



The recipes on pages 66-67 are taken from *Mug Crumbles* by Christell Huet-Gomez, published by Hardie Grant, RRP £7.99. Photography by David Japy.



Cherry, apple and chocolate mug crumble

By Christell Huet-Gomez

Makes 1 mug

FOR THE FRUIT

- 1 apple, peeled, cored and diced**
- 1 tbsp caster sugar**
- a knob of butter**
- 60g (2oz) pitted cherries**

FOR THE CRUMBLE

- 1 slice of butter 5mm (¼in) thick (15g (½oz))**
- 1 tbsp soft brown sugar**
- 2 heaped tbsp plain flour**
- 2 tsp unsweetened cocoa powder**
- a pinch of salt**

- 1** In a mug, mix the apple with the sugar and butter. Cover the mug with clingfilm, pierced several times.
- 2** Cook in the microwave for 1 minute at 800 watts or 50 seconds at 1000 watts. Pour off any excess liquid. Add the pitted cherries and stir again.
- 3** In a bowl, mix the butter, soft brown sugar, flour, cocoa powder and salt with your fingertips to form a dough.
- 4** Crumble it into the mug and cook in the microwave for 1 minute at 800 watts or 50 seconds at 1000 watts.
- 5** Let it cool a little before eating.



Pear with gingerbread and white chocolate mug crumble

By Christell Huet-Gomez

Makes 1 mug

FOR THE FRUIT

- 2 pears, peeled, cored and diced**
- 1 tbsp caster sugar**
- a knob of butter**

1 tsp gingerbread spices or French four-spice seasoning

1 tbsp white chocolate chips

FOR THE CRUMBLE

- 1 slice of butter 5mm (¼in) thick (15g (½oz))**
- 1 tbsp soft brown sugar**
- 3 slices of gingerbread**
- a pinch of salt**
- 1 tbsp white chocolate chips**

- 1** In a mug, mix the pears with the sugar and butter. Cover the mug with clingfilm, pierced several times.
- 2** Cook in the microwave for 1 minute at 800 watts or 50 seconds at 1000 watts. Pour off any excess liquid. Add the spices, white chocolate chips and stir again.
- 3** In a bowl, mix the butter, soft brown sugar, gingerbread and salt with your fingertips to form a dough.
- 4** Crumble it into the mug and cook in the microwave for 1 minute at 800 watts or 50 seconds at 1000 watts. Sprinkle the chocolate chips over the crumble and cook for a further 30 seconds at 800 watts or 20 seconds at 1000 watts.
- 5** Let it cool a little before eating.



Spiced strawberry linzer torte

By Eleanor Ozich
Serves 8

FOR THE PASTRY

125g (4½oz) butter, chilled and cubed

175g (6oz) ground almonds

230g (8oz) buckwheat flour, 175g (6oz) spelt flour or 300g (10½oz) rice flour, plus extra for dusting

100g (3½oz) rapadura, coconut or muscovado sugar

1 tsp pure vanilla extract

1 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

2 free-range eggs

FOR THE FILLING

450g (1lb) strawberries, green hulls removed, sliced in half

75g (2½oz) rapadura, coconut or muscovado sugar

juice of ½ a lemon

FOR THE TOPPING

1 free-range egg, beaten

2 tbspp poppy seeds

- 1** Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Grease a 22cm (8½in) pie tin.
- 2** For the pastry, place all of the ingredients, except the eggs, in a food processor. Pulse until the mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs. With the motor running on low, add the eggs one at a time, and process until the mixture starts to come together like a dough.
- 3** Turn the dough out onto a floured bench, then knead for 2-3 minutes, until lovely and smooth.
- 4** Using a rolling pin, roll the dough out to about 5mm (¼in) thick, then dust with extra flour. Loosely roll the pastry around the rolling pin, then carefully unroll it over the pie dish. Press the pastry into the dish and trim the edges using a sharp knife.
- 5** Combine the filling ingredients in a mixing bowl. Toss well to combine, then spoon the mixture into the pie dish.
- 6** Roll out the pastry trimmings, then slice into long strips, about 3cm (1¼in) wide. Arrange the pastry strips over the strawberry filling, in a lattice pattern. Trim any excess pastry from the edges.
- 7** Gently brush the pastry with the beaten egg, then sprinkle with the poppy seeds. Bake for 35-40 minutes, or until the pastry is golden and the filling is bubbling.
- 8** Remove from the oven and leave to cool in the tin before serving. The torte will keep in an airtight container in a cool, dark place for up to 3 days.



The recipes on pages 68-69 are taken from *My Family Table* by Eleanor Ozich, published by Murdoch Books, RRP £18.99. Photography by Eleanor Ozich.



Brown butter cinnamon blondies

By Eleanor Ozich

Makes 12

FOR THE BLONDIES

- 170g (6oz) unsalted butter or cocoa butter**
- 150g (5½oz) spelt flour, 195g (6¾oz) buckwheat flour, 240g (8½oz) brown rice flour or 180g (6oz) quinoa flour**
- 150g (5½oz) rapadura, coconut or muscovado sugar**
- 2 free-range eggs**
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract**
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda**
- a pinch of sea salt**

FOR DUSTING

- 1 tsp ground cinnamon**
- 35g (1¼oz) rapadura, coconut or muscovado sugar**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 2½. Find a baking dish measuring about 24x20cm (9x8in) and line it with baking paper.
- 2** If using butter, brown the butter by melting it in a frying pan over low heat and cooking until it is golden and smells deliciously nutty, then set aside to cool. If using cocoa butter, skip this process.
- 3** Add the remaining blondie ingredients to a food processor, then blend until it's smooth. Add the melted butter or cocoa butter and blend until just combined, then pour the batter into the baking dish.
- 4** In a small bowl, mix the cinnamon and sugar together, then sprinkle evenly over the blondie mixture.
- 5** Transfer to the oven and bake for 30-40 minutes, or until a skewer inserted in the middle comes out clean. Remove from the oven and leave to cool, then slice into bars. The blondies will keep in an airtight container in a cool, dark place for 3-4 days.



Blackcurrant clafoutis

By Eleanor Ozich

Serves 4

FOR THE CLAFOUTIS

- 3 free-range eggs**
- 310ml (10¾fl oz) almond milk, or other milk of your choice**
- 50g (1¾oz) ground almonds**
- 75g (2½oz) rapadura or coconut sugar**
- 45g (1½oz) rice flour**
- 1 tbsp pure vanilla extract**
- grated zest of 1 lemon**
- a pinch of sea salt**

FOR THE TOPPING

- 15g (½oz) coconut flakes**
- 75g (2½oz) fresh or frozen blackcurrants**
- 2 tbsp coconut flour (optional)**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease a 22cm (8½in) baking dish or ovenproof cast-iron frying pan with coconut oil.
- 2** Add all the clafoutis ingredients to a food processor. Process until smooth, then pour into the baking dish. Top with the coconut flakes and blackcurrants.
- 3** Bake for 45 minutes, or until a skewer inserted in the middle of the clafoutis comes out clean. Remove from the oven and leave to cool slightly, then garnish with a sprinkling of coconut flour, if using.
- 4** The clafoutis is best served warm.



Apple and cloudberry crumble

By Bronte Aurell

Serves 4-6

FOR THE FILLING

6 Granny Smith apples (or equivalent tart apples)

2 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
seeds from ½ a vanilla pod

200g (7oz) cloudberry jam

TO SERVE

vanilla ice cream or fresh vanilla custard

FOR THE TOPPING

100g (3½oz) plain flour

80g (2¾oz) ground almonds

40g (1½oz) chopped hazelnuts or almonds

100g (3½oz) butter

100g (3½oz) golden caster sugar

a pinch of sea salt

flaked almonds (optional)

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 2 Peel and core the apples and cut into bite-size pieces. Place in a saucepan with a dash of water. Heat and stir for a few minutes, then add the lemon juice and vanilla. Turn off the heat and fold in the cloudberry jam. (If you are lucky and you can get hold of fresh cloudberrys, use half cloudberrys and half cloudberry jam, but reduce the amount of lemon juice a bit as fresh cloudberrys are very tart.)
- 3 For the crumble, blitz all the ingredients apart from the flaked almonds in a food processor, until you have a crumbly mixture.
- 4 Add the apples to an ovenproof dish and top evenly with the crumble mixture. Add flaked almonds, if using, to the top of the crumble for extra crunch.
- 5 Bake in the oven for about 25-30 minutes or until cooked.
- 6 Serve with a good vanilla ice cream or vanilla custard.



Danish dream cake

By Bronte Aurell

Serves 10-12

FOR THE CAKE

3 free-range eggs

225g (8oz) caster sugar

½ tsp vanilla sugar

225g (8oz) plain flour or cake flour

2 tsp baking powder

150ml (5fl oz) whole milk

75g (2¾oz) butter, melted

FOR THE TOPPING

100g (3½oz) butter

150g (5¼oz) desiccated coconut

250g (9oz) dark brown sugar

75ml (2¾fl oz) whole milk

a pinch of salt

- 1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5.
- 2 In a food mixer bowl, whisk the eggs, caster sugar and vanilla sugar on a high speed for a few minutes, until white and light. Meanwhile, in a separate bowl, sift together the flour and baking powder.
- 3 Carefully fold the flour into the egg mixture. Mix the milk with the melted butter in a jug and carefully pour into the batter, folding it in until incorporated. Pour the batter into a 23cm (9in) springform or round cake pan, greased and lined with baking parchment.
- 4 Bake in the oven for 35-40 minutes, or until almost done (try not to open the oven door for the first 20 minutes of the baking time).
- 5 To make the topping, put all the ingredients in a saucepan and gently melt together.
- 6 Remove the cake from the oven and carefully spread the topping all over the cake. Return to the oven. Turn up the heat to 200°C/Gas Mark 6 and bake for a further 5 minutes.
- 7 Leave the cake to cool before eating, if you can.

Auntie Inga's sticky chocolate cake

By Bronte Aurell

Serves 6-8

FOR THE CAKE

2 free-range eggs

200g (7oz) caster sugar

150g (5¼oz) plain flour or cake flour

3 tbsp good-quality cocoa powder, plus extra for dusting

1 tbsp vanilla sugar or extract

a pinch of salt

100g (3½oz) unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly

whipped cream, to serve

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.

2 Whisk the eggs and sugar together until the mixture is light, fluffy and pale.

3 Sift all the dry ingredients into the egg and sugar mixture. Fold in until everything is incorporated, then fold in the melted butter.

4 Pour into a 20cm (8in) deep round cake pan, greased and lined with baking parchment.

5 Bake in the oven for 10-15 minutes. The exact time can vary, so keep an eye on the cake. A perfect *kladdkaka* is very soft in the middle, but not runny once it has cooled – but almost runny. The cake will not rise, but it will puff up slightly during baking.

6 If you press down gently on the cake, the crust should need a bit of pressure to crack. When this happens, the cake is done. Leave to cool in the pan.

7 Serve with whipped cream, dusted with cocoa powder.



The recipes on pages 70-71 are taken from *The Scandi Kitchen* by Bronte Aurell, published by Ryland Peters & Small, RRP £16.99. *The Scandi Kitchen* is available to buy for the special price of £11.99 including P&P (RRP £16.99) by calling Macmillan Direct on 01256 302 699 and quoting code GLR EA4.



Zebra puddings with hot chocolate fudge sauce

By Love Food
Makes 6

FOR THE PUDDINGS

10g (¼oz) flour, for dusting
125ml (4fl oz) vegetable oil, plus 1 tbsp for oiling the moulds

125g (4½oz) caster sugar

4 tbsp milk

2 free-range eggs, beaten

150g (5½oz) self-raising flour, sifted

½ tsp baking powder

15g (½oz) cocoa powder, sifted

FOR THE SAUCE

300ml (10fl oz) double cream

200g (7oz) plain chocolate, chopped

1 tbsp golden syrup

25g (1oz) butter

- 1 Lightly oil six 175ml (6fl oz) dariole moulds or ramekin dishes and dust with flour. Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 2 Place the oil, sugar, milk and eggs in a mixing bowl and gently whisk to combine. Divide the mixture between two bowls.
- 3 Add 100g (3½oz) of the flour and half the baking powder to one of the bowls and fold to combine. Add the remaining flour and baking powder together with the cocoa powder to the other bowl and mix well. Make sure that both mixtures have the same consistency, they should be pourable but not runny. If they need to be looser, add a little more milk.
- 4 Begin to build the sponge mixtures in the moulds. Pour a little of the vanilla mixture into each of the moulds to cover the base. Pour a little of the chocolate mixture into the centre of each, then repeat with the vanilla mixture. Alternate and repeat until all the mixture has been used, always pouring into the centre to form a 'zebra' pattern. Place the moulds on a baking tray and bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes, until well risen and a skewer inserted in the middle of the cakes comes out clean. Leave in the moulds until you are ready to serve.
- 5 Meanwhile, make the sauce. Heat the cream in a saucepan to just below boiling point. Stir in the chocolate, golden syrup and butter and gently mix until the chocolate has melted and combined with the other ingredients. The sauce should be smooth and glossy.
- 6 Remove the puddings from the moulds, pour the sauce over and serve immediately.



The recipes on pages 72-74 are taken from *Tempt* by Parragon Books, RRP £15. Part of Parragon's range of Love Food cookbooks, visit www.parragon.com/lovefood for more.



Chunky chocolate bread and butter pudding

By Love Food

Serves 6-8

FOR THE PUDDING

- 1 large brioche loaf**
- 200g (7oz) butter, softened**
- 150g (5½oz) plain chocolate, broken into large pieces**
- 100g (3½oz) chopped dried figs**
- 4 large free-range eggs**
- 600ml (1pt) milk**
- 150g (5½oz) caster sugar**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 3.
- 2** Line a 900g (2lb) loaf tin with baking paper.
- 3** Slice the brioche and butter each slice on one side. Sprinkle the chocolate and figs over the buttered side of the slices. Put the slices back into the shape of the loaf and fit it into the prepared tin.
- 4** In a medium-sized bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, sugar and vanilla extract, then pour the mixture over the brioche and leave to soak for 5 minutes.
- 5** Bake in the oven for 35-40 minutes, or until golden and the juices have set in the middle. Remove from the oven and leave to cool for 10 minutes before serving.



Melting chocolate risotto

By Love Food

Serves 4-6

FOR THE RISOTTO

- 400ml (14fl oz) milk**
- 30g (1 oz) caster sugar**
- 100g (3½oz) arborio rice**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**
- 100g (3½oz) plain chocolate, broken into small pieces**
- 4-6 tbsp double cream**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 150°C/Gas Mark 2. Place a 1lt (1¾pt) ovenproof dish in the oven to warm through.
- 2** Put the milk, sugar and rice into a saucepan and bring just to the boil over a low heat.
- 3** Stir through the vanilla extract and 75g (2¾oz) of the chocolate and stir until the chocolate has melted. Carefully transfer the dish to the oven. Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes.
- 4** Remove from the oven, stir well, re-cover and leave to rest for about 5 minutes. Drizzle over the cream and swirl it into the risotto. Scatter with the remaining chocolate to serve.

Mousse-au-chocolat tartlets

By Love Food

Makes 6

FOR THE PASTRY

250g (9oz) plain flour

a pinch of salt

50g (1½oz) caster sugar

140g (5oz) butter

1 free-range egg

finely grated zest of 1 lemon

10g (¼oz) flour, for dusting

FOR THE FILLING

375ml (13fl oz) single cream

350g (12oz) plain chocolate, broken into pieces

5 free-range egg yolks

55g (2oz) caster sugar

2½ tbsp water

sea salt flakes, to decorate (optional)

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. To make the pastry, put the flour, salt, sugar, butter, egg and lemon zest into a bowl and mix together. Roll the pastry into a ball, wrap in clingfilm and chill for 30 minutes in the refrigerator.

2 Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured work surface and ease it into six 10cm (4in) tartlet tins, then line them with baking paper and fill with baking beans. Bake in the oven for 15 minutes, then remove the beans and paper and bake for a further 10 minutes.

3 To make the filling, heat the cream in a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of gently simmering water, then add the chocolate and heat until melted. Remove from the heat and leave to cool down to room temperature.

4 Put the egg yolks, sugar and water into a separate heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water and heat, whisking constantly, for 8-10 minutes until the mixture thickens. Remove from the heat, stir into the chocolate mixture and beat with a hand-held electric mixer for 5-6 minutes.

5 Pour the filling into the pastry cases. Carefully transfer to the refrigerator and chill for 2-3 hours, or until the filling is firm. Serve chilled, decorated with sea salt flakes, if using.





Mocha soufflés

By Love Food

Serves 4

FOR THE SOUFFLÉ

- 2 tsp butter, to grease**
- 2 tbsp ground almonds**
- 1 tbsp cocoa powder, plus a little extra to dust**
- 1 tbsp strong espresso**
- a small pinch of sea salt**
- 5 tbsp cold water**
- 3 free-range egg whites**
- 1 tbsp rice malt syrup**
- 4 tbsp mascarpone cheese, to serve**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Lightly grease four ramekins, then sprinkle with the ground almonds. Roll and rotate the ramekins so the almonds stick to the butter, coating all sides.
- 2** Put the cocoa powder, espresso, salt and water in a small saucepan and cook, stirring over a low heat, until smooth. Increase the heat to medium-high and bring to the boil, then cook for a further minute. Pour the mixture into a large bowl and leave to cool.
- 3** Put the egg whites in a separate large, clean glass bowl and whisk until they form soft peaks. Add the rice malt syrup and whisk again until you have stiff peaks. Using a metal spoon, gently fold a spoonful of the egg white into the cocoa mixture, preserving as much air as possible, then fold in the rest.
- 4** Spoon the mixture into the ramekins. Bake in the oven for 10-12 minutes, or until the soufflés are towering out of the ramekins.
- 5** Add a tbsp of the mascarpone to each ramekin and sprinkle with the cocoa powder. Serve immediately, as quickly as possible before the soufflés start to collapse.



Plum and blackberry brûlées

By Love Food

Serves 6

FOR THE BRÛLÉES

- 300g (10½oz) plums, stoned and sliced**
- 175g (6oz) blackberries**
- 2 tbsp water**
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon**
- 5 tbsp light muscovado sugar**
- 225ml (8fl oz) double cream**
- 225g (8oz) Greek-style natural yoghurt**

- 1** Put the plums, blackberries and water in a saucepan. Sprinkle over the cinnamon and 2 tbsp sugar; then cover and cook over a medium-low heat for 10 minutes, or until just tender. Leave to cool.
- 2** Put the cream in a large bowl and whisk until soft swirls form, then fold in the yoghurt.
- 3** Spoon the fruit and a little of the juice from the pan into six ovenproof 175ml (6fl oz) ramekins or soufflé dishes. Dot teaspoons of the cream mixture over the top, then spread it into an even layer. Chill for at least 30 minutes.
- 4** Sprinkle the remaining 3 tbsp sugar over the tops of the dishes. Stand them in the base of the grill pan, pack ice around them to keep them cold and grill for 4-5 minutes, or until the sugar has dissolved and caramelized. Leave to cool for 2 minutes. Serve.



The recipes on pages 75-76 are taken from *The Weekend Cook* by Parragon Books, RRP £15. Part of Parragon's range of Love Food cookbooks, visit www.parragon.com/lovefood for more.

Roasted fig tartlets with crème de cassis and honey mascarpone

By Love Food

Serves 6

FOR THE TARTLETS

grated zest and juice of 1 orange

2 tbsp clear honey

100ml (3½fl oz) crème de cassis

12 ripe black figs

flour, for dusting

500g (1lb 2oz) puff pastry

150g (5½oz) butter

150g (5½oz) caster sugar

150g (5½oz) ground almonds

2 free-range egg yolks

FOR THE HONEY MASCARPONE

300g (10½oz) mascarpone cheese

2 tbsp natural yoghurt or crème fraîche

3 tbsp clear honey

1 vanilla pod, split in half, seeds removed

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. In a small saucepan, mix the orange juice and honey and bring to the boil. Cook for about 10 minutes, or until reduced and syrupy, then add the crème de cassis. Halve the figs and place in the pan. Spoon over the cassis mixture so they are well coated. Remove the pan from the heat.
- 2 Flour a board and roll the pastry out on the board to a thickness of 5mm (¼in). Using a saucer as a template, cut out six rounds and place them on squares of baking paper. Using a fork, prick lots of holes in the centre of the rounds, leaving a clean border of 2cm (¾in) around the edge of each round. Place the rounds in the refrigerator for 20 minutes, then transfer them to the oven and bake for 10 minutes.
- 3 Meanwhile, cream the butter and sugar in a food processor until smooth and pale, add the ground almonds and orange zest and combine. Add the egg yolks and a tbsp of the soaking juice from the figs, then mix until smooth.
- 4 When the pastry cases are a pale golden colour, spoon some of the almond mixture into the centre of each. With the back of the spoon, spread the mixture up to the border, where the pastry will have risen more. Spoon four fig halves onto each tart and then spoon some of the cassis syrup on top.
- 5 Reduce the oven temperature to 160°C/Gas Mark 3, transfer the tarts to the oven and bake for 12 minutes, or until the mixture is set and the base of the pastry is crisp and golden brown. Reduce any leftover cassis liquid by simmering until thick and syrupy. Take the tarts out of the oven and spoon some of the hot syrup over the fruit.
- 6 To make the honey mascarpone, place the mascarpone cheese in a bowl and whisk together with the yoghurt, honey and the vanilla seeds. Whisk until smooth. Serve with the tartlets.





Recipe and photography by Lakeland (www.lakeland.co.uk)

Chocolate and salted caramel fondant puddings

By Lakeland (www.lakeland.co.uk)

Makes 6

FOR THE FILLING

75g (2½oz) light soft brown sugar

75g (2½oz) butter

½ tsp sea salt

100ml (3½fl oz) double cream

FOR THE FONDANT

150g (5¼oz) butter, plus extra for greasing

150g (5¼oz) dark chocolate, broken into small pieces

100g (3½oz) caster sugar

4 large free-range eggs

50g (1¾oz) self-raising flour

FOR THE FILLING

- 1 Make the filling the day before the fondant. In a small saucepan, gently heat the sugar, butter and salt until the sugar has melted.
- 2 Add the cream and bring to the boil, stirring continuously, then simmer for 3 minutes until you have a thick caramel sauce.
- 3 Pour into a jug and leave to cool, then divide the sauce between the freezing trays from Lakeland's Fail-safe Fondant Dessert Kit (includes six silicone fondant moulds and silicone tray) and freeze overnight.

FOR THE FONDANT

- 1 Next day, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease the six fondant moulds (from the kit) with a little soft butter.
- 2 Melt the butter and chocolate in a bowl set over a pan of gently simmering water, taking care not to overheat or let the bowl touch the water. Stir gently until smooth and then set aside to cool.
- 3 Place the sugar in a large bowl, then add the eggs one at a time and beat well with an electric hand mixer; until the mixture is thick and creamy and the whisk leaves a trail. This may take a few minutes.
- 4 Sift the flour into the egg mixture and fold in gently using a large metal spoon. Add the melted chocolate and continue folding until well combined, taking care not to over-mix.
- 5 Spoon a small amount of sponge mixture into the fondant moulds about a quarter of the way up. Place the moulds on a baking tray and bake for 5 minutes, then remove from the oven.
- 6 Take the frozen fillings out of the freezer and place a disc of frozen caramel on top of the baked mixture. Make sure the filling does not touch the mould.
- 7 Cover with the rest of the fondant mix and bake for 20-25 minutes. The fondants are ready when firm to the touch, with a crust on top and are beginning to come away from the mould sides.
- 8 Leave to cool for a few minutes, then turn out onto plates and serve immediately – perfect with vanilla ice cream.



IN THE KITCHEN WITH...

Luminary Bakery

Discover the inspiring story of an East London bakery that not only satisfies the tastebuds, but is transforming the lives of women from vulnerable backgrounds too...

Q When and why did you first set up Luminary Bakery?

Luminary Bakery was first set up as two needs were recognised in East London – one was the need for a wholesale bakery and the other was to provide employment opportunities for women from vulnerable backgrounds, providing training as well.

Q Where did the distinctive name come from?

The idea of the moon was to bring light into dark places and the definition

kind words, offered their help, time and support! We wouldn't have got to where we are so quickly if it wasn't for our wonderful staff and volunteers.

Q How do you teach the bakery skills?

We run a 6 month training course, which teaches life skills, finances, business, etc, but the women spend time in the kitchen with our bakers each week, learning new skills. Each session will be focussed on a different aspect of baking and builds on their knowledge slowly. On

We want to encourage and inspire women to reach their potential...

of Luminary is a person who inspires. We want to encourage that and inspire women to reach their potential... reach for the moon!

Q What is the ultimate aim of the bakery?

Our vision is to see women provided with opportunities to leave their vulnerable situations and be released into a positive future.

Q Why a bakery?

We started a bakery because we could see, through research, it was a viable business idea, but we also found baking can be therapeutic and relaxing. It's amazing to bake together with people and it can really build community.

Q What kind of a response have you had?

We have had an amazing response! So many people have had encouraging and

the last session they get to design, create and bake their own recipe, which is then showcased (and of course eaten!) at their graduation ceremony.

Q Can you tell us about the bakery itself?

We are a small wholesale bakery, slowly growing. We bake a variety of things for different clients, including Lady Dinah's Cat Cafe and TOMS Cafe. We also make some bespoke bakes for some of our clients, including cat shaped bread rolls – you can guess who they are for! The majority of our bakes are sweet, but we do also do savoury. Most days our bakers work shifts, including early mornings. We also make seasonal cakes which are 'limited edition' and appear for a short time only – for Halloween/bonfire night we did smoked toffee apple cakes, which were amazing and we are working on our Christmas special! We love to get creative and brainstorm together. We



all work very hard, but also do have fun in the kitchen together – most days will feature a few dance moves and singing with a wooden spoon!

Q What happens when a student finishes the course?

Once they finish the course, they graduate and have an accredited qualification along with other certificates. We always have a wonderful graduation ceremony! Then they can apply for our apprenticeship places or we help and support them to find employment elsewhere – we have ever-expanding connections with other businesses. We stay in contact with all our graduates and keep the community going – we are having a lunch with everyone for Christmas soon.

Q How do people get involved?

We are always looking for new volunteers, people who are willing to donate their time and skills. They can contact us via our website.

Q The bakery makes wedding cakes too?

We occasionally cater for celebrations and events. Sometimes this is larger cakes and sometimes small canapes. The bakers love these when they come up, because it's a chance to be even more creative and do some one-off bakes!

Q What's next for you?

We are very excited to be moving into our new premises before Christmas. This will have a cafe and we will be able to have more women on the training course, complete more orders, bake on a larger scale, open a cafe, run classes for the public and so on! It's a really exciting time of growth and development.

Find out more by visiting the website at www.luminarybakery.com



NEW
FEATURE

Baking with vegetables

Put some goodness and flavour into your bakes by using vegetables to provide texture, taste and variety...



The recipes on pages 79-81 are taken from *Baking With Vegetables* by Parragon Books, RRP £8. Part of Parragon's range of Love Food cookbooks, visit www.parragon.com/lovefood for more.





Sweet potato brownies

By Love Food

Makes 12

FOR THE BROWNIES

- 175g (6oz) sweet potatoes, coarsely grated**
- 150ml (5fl oz) olive oil, plus 1 tbsp for oiling**
- 100g (3½oz) stevia**
- 50g (1¾oz) cocoa powder**
- ½ tsp baking powder**
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda**
- 50g (1½oz) ground almonds**
- 2 free-range eggs, beaten**
- 20g (¾oz) walnuts, roughly chopped**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Lightly oil a shallow 19cm (7in) square cake tin, then line it with a large square of baking paper, snipping into the corners diagonally and pressing the paper into the tin to line the base and sides.
- 2** Put the sweet potatoes, oil, stevia, cocoa powder, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, almonds, eggs and walnuts in a large bowl and stir well. Pour the mixture into the prepared tin. Bake for 20 minutes, or until well risen and the centre is just set.
- 3** Leave to cool in the tin for 15 minutes. Lift out of the tin using the baking paper, then carefully remove the paper. Cut into 12 brownies to serve.



Baked pumpkin doughnuts

By Love Food

Makes 6

FOR THE DOUGHNUTS

- 10g (¼oz) butter, for greasing**
- 115g (4oz) self-raising flour**
- ½ tsp baking powder**
- ½ tsp salt**
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon**
- ½ tsp grated nutmeg**
- 50g (1¾oz) butter, softened**
- 50g (1¾oz) soft light brown sugar**

- 1 large free-range egg, beaten**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**
- 1 tbsp milk**
- 115g (4oz) canned pumpkin purée**

FOR THE GLAZE

- 115g (4oz) icing sugar**
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon**
- 2 tbsp milk**
- 1-2 tsp maple syrup**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5. Grease a 6-hole doughnut tin.
- 2** Sift together the flour and baking powder into a bowl and stir in the salt, cinnamon and nutmeg. Put the butter and sugar into a separate bowl and beat together until pale and creamy. Gradually beat in the egg, vanilla extract and milk. Fold in the flour mixture and pumpkin purée.
- 3** Spoon the mixture into a large piping bag fitted with a plain nozzle and pipe into the prepared tin. Bake in the oven for 15 minutes, until risen, golden and just firm to the touch. Leave the cake to cool for 5 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack to cool completely.
- 4** To make the glaze, sift together the icing sugar and cinnamon into a bowl, add the milk and maple syrup and stir until smooth. Dip the top of each doughnut in the glaze and leave to set.



Courgette loaf cake

By Love Food

Serves 10

FOR THE CAKE

- 175g (6oz) ground almonds**
- ½ tsp baking powder**
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda**
- 3 tbsp stevia**
- 40g (1½oz) chopped mixed nuts**
- 50g (1¾oz) butter**
- 2 large free-range eggs, beaten**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**

200g (7oz) courgettes, coarsely grated

FOR THE FROSTING

- 200g (7oz) full-fat cream cheese**
- 1 tbsp stevia**
- finely grated zest and juice of ¼ unwaxed lemon**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 3. Line a non-stick loaf tin with baking paper.
- 2** Put the ground almonds, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, stevia and half the nuts into a large bowl and stir well.
- 3** Melt the butter in a small saucepan over a medium-low heat. Pour it onto the dry ingredients. Add the eggs, vanilla extract and courgettes and mix well.
- 4** Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and spread it in an even layer. Bake for 55-60 minutes, or until well risen and a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin for 15 minutes, then remove from the tin, peel off the baking paper and transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** To make the frosting, put the cream cheese and stevia in a large bowl and whisk until light and airy. Add the lemon zest and juice, and whisk again briefly. Using a spatula, spread the frosting over the top of the cake. Decorate with the remaining nuts and serve.



Spinach and apple cake

By Love Food

Serves 12

FOR THE CAKE

- 500g (11lb 2oz) baby spinach**
- 250g (9oz) spelt flour**
- 1 tbsp baking powder**
- ½ tsp salt**
- 3 free-range eggs**
- 150g (5½oz) golden caster sugar**
- 125ml (4fl oz) rapeseed oil, plus 1 tbsp for oiling**

3 tbsp lemon juice

100g (3½oz) eating apples, coarsely grated

2 tsp vanilla extract

FOR THE FROSTING

- 2 cooking apples, cut into large chunks**
- 225g (8oz) icing sugar, sifted**
- 25g (1 oz) butter, softened**
- ½ tsp grated lemon peel**

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Oil a 22cm (8½in) square cake tin and line with baking paper.
- 2** Steam the spinach for 3 minutes, squeeze dry, transfer to a blender and purée until smooth. Set aside until needed.
- 3** Sift the flour, baking powder and salt twice into a bowl. Put the eggs and sugar into a separate large bowl and beat with a hand-held electric mixer for 5 minutes, or until pale and creamy. Lightly whisk in the oil, lemon juice, apple, vanilla extract and spinach purée. Gradually stir in the flour mixture.
- 4** Pour the mixture into the tin. Bake in the oven for 25-30 minutes until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then turn out on a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5** Using a sharp serrated knife, trim about 1½cm (½in) from all four sides of the cake. Scoop out the green part from underneath these crusts, rub into crumbs using your fingertips and set aside.
- 6** For the frosting, put the apples in a saucepan with a little water, bring to a simmer over medium-low heat and cook until soft. Mash with a fork, then push through a sieve into a bowl. Add the remaining ingredients and mix well. Spoon over the cake and sprinkle with reserved green crumbs. Slice into squares to serve.

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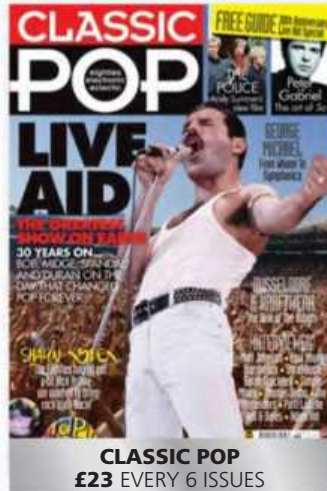
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A top-down view of various chocolate macarons, almond shells, and chocolate shavings scattered on a light blue surface. The macarons are in shades of brown and green, some with intricate patterns. The text 'Teatime treats' is written in a light blue, cursive font, with 'HEAVEN' in a smaller, white, sans-serif font below it. A dotted white line forms a decorative flourish under the word 'HEAVEN'.

Teatime treats
HEAVEN



Date rum cakes

By Yvette van Boven

Makes 8

FOR THE CAKES

200g (7oz) sugar

250g (9oz) dates, pitted and chopped

200ml (7fl oz) plus 1 tbsp boiling water

225g (8oz) plain flour

1 tsp baking powder

$\frac{3}{4}$ tsp salt

1 free-range egg

1 tsp vanilla extract

FOR THE GLAZE

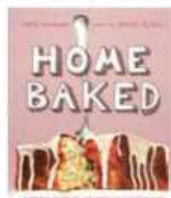
3 tbsp butter

75g (2 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz) dark brown sugar

60ml (2fl oz) good-quality rum

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp flaky sea salt, such as Maldon, to garnish

- 1 Preheat the oven to 175°C/Gas Mark 3 $\frac{1}{2}$. Grease eight 10cm (4in) mini pie pans. (You can also use a 22x14cm (9x5 $\frac{1}{2}$ in) loaf pan and cut the cake into pieces afterward. In that case, you'll need to bake the cake slightly longer.)
- 2 For the cakes, melt the sugar in a heavy saucepan over medium heat, until the caramel is tea coloured. This will take a while, about 15 minutes. Try not to stir, but use a wet pastry brush to brush down the edges of the pan where the sugar crystals form. Shake the pan occasionally.
- 3 Add the dates and the boiling water. Be careful, it can splatter a lot!
- 4 Remove from the heat and let the pan stand for 15 minutes. When the caramel hardens, you can heat it up again to melt it.
- 5 Combine the flour with the baking powder and salt. Stir in the warm caramel mixture and then the egg and vanilla.
- 6 Pour the batter into the mini pie pans and bake for 30 minutes.
- 7 Meanwhile, make the glaze. Melt the butter and brown sugar in the saucepan used above, until the sugar has dissolved. Remove from the heat and carefully stir in the rum.
- 8 Remove the warm cakes from their pans and place them on a rack. Pour the warm glaze over the tops and sprinkle with salt flakes.
- 9 Let cool or eat immediately, when they're still a little warm, with crème fraîche.



The recipes on pages 86-87 and the chocolate olive oil cake on page 88 are taken from *Home Baked* by Yvette van Boven, published by Stewart, Tabori & Chang, RRP £25. Photography © OofVerschuren.



Matcha tea roll

By Yvette van Boven

Serves 8

FOR THE FILLING

1 envelope of unflavoured gelatine powder

500g (1 lb 2 oz) ricotta

150g (5 1/2 oz) cream cheese, at room temperature

125g (4 1/2 oz) granulated sugar, or to taste

grated zest and juice of 2 limes (about 90ml (3 fl oz))

FOR THE CAKE

100g (3 1/2 oz) plain flour

1 tsp matcha tea powder

1 tsp baking powder

5 free-range eggs, separated

180g (6 1/2 oz) granulated sugar

60ml (2 fl oz) milk

a pinch of salt

250g (9 oz) pineberries, hulled

- 1 For the filling, put 60ml (2 fl oz) cold water in a small saucepan, sprinkle the gelatine over it and let soak for 5 minutes. With a mixer, beat the ricotta with the cream cheese, sugar and lime zest into a smooth, thick cream.
- 2 Add the lime juice to the softened gelatine and place over low heat, stirring until the gelatine is dissolved. Let cool, then stir the lime-gelatine mixture into the ricotta cream. Scoop the filling into a pastry bag, if you have one. Let solidify in the fridge until ready to use.

- 3 For the cake, preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease a 30x40cm (12x16in) rimmed baking sheet, line it with parchment paper and grease the parchment paper.
- 4 Combine the flour, matcha and baking powder in a bowl. In another bowl, beat the egg yolks with the sugar and milk into a thick, pale yellow foam. In a third bowl using clean beaters, whisk the egg whites and salt until stiff. With a spatula, fold the flour mixture in batches into the egg yolk and fold into a smooth batter. Gently fold in the whipped egg whites, also in batches. Pour the batter into the prepared baking sheet and bake for about 14 minutes, until the roll springs back when you gently press it.
- 5 Remove from the oven and run a sharp knife between the cake and the pan to loosen it from the edges. Turn the cake out onto a clean dish towel. Carefully peel off the parchment paper and roll up the cake with the dish towel, as if the towel were the filling. Allow the cake to cool off completely like this.
- 6 Gently unroll the cake and remove the dish towel. Spread a thick layer of the filling (keep some aside) over the entire cake, leaving 3cm (1 1/4 in) unfilled on one short end. Arrange nearly all the pineberries over the filling. Keep a few pretty ones for garnish. Carefully roll up the cake from the filled short end, ending with the unfilled short end. Place on a plate with the seam facing down and let the cake set in the fridge for at least 2 hours before serving. Just before serving, pipe a few dollops of the ricotta cream filling on top and press in the remaining pineberries.



Chocolate olive oil cake

By Yvette van Boven

Serves 10

FOR THE CAKE

- 200g (7oz) good-quality dark chocolate**
- 100ml (3½fl oz) extra-virgin olive oil, extra for greasing**
- 5 free-range eggs, separated**
- 70g (2½oz) almond flour or ground almonds**
- grated zest of 2 grapefruits**
- salt**
- 200g (7oz) granulated sugar**
- unsweetened cocoa powder, for dusting**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 175°C/Gas Mark 3½. Grease a 23cm (9in) springform pan and line the bottom with a round of parchment paper cut to fit. Grease the parchment as well.
- 2 Melt the chocolate in a bain-marie. As soon as the water begins to boil, turn off the heat and let the chocolate finish melting gently.
- 3 Now stir in the olive oil and mix it into an even sauce.
- 4 In a bowl, using a hand mixer, combine the egg yolks, almond flour, grapefruit zest, pinch of salt and 100g (3½oz) sugar. Mix the chocolate sauce in well.
- 5 In a perfectly clean bowl, using a perfectly clean whisk, whisk the egg whites (with a pinch of salt) until almost stiff. Keep beating while gradually adding the rest of the sugar until everything has been absorbed. Gently fold a bit of the egg white mixture into the almond mixture, then add the rest in three additions, a little at a time, combining everything into a smooth mixture.
- 6 Pour into the pan and bake for 35-40 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out with a few wet crumbs attached.
- 7 Allow the cake to cool completely in the pan. It will sink a little, but that's normal. Just before serving, dust the cake with cocoa powder.



Recipe and photography © Abel & Cole (www.abelandcole.co.uk)

Banana macarons

By Abel & Cole (www.abelandcole.co.uk)

Makes 16

FOR THE MACAROONS

- 2 bananas, peeled**
- 125g (4½oz) desiccated coconut**
- seeds from a vanilla pod**
- 1 free-range egg**
- a little oil**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 2 In a bowl, add the bananas, coconut and vanilla seeds.
- 3 Mash it all up and give it a squidgy mix with your hands or with a large spoon or fork.
- 4 Crack the egg in. Mix it well.
- 5 Scoop out into rounded tablespoons. Roll each into a little ball in your hands. Pop them on an oiled or greaseproof paper-lined baking sheet.
- 6 Press each cookie flat with the back of a fork. Bake for 10-12 minutes or until a little golden around the edges.

Sweet fruit focaccia

By Annabel Crabb and Wendy Sharpe

Serves at least 8

FOR THE FOCACCIA

310ml (10¾fl oz) lukewarm water

2 tsp active dried yeast

55g (2oz) granulated sugar, plus 1 tbsp extra for sprinkling

400g (14oz) strong white bread flour

a pinch of fine salt

olive oil, for greasing

4 ripe nectarines (or other stone fruit), thinly sliced

icing sugar, for dusting

- 1 Start the evening beforehand. Close to bedtime, pour the water into a large bowl and sprinkle the yeast and half of the sugar on the top. Sift in the flour and salt and stir until a loose dough forms. Knead the dough for about 5 minutes. Don't bother with tipping it out onto the bench, just work the dough inside the bowl, it will save you some cleaning-up time. To the fridge with the dough, and *buona notte* to you.
- 2 The next day (it needs to be at least 90 minutes before you want to eat), line a 30x20cm (12x8in) baking tray with baking paper and rub a generous amount of olive oil all over it. Now stretch out

your dough to reach all corners of the tray and set aside.

- 3 Place the nectarines in a bowl with the remaining sugar and toss them gently.
- 4 Return to your baking tray. The dough will have shrunk back a little, so re-train the edges back to the edges of the tray, then cover with a sheet of oiled clingfilm and leave in a warm, cosy place for about an hour.
- 5 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6. Because your dough is spread out and flat, it won't look very much increased in size, but it will be a bit puffy. Arrange the nectarine slices in neat rows, using your fingers to flick some of the delicious sugary juices all over as you go, then sprinkle the extra sugar over the top. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until risen and golden. Dust with icing sugar to serve.



The recipes on pages 89-90 are taken from *Special Delivery: Favourite Food To Make & Take* by Annabel Crabb and Wendy Sharpe, published by Murdoch Books, RRP £17.99. Photography by Rob Palmer.



Almond meringues

By Annabel Crabb and Wendy Sharpe

Makes 16

FOR THE MERINGUES

150g (5½oz) almonds

3 free-range egg whites

200g (7oz) caster sugar

food colouring gel or cocoa powder, optional

90g (3¼oz) cornflakes

- 1 Preheat the oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 2½. Run a knife through the almonds a couple of times to chop a few in half – it is fine if there are still whole nuts in there. Now scatter them over a baking tray and give them 8 minutes in the oven to toast, then leave to cool completely. Reduce the oven temperature to 130°C/Gas Mark ½.
- 2 Using an electric mixer, whisk the egg whites and a pinch of salt to stiff peaks. Still whisking, gradually add the sugar – don't be tempted to add the sugar too quickly, or it will knock out too much air from the egg whites. If you would like coloured meringues, you can add a tiny speck of food-colouring gel now. Alternatively, you could beat in 2 tbsp cocoa powder for chocolate meringues. (And if you want an impressive, rippled look, take out half the meringue before adding the colouring or cocoa, then lightly swirl it back in afterwards.) When you have a beautifully stiff and glossy meringue, carefully fold in the cornflakes and toasted almonds.
- 3 Line a large baking tray with baking paper. Drop teaspoonfuls of almond meringue on the lined tray and cook in the oven until completely dried. This will probably take just over an hour, maybe longer if you are in humid climes. These really work best if you are in a low-humidity environment – like, say, the arid dusty plains of South Australia's mid-north.
- 4 To transport, airtight is the keyword here. Lovely old vintage biscuit tins look beautiful, but rarely give a good seal. If your heart's set on using one, just truss it up with tape once the meringues are inside.



Hummingbird-ish cake

By Annabel Crabb and Wendy Sharpe

Makes a 20cm (8in) cake

FOR THE CAKE

1 x 235g (8½oz) tin of peaches, well drained

100g (3½oz) tinned pineapple (about 3 rings), well drained

250g (9oz) plain flour

1 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tsp ground ginger

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

½ tsp baking powder

200g (7oz) caster sugar

2 large free-range eggs, lightly beaten

200ml (7fl oz) neutral-flavoured vegetable oil

2 very ripe, squishy bananas, mashed

50g (1¾oz) dried apricots, cut into slivers

100g (3½oz) mixed seeds, such as sunflower and pepitas (pumpkin seeds)

FOR THE ICING

300g (10½oz) cream cheese, at room temperature

70g (2½oz) unsalted butter, at room temperature

150g (5½oz) icing sugar

- 1 Preheat your oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Grease and line three 20cm (8in) cake tins. Roughly chop the peaches and pineapple to make a lumpy purée. Sift the flour, spices, bicarbonate of soda and baking powder together into a large bowl, then stir in the sugar. Add the eggs, oil, banana and peach and pineapple purée. Mix until just combined. Fold in the dried apricots and seeds. Divide the mixture among the prepared tins (use scales if you want to be precise) and bake for 15 minutes or until a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean – as the layers are thin, they'll cook quickly, so keep an eye on them. Leave the cakes to cool on a wire rack.
- 2 For the icing, just mix all the ingredients like crazy until you have a smooth, easily spreadable icing. Assemble the cooled cakes with a thin layer of icing between each one and a final, thicker layer on top.

Chilli infused vodka and chocolate fruitcake

By Ursula Evans (www.mycottagekitchen.co.uk)

Makes 1 cake

FOR THE INFUSED VODKA

3 large chillies

400ml (14fl oz) bottle of vodka

FOR THE CAKE

350g (12oz) sultanas

275g (9¾oz) raisins

125g (4½oz) currants

100ml (3½fl oz) chilli-infused vodka, plus extra for pouring over cake after baking and during maturing, about 120ml (4fl oz) over 4 weeks

grated zest and juice of 2 oranges

175g (6oz) demerara sugar

230g (8oz) unsalted butter

4 free-range eggs

100g (3½oz) plain flour

180g (6¼oz) self-raising flour

1 tbsp mixed spice (your own blend if you prefer)

1 tsp chilli flakes

50g (1½oz) ground almonds

50g (1½oz) flaked almonds

FOR DECORATING

200g (7oz) dark chocolate

FOR THE INFUSED VODKA

- 1 Remove about 20ml (¾fl oz) of vodka from the bottle. Slice the washed and dried chillies in half and push them into the bottle, close and leave for one week to infuse.

CAKE PREPARATION

- 1 Soak the vine fruits overnight in the chilli infused vodka, orange zest and juice.

FOR MIXING

- 1 Mix the cake on the following day. Grease and line 2 large loaf tins.
- 2 Preheat conventional ovens and AGA Total Control cookers, conventional oven to 140°C/Gas Mark 1.
- 3 Cream together the sugar and butter until light and fluffy.
- 4 Add the eggs one at a time with a spoonful of flour.
- 5 Mix in the remaining dry ingredients, and finally the soaked fruit.
- 6 Spoon the mixture into the prepared loaf tins and level to the tops.

FOR BAKING

- 1 Bake slowly at a low temperature – 2½-3 hours in a conventional oven, 8-10 hours in an AGA. In conventional ovens you may need to cover the cake during the last hour to prevent the top burning. In AGA cookers, the baking starts off in the baking oven for 30 minutes and is moved to the simmering oven. The baking time depends on the running temperature of individual AGA cookers.
- 2 Test the fruitcake to check that it is completely baked.
- 3 Pour over a little chilli infused vodka while the cakes are still hot and leave in the tin to cool.

FOR MATURING

- 1 Mature the cake at room temperature for at least four weeks, leaving the greaseproof paper on and wrapping in a second layer and then two layers of food wrap.
- 2 Unwrap weekly to add more chilli infused vodka.

FOR DECORATING

- 1 For the chocolate and chilli vodka drizzle, in a bowl over a saucepan of simmering water (bain-marie), melt 200g (7oz) dark chocolate with 1 tbsp chilli vodka and drizzle over the cake. A bain-marie avoids splitting and solidifying of the chocolate, because it heats the chocolate gently at a fixed temperature.



The recipes on pages 91-92 and the apple mincemeat cake on page 93 are taken from *Fruitcake* by Ursula Evans, published by Middle Farm Press, RRP £20.

Black bun

By Ursula Evans (www.mycottagekitchen.co.uk)

FOR THE PASTRY

100g (3½oz) unsalted butter, cut into small pieces straight from the fridge

200g (7oz) plain flour

3 tbsp cold water

FOR THE FILLING

200g (7oz) plain flour

100g (3½oz) soft dark sugar

400g (14oz) currants

200g (7oz) raisins

100g (3½oz) mixed dried peel

50g (1¾oz) ground almonds

50g (1¾oz) flaked almonds

3 free-range eggs, 1 for brushing over the pastry

3 tbsp milk

60ml (2fl oz) whisky

1 tsp ground ginger

1 tsp ground cinnamon

½ tsp cayenne pepper

½ tsp bicarbonate of soda

1 tsp golden caster sugar, for sprinkling

FOR THE PASTRY

- 1 Rub the butter into the flour with your finger tips until it resembles fine breadcrumbs.
- 2 Add the water and mix until the dough begins to hold together, if it is too dry, add a little water and mix until you have a soft dough.
- 3 Wrap in clingfilm and cool in the fridge while you make the filling.

FOR THE FILLING

- 1 Preheat a conventional oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4 or the AGA baking oven, where you will be using the middle shelf. Set aside a beaten egg and some golden caster sugar for finishing. Grease a large loaf tin with butter.
- 2 Place all the other ingredients into a large mixing bowl and mix them together well.
- 3 On a lightly floured board roll out two-thirds of the pastry.
- 4 Gently line the tin with the pastry, being careful not to rip it.
- 5 Spoon the filling onto the pastry in the tin and press down firmly.
- 6 Lightly brush the pastry edges with water.
- 7 Roll out the remaining third of pastry, place on top and press around the edge with a fork.
- 8 Cut off excess pastry, decorate with a pastry thistle, brush with the beaten egg and sprinkle with golden caster sugar.
- 9 Bake for 2 hours, you may have to cover with foil for last 30 minutes to prevent burning.
- 10 Leave to cool on wire rack.
- 11 Store for up 1 month in an airtight container.



Apple mincemeat cake

By Ursula Evans (www.mycottagekitchen.co.uk)

FOR THE MINCEMEAT	grated zest and juice of 1 orange
250g (9oz) stewed cooking apples with 2 tbsp water and a knob of butter	1 tsp mixed spice
200g (7oz) shredded beef suet or vegetable suet or grated cold butter	100g (3½oz) dark brown sugar
200g (7oz) raisins	100ml (3½fl oz) brandy
200g (7oz) currants	FOR THE CAKE
200g (7oz) sultanas	100g (3½oz) unsalted butter
150g (5¼oz) mixed peel	100g (3½oz) golden caster sugar
100g (3½oz) glacé cherries	2 free-range eggs
50g (1¾oz) flaked almonds	200g (7oz) self-raising flour
	2 tbsp milk
	6 tbsp mincemeat
	flaked almonds, for decoration

FOR THE MINCEMEAT

- Mix all the ingredients together thoroughly, and pack into three sterilized, cold 400g (14oz) jars. Press down well and cover with a screw top lid. (Suet aids the keeping property of the mincemeat by coating the fruits and sealing them, preventing fermentation. This will keep for 6 months if stored in a cool dry place.)

FOR THE CAKE

- Preheat the AGA baking oven or a conventional oven to 160°C/Gas Mark 3. Line two small loaf tins with greaseproof paper.
- Cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy, then add the eggs one at a time with a spoonful of flour; then add the milk and fold in the flour. Gently mix in the mincemeat. Divide the mixture between the loaf tins. Level the top and sprinkle with the flaked almonds. Bake for 45-50 minutes.



Macaron moelleux tiède

By Pierre Hermé

Makes about 70

FOR THE SOFT MACARONS

750g (1lb 10½oz) plain almond paste (made with 60% almonds)

10 large free-range egg whites (300g (10½oz)) 'liquefied' (left in the fridge to liquefy for several days, preferably a week)

TO DECORATE

icing sugar, for dusting

- For the soft macarons, place the almond paste and a small amount of the egg whites in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Beat just until the almond paste is softened. Add a little more of the egg whites, if necessary, to help soften it.
- Replace the paddle attachment with the wire whisk. Beat in the rest of the egg whites a little at a time. Continue beating for 10 minutes, stopping from time to time to scrape down the sides of the bowl and bring the mixture together with a silicone spatula or bowl scraper. Transfer the batter to a pastry bag fitted with a plain #10, 6-7mm (¼in) pastry tip.
- Line baking sheets with parchment paper. Pipe disks about 6cm (2½in) in diameter and 2cm (¾in) apart on the lined baking sheets. Dust the disks with icing sugar. Let rest for 20 minutes.
- Preheat a convection oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6, then dust the disks again with icing sugar. Place the baking sheets in the oven. Bake for 7 minutes, quickly opening and closing the oven door once during baking to release moisture.
- Remove the macarons from the oven and slide them, still on the parchment paper, onto a work surface. Serve immediately.

Macaron Chloé

By Pierre Hermé

Makes about 72

FOR THE CHOCOLATE MACARON SHELLS

60g (2oz) Valrhona 100% cocoa paste

150g (5¼oz) icing sugar

150g (5¼oz) ground almonds

4 drops of liquid carmine red food colour

3½ large (110g (4oz)) 'liquefied' (left in the fridge to liquefy for a week) free-range egg whites, divided

3 tbsp still mineral water

150g (5¼oz) caster sugar

100g (3½oz) unsweetened cocoa, preferably Valrhona

FOR THE RASPBERRY MACARON SHELLS

150g (5¼oz) icing sugar

150g (5¼oz) ground almonds

generous 1 tsp liquid raspberry red food colour

3½ large (110g (4oz)) 'liquefied' (left in the fridge to liquefy for a week) free-range egg whites, divided

3 tbsp still mineral water

150g (5¼oz) superfine granulated sugar

FOR THE CHOCOLATE-RASPBERRY GANACHE

365g (13oz) Valrhona Manjari 64% cacao dark chocolate

550g (19oz) fresh raspberries or 360g (12oz) raspberry purée

315g (11oz) fine French unsalted butter, preferably beurre de la Viette, at room temperature

FOR THE FILLING

generous 200g (7oz) fresh raspberries or 40g (1½oz) dried

- 1 The day before, if using fresh raspberries, preheat the oven to 90°C. Spread the fresh raspberries for the filling onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper; then place them in the oven. Leave them to dry for 2 hours, stirring every 30 minutes. Set them out to cool, then place them in an airtight container until needed.
- 2 For the chocolate macaron shells, chop the cocoa paste using a serrated knife, then melt it to between 45-50°C set over a bain-marie or in a microwave.
- 3 Sift together the icing sugar and almonds.
- 4 Combine the food colour with half of the 'liquefied' egg whites. Pour this into the icing sugar-almond mixture without mixing.
- 5 Add the remaining egg whites to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the wire whisk. In a saucepan, boil the mineral water and granulated sugar to 118°C. As soon as the syrup reaches 115°C, begin beating the egg whites on high speed.
- 6 When the syrup reaches 118°C, reduce the mixer speed to medium-high and pour the syrup in a steady stream down the inside edge of the bowl into the beaten egg whites. Beat the meringue until it cools to 50°C. Fold about one-third of the meringue into the melted cocoa paste, then add this mixture to the icing sugar-almond mixture along with the rest of the meringue. Fold it with a silicone spatula until the mixture loses volume. Transfer the batter to a pastry bag fitted with a plain #11, 11-12mm (½in) pastry tip.
- 7 Line baking sheets with parchment paper. Pipe disks about 3.5cm

(1½in) in diameter and 2cm (¾in) apart on the lined baking sheets. Tap the baking sheets on a work surface covered with a clean kitchen towel to gently smooth out the disks. Dust the disks with the cocoa. Set aside for at least 30 minutes at room temperature to allow a skin to form.

- 8 For the raspberry macaron shells, sift together the icing sugar and the almonds.
- 9 Combine the food colour with half of the 'liquefied' egg whites. Pour this into the icing sugar-almond mixture without mixing.
- 10 Add the remaining egg whites to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the wire whisk. In a saucepan, boil the mineral water and granulated sugar to 118°C. As soon as the syrup reaches 115°C, begin beating the egg whites on high speed.
- 11 When the syrup reaches 118°C, reduce the mixer speed to medium-high and pour the syrup in a steady stream down the inside edge of the bowl into the beaten egg whites. Beat the meringue until it cools to 50°C. Fold it with a silicone spatula into the icing sugar-almond mixture until the mixture loses volume. Transfer the batter to a pastry bag fitted with a plain #11, 11-12mm (½in) pastry tip.
- 12 Line baking sheets with parchment paper. Pipe disks about 3.5cm (1½in) in diameter and 2cm (¾in) apart on the lined baking sheets. Tap the baking sheets on a work surface covered with a clean kitchen towel to gently smooth out the disks. Set aside for at least 30 minutes at room temperature to allow a skin to form.
- 13 Preheat a convection oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Place the baking sheets in the oven. Bake for 12 minutes, quickly opening and closing the oven door twice during baking to release moisture. Remove the shells from the oven and slide them, still on the parchment paper, onto a work surface.
- 14 For the chocolate-raspberry ganache, chop the chocolate using a serrated knife, then melt it to between 45-50°C set over a bain-marie or in a microwave.
- 15 If using whole raspberries, purée them using a food mill. Bring the raspberry purée to a boil in a saucepan. Remove it from the heat, then pour it in thirds into the melted chocolate, stirring after each addition starting in the centre then in increasingly wider concentric circles toward the sides of the bowl.
- 16 When the ganache has cooled to 60°C, stir in the butter in small pieces a little at a time until incorporated. Using an immersion blender, blend the ganache until smooth.
- 17 Pour the ganache into a baking dish. Cover it by gently pressing clingfilm onto its surface. Refrigerate for 2 hours, just until the ganache has developed a creamy consistency. Transfer the ganache to a pastry bag fitted with a plain #11, 11-12mm (½in) pastry tip.
- 18 Turn the chocolate shells over, with the flat sides up, onto a new piece of parchment paper. Fill them with the ganache, then gently place a dried raspberry in the centre. Pipe a small dab of ganache on top of the raspberry. Close them with the raspberry shells, pressing down lightly.
- 19 Refrigerate the macarons for 24 hours. Remove them from the refrigerator 2 hours before eating them.





Macaron chocolat

By Pierre Hermé

Makes about 72

FOR THE CHOCOLATE MACARON SHELLS

240g (8½oz) whole almonds, with skins

480g (1lb 1oz) icing sugar

20g (¾oz) unsweetened cocoa

8 drops of liquid carmine red food colour

generous 1 tsp water

2½ large (70g (2½oz)) fresh free-range egg whites

1 tbsp apricot purée

TO FINISH THE MACARON SHELLS

3½ large (110g (4oz)) fresh free-range egg whites

FOR THE CHOCOLATE GANACHE

320g (11oz) Valrhona extra-bitter 61% cacao dark chocolate

220g (7¾oz) fresh whole milk

100g (3½oz) fine French unsalted butter, preferably beurre de la Viette, at room temperature

- 1 Two days in advance, place the almonds in boiling water for 2 minutes. Drain, then immediately remove the skins. Spread the skinned almonds out on several layers of paper towels. Let dry for 48 hours at room temperature.
- 2 For the chocolate macaron shells, the day before, process the almonds in a food processor with a little bit of the icing sugar. Add the rest of the icing sugar; then process again until the almonds are finely ground. Sift and press the icing sugar-almond mixture through a medium sieve. Re-process any remaining large almond pieces with the sifted icing sugar-almond mixture, until all of the almonds are very finely ground and will fit through the sieve. Dilute the cocoa and the food colour in the water; then add this along with the 70g (2½oz) egg whites and the apricot purée and process again until the mixture forms a rough mass.
- 3 Lightly beat the 110g (3½oz) egg whites just until frothy, then add them to the food processor. Process to combine, then transfer the batter to a pastry bag fitted with a plain #11, 11-12mm (½in) pastry tip.
- 4 Line baking sheets with parchment paper. Pipe disks about 3.5cm (1½in) in diameter and 2cm (¾in) apart on the sheets. Set aside for at least 1 hour at room temperature to allow a skin to form.
- 5 Preheat a convection oven to 150°C/Gas Mark 2. Place the baking sheets in the oven. Bake for 15 minutes, quickly opening and closing the oven door twice during baking to release moisture. Remove the shells from the oven and slide them still on the parchment paper onto a work surface.
- 6 For the chocolate ganache, chop the chocolate using a serrated knife, then melt it to between 45-50°C set over a bain-marie or in a microwave.
- 7 In a saucepan, bring the milk to a boil. Pour the hot milk in thirds into the melted chocolate, stirring after each addition starting in the centre, then in wider concentric circles toward the sides of the bowl. Using an immersion blender, blend the ganache until smooth.
- 8 Add the butter in small pieces. Blend again until smooth. Pour the ganache into a baking dish. Cover it by gently pressing clingfilm onto its surface. Refrigerate for 2 hours, just until the ganache has developed a creamy consistency. Transfer the ganache to a pastry bag fitted with a plain #11, 11-12mm (½in) pastry tip.
- 9 Turn half of the shells over with the flat sides up onto a new piece of parchment paper. Fill them with the ganache. Close them with the rest of the shells, pressing down lightly.
- 10 Refrigerate the macarons for 24 hours. Remove them from the refrigerator 2 hours before eating them.



The recipes on pages 94-97 and the macaron moelleux tiède on page 93 are taken from *Pierre Hermé Macaron* by Pierre Hermé, published by Stewart, Tabori & Chang, RRP £27.99. Photography © Laurent Fau.



Californian raisin and whiskey brownies

By Eve and David O'Sullivan

Makes 12

FOR THE BROWNIES

- 150g (5½oz) Californian raisins**
- 4 tbsp Irish whiskey**
- 250g (9oz) milk chocolate, roughly chopped**
- 200g (7oz) butter**
- 250g (9oz) caster sugar**
- 3 free-range eggs**
- 60g (2oz) plain flour**
- 60g (2oz) cocoa powder**
- 1 tsp baking powder**

FOR THE DRIZZLE

- 50ml (1¾fl oz) Irish cream liqueur**
- 75g (2¾oz) milk chocolate, chopped**

- 1** Soak the raisins in the whiskey for at least 30 minutes, then preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4 and butter and line a 20x20cm (8x8in) brownie tin.
- 2** Put the chocolate in a glass bowl over a pan of simmering water to melt gently. Beat the butter and sugar until pale and creamy, then, while still beating, add the eggs, mix until combined, then pour in the melted chocolate. Add the raisins and whiskey, then fold in the flour, cocoa and baking powder. Bake for 35-40 minutes, until just set in the middle. Allow to cool in the tin.
- 3** To make the drizzle, heat the cream liqueur in a pan until just bubbling, then pour over the chopped chocolate, stirring until smooth. Drizzle over the brownie, allow to harden for 10-15 minutes, then cut into bars.



Rye, fennel and cranberry crackers

By Eve and David O'Sullivan

Makes 50

FOR THE CRACKERS

- 200ml (7fl oz) rapeseed oil**
- 300ml (10½fl oz) water**
- 4 tsp fennel seeds**
- 50 dried cranberries, finely chopped**
- 2 tsp salt**
- 2 tsp caster sugar**
- 300g (10½oz) flour**
- 300g (10½oz) rye flour**
- 2 tsp baking powder**

FOR THE CORDIAL

- 500g (1lb 2oz) rosehips, washed**
- 250g (9oz) caster sugar**

- 1** First, make the cordial. Put the rosehips in a large pan with 1 litre (1¾pt) water; bring to the boil then simmer for 5 minutes. Take off the heat, allow to infuse for 30 minutes, then strain the rosehips through a muslin cloth, reserving the liquid. Put the pulp back in the pan, this time with 750ml (26fl oz) water, and repeat the process. Repeat again with 500ml (18fl oz) water.
- 2** Pour all of the rosehip liquid back into the pan, bring to the boil and reduce to around 500ml (18fl oz). Tip in the sugar, stir until dissolved, then pour into sterilised bottles.
- 3** For the crackers, whisk the oil and water in a large jug or bowl. Put all the other ingredients into a large bowl, add the liquid from the other bowl and mix together. Once the mixture has formed a dough, take it out of the bowl and knead on a lightly floured surface until smooth. Wrap in clingfilm, then chill in the fridge for 1 hour.
- 4** Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6 and line two large baking trays with baking paper. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough to about 5mm (¼in) thick and cut into triangles.
- 5** Put the crackers on the prepared baking trays, then bake for 8-10 minutes, until golden brown. You'll need to do this in 3-4 batches.
- 6** Dilute the rosehip cordial with a little vodka and soda water; then serve with the crackers and a few slices of hard cheese.

Walnut, coconut and chocolate spiral bundt cake

By Eve and David O'Sullivan

Serves 8-10

FOR THE CAKE

170g (6oz) salted butter

340g (12oz) caster sugar

1 tsp almond essence

3 free-range eggs

200g (7oz) self-raising flour

40g (1½oz) cocoa powder

a pinch of salt

300ml (10½fl oz) milk

75g (2½oz) milk chocolate, roughly chopped

FOR THE WALNUT AND COCONUT MARBLE

50g (1¾oz) flour

70g (2½oz) dark brown sugar

70g (2½oz) salted butter, cubed

50g (1¾oz) shredded, sweetened coconut

a large handful of walnuts, finely chopped

1 First, prepare the marble. Mix the flour and the sugar, then rub the butter into the mix until it resembles fine breadcrumbs. Stir in the coconut and walnuts, then set aside.

2 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Lightly butter the bundt tin. In a large bowl, beat the butter and sugar until combined, then add the almond essence. Beat in the eggs one at a time, until they are incorporated.

3 Sieve the flour with the cocoa powder and salt, then stir into the batter. Pour in the milk, stir until combined, then spoon half of it into the bundt tin.

4 Add blobs of half the walnut and coconut marble evenly in the tin.

5 Using a knife, gently swirl the mixture through the chocolate cake batter – make sure you don't mix it too much, as it will ruin the marble effect. Repeat with the other half of the cake mixture and marble, then bake for 50-60 minutes, until a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean.

6 Allow to cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack to cool completely. Once cool, melt the milk chocolate in a glass bowl set over, but not in, a pan of simmering water, then drizzle down the grooves of the cake or diagonally across it.



The recipes on pages 98-99 are taken from *Bake In Black* by Eve and David O'Sullivan, published by The Flood Gallery Publishing, distributed by Omnibus Press, RRP £14.99. Photography by Stuart Ovenden.



Dark chocolate crème pâtissière millefeuille

By Debbie Wingham from Couture to Cakes
(www.couturetocakes.com)

FOR THE CRÈME PÂTISSÈRE

4 medium free-range egg yolks (preferably organic)

65g (2½oz) caster sugar

15g (½oz) plain flour

15g (½oz) cornflour

350ml (12fl oz) whole milk

1 tbsp double cream (optional)

80g (2¾oz) best quality chocolate, grated

OTHER INGREDIENTS

1 pack of puff pastry

1 chocolate transfer sheet of your choice

1 large bar of chocolate for chocolate transfer work – I used dark chocolate because it made the leopard print pop, but dependent on design you can use white or milk chocolate and even candy melts if it requires a bold colour as a platform for transfer design

1 free-range egg yolk, to brush

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6.
- 2 Prepare your puff pastry by rolling out no thicker than 1cm (½in), then use a cutter the size of your glass or jar top to cut to size, you will need around 3 discs per glass. (Do remember that many glasses are slimmer at the bottom than the top and also that puff pastry tends to shrink slightly when it rises.)
- 3 Use a toothpick to pierce the pastry, because this will prevent it rising too much and sitting unevenly.
- 4 Separate an egg and use the yolk to brush the top of the pastry, so that it cooks with a good colour and evenly.
- 5 Place in the oven for about 10 minutes, dependent on the disc size it may need more or less – the smaller it is, the quicker it cooks.
- 6 For the crème pâtissière, in a large mixing bowl, whisk together the eggs and sugar until they turn a pale gold colour. Whisk in the flour and cornflour and set aside.
- 7 Place the milk in the pan, bring to a gentle simmer, stirring frequently. Remove the pan from the heat and let cool for 30 seconds. Slowly pour half of the hot milk onto the egg mixture, whisking all the time, then return the mixture to the remaining milk in the pan. It's important to slowly pour the hot milk onto the cold eggs before you return the mixture to the pan to prevent the eggs from scrambling.
- 8 Bring the mixture back to the boil and simmer for one minute, whisking continuously or until smooth.
- 9 Add the grated chocolate and, when entirely combined, add the spoon of double cream (optional).
- 10 Pour the cream into a piping bag and dust with icing sugar to prevent a skin forming, then put it in the fridge until ready to use.
- 11 Line up four champagne glasses or glasses of your choice. Place a puff pastry disc at the bottom of each glass.
- 12 Pipe in the crème pâtissière. Place another pastry disk on top of the crème pâtissière, then add another layer of piped crème pâtissière.
- 13 Now mark the chocolate transfer sheets by using a wooden skewer like a pencil and drawing around a cutter. Cut your chocolate transfer to size using the skewer lines as a guide and use a cupcake tin to ensure a neat finish. Put the cut out transfer, shiny side down, in the bottom of a cupcake tin. The key thing about using chocolate transfer sheets is you need to make sure you use the non-shiny side and be sure not to scratch the more matt side, because that is the transfer and you can scratch and ruin these if you're not careful.
- 14 Now your transfer sheets are ready, melt the chocolate and either use a piping bag or chocolate pouring pot (Lakeland sell these) to insure the chocolate doesn't splatter, because the neater the chocolate is the flatter it will sit.
- 15 Leave to set in a cool place for a few hours, then pop out the chocolate discs and peel off the transfer gently. Pop on top of the glass and voilà, the ideal dessert for any dinner party!



Brownie goody bars

By Ashley Fox Whipple

Makes 12

FOR THE BARS

286g (18oz) pack of family size package fudge brownie mix

60ml (2fl oz) water

120ml (4fl oz) vegetable oil

2 free-range eggs

250g (9oz) vanilla frosting

75g (2¾oz) crisp rice cereal

250g (9oz) creamy peanut butter

175g (6oz) semi-sweet chocolate chips

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4. Grease the bottom of a 22x33cm (9x13in) baking dish. Combine the brownie mix, water, oil and eggs in a medium bowl until well blended. Spread into the baking dish. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted 5cm (2in) from the side of the baking dish comes out clean or almost clean. Cool completely, about 1 hour.
- 2 Spread frosting over the brownies and refrigerate covered while you prepare the cereal mixture. Measure the crisp rice cereal into a large bowl and set aside. Melt the peanut butter and chocolate chips in a saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly. When the mixture is melted and completely combined, pour over the cereal in the bowl and stir to combine. Spread the cereal mixture over the frosted brownies. Cool completely before cutting.
- 3 Store the treats in an airtight container at room temperature and serve within 24 hours. To keep treats longer, refrigerate for 2-3 days. Allow refrigerated treats to sit at room temperature for 20-30 minutes before serving.



Triple-crunch peanut butter chocolate treats

By Ashley Fox Whipple

Makes 24

FOR THE TREATS

235ml (8fl oz) corn syrup

200g (7oz) sugar

260g (9oz) chunky peanut butter

150g (5¼oz) crisp rice cereal

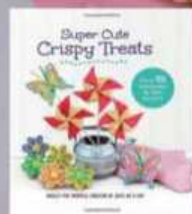
175g (6oz) chocolate chips

175g (6oz) peanut butter chips

30g (1oz) chopped nuts

- 1 Heat the corn syrup and sugar over medium heat until the sugar is dissolved and the mixture begins to boil. Remove from the heat and stir in the chunky peanut butter.
- 2 Pour in the crisp rice cereal and stir to coat. Turn out into a greased 22x33cm (9x13in) baking dish. Set aside.
- 3 In a small saucepan, melt the chocolate chips and peanut butter chips over medium-low heat. Stir occasionally until completely melted. Spread over the rice cereal mixture. Sprinkle with nuts. Let stand until the chocolate has set.
- 4 Store in an airtight container on the counter top and serve within 24 hours. Just before serving, cut into 5cm (2in) bars.

TIP If you'd prefer not to use corn syrup, you can try a substitution of 340g (12oz) honey. Honey can burn more easily though, so be sure to watch your temperatures.



The recipes on pages 102-103 are taken from *Super Cute Crispy Treats – Nearly 100 Unbelievable No-Bake Desserts* by Ashley Fox Whipple, published by Race Point Publishing, RRP £12.99.



Donut treats

By Ashley Fox Whipple

Makes 12

FOR THE DONUTS

3 tbsp margarine

280g (10oz) mini marshmallows

150g (5¼oz) crisp rice cereal

187g (6½oz) buttercream frosting (see below), in tinted colour(s) of your choice
sprinkles

FOR THE BUTTERCREAM FROSTING

113g (4oz) butter, softened

1½ tsp clear vanilla extract

4-6 tbsp milk

480-540g (17-19oz) icing sugar

- 1 Melt the margarine over a low heat in a large saucepan. Add the marshmallows and stir. Let the marshmallows melt completely, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat.
- 2 Stir in crisp rice cereal until covered with marshmallow. As soon as the mixture is cool enough to handle, press into a greased donut baking pan to form donut-shaped treats. (If necessary, turn out the formed treats onto a greased baking sheet and reuse the donut pan

until all of the mixture has been used.) Let cool completely.

- 3 Frost the donuts with buttercream and top with sprinkles. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator and serve within 24 hours.

FOR THE BUTTERCREAM FROSTING

- 1 For the frosting, in a large bowl, beat the softened butter until creamy with a hand mixer or stand mixer. Beat in the vanilla. Add the sugar, one cup at a time, and beat until incorporated.
- 2 When the frosting becomes too dry, add 1 tbsp milk. Alternate between adding milk and sugar until all of both ingredients have been added. If the consistency needs to be adjusted, use icing sugar to thicken and milk to thin. If you're using the buttercream later in the day, place a damp towel over the frosting until you're ready to use (about 3-4 hours). Otherwise store the frosting in a covered container in the refrigerator until ready to use, for up to 1 week.
- 3 To colour the frosting, unless a large amount of frosting is needed at once, put 115-230g (4-8oz) of frosting in a bowl and colour with gel food colouring.
- 4 Buttercream frosting can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 1 week. For longer storage, freeze the frosting for up to 3 months. Always let the frosting return to room temperature before using, and lightly beat it to make sure it's light and fluffy.



IN THE KITCHEN WITH...

The Baking Tree

A little cake pop may not look like much on its own, but **Becca Ford** has turned them into a thriving business and even appeared on television with them...

Q How did your career in the food industry begin?

I've always been interested in cooking, from a young age. I started baking cakes in my mum's kitchen and then progressed onto savoury dishes as my tastebuds developed. I took up O-Level Home Economics, as it was then, did a diploma in Cordon Bleu cookery and then went on to study Food and Nutrition at Cardiff University. As part of the course I chose to do my work placement in publishing at *BBC Good Food Magazine*. I enjoyed it so much I went back there in my summer holidays and landed my first job working for *Essentials* magazine as a food writer a few months later.

Q When and why did you set up The Baking Tree?

The Baking Tree started in 2012. I never intentionally set out to have my own business, it kind of just evolved.

I'd look on in total fascination at the white foamy mass of egg whites...

It all started when I met a friend for a coffee one morning in February 2011. We both had daughters in the same year at school. She mentioned she had seen a new idea for a cake on the Internet called a 'cake pop', basically a ball of cake on a stick. She had a go at making some for the school cake sale and unsurprisingly they sold out within seconds. I was intrigued by the idea and invited her round to my kitchen the next day. We had a lot of fun experimenting and seeing a business idea in the making. I immediately wanted to approach the local cafes to test out our new creations. Within weeks we were up and running. We called our business The Little Cake Pop Company and started selling to a

number of local cafes, farmers markets, online and through word of mouth. Sadly though it wasn't to last, as it became apparent that we both had different objectives. I was desperate to absorb myself in something positive and fulfilling, so in August 2012 the company ceased trading. A few months later The Baking Tree was born.

Q What appeals to you most about baking?

My love of baking started in childhood. I remember watching my mum in the kitchen from a young age. I always remember the meringues she used to make – I would look on in total fascination at the white foamy mass evolving in the bowl as the egg whites were whisked furiously together with the sugar, desperately hoping to have a taste! From that moment on I started to bake and never looked back.

Q Why did you choose to focus on cake pops?

I never outwardly set out to specialise in cake pops, one thing just led to another. The timing was perfect with the sudden rise and phenomena in the baking market and we were hitting it just ahead of time, before many people had heard of them. Not only are they different to anything seen before, but people are still so intrigued as to how they are made. Children's eyes light up when they see the brightly coloured cakes on sticks... adults too for that matter! As a born foodie, flavour and texture are key and I don't mind admitting that I think they're the best tasting cake pops around – or so I've been told by many customers!



Q Can you tell us about the TV show you appeared on?

The show was called *Cooks to Market* and was aired in the summer of 2013 on Sky Living. The show focused on small food producers selling primarily at food markets, with an ambition to appear in mainstream supermarkets across the country. It was a competition – the best way to describe it is a tamer version of *The Apprentice*!

Q Why did you decide to start producing kits?

People were so intrigued by the cake pops and I was forever being asked how they were made, so the idea for a cake pop kit seemed the logical next step. I started with the Chocolate Rainbow Cake Pop Kit as chocolate is naturally the best selling flavour. In response to demand we quickly followed suit with the Red Velvet Cake Pop Kit too.

Q What's next for you?

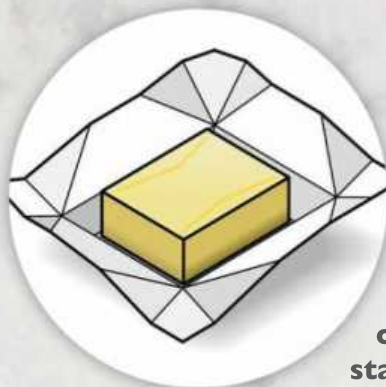
I'm very passionate about these little creations on sticks, the feedback from my customers confirms this is so and therefore I still feel there is a huge market out there waiting to be explored. My ultimate dream would be to become a household brand and be known as the 'Lola's Cupcakes' of the Cake Pop world!

Find out more about Becca's cake pops by visiting www.thebakingtree.co.uk

10 top tips for perfect cake pops

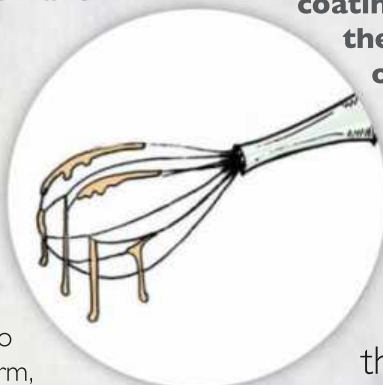
Want to try making your own cake pops? **Becca Ford** shares her foolproof tips for getting the best results every time...

1 Always use softened butter for the sponge cake, it will make the mixing easier.



stick when coating in chocolate.

2 Always use a hand whisk or food mixer for the cake if you have one. You will incorporate more air and volume into the cake.



3 Allow the cake to cool completely before turning into crumbs. If too warm, the buttercream will melt when mixed together.

4 Get perfect sized balls every time by weighing each one to 30g.



5 The cake balls must be kept in the fridge until they are firm, but not rocks! If too soft they will fall off the

more firmly onto the stick.

8 You must use the correct type of chocolate for coating, such as Wilton or PME

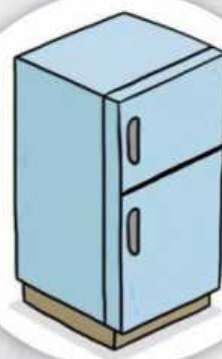
6 Let the cake balls stand at room temperature for about 10-15 minutes once out of the fridge and before coating. If they are too cold the chocolate will crack on setting.

7 Dip all the sticks in the melted chocolate first, then push a little way into the cake balls. Allow to set before coating. This will hold the cake



9 If the chocolate is too thick when melted, thin it down with a few spoonfuls of vegetable oil and stir until smooth.

10 Use floristry oasis or a vase filled with rice or couscous for standing the cake pops up in to dry.



Candy Melts. They are available online and from all specialist cake shops. Supermarket and other chocolates are too runny when melted and won't set quickly enough to hold the cake on the stick.

Cake pops

Basic cake pops

By Renshaw (www.renshawbaking.com)

Makes 25

FOR THE SPONGE

200g (7oz) unsalted butter, softened

150g (5oz) caster sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

2 medium free-range eggs, at room temperature

180g (6oz) self-raising flour

4 tbsp milk, at room temperature

TO DECORATE

80g (3oz) unsalted butter

40g (2oz) cream cheese, softened

200g (7oz) icing sugar, sifted

1 tsp vanilla extract

200g (7oz) each of Renshaw Colour Melts in the colours Pink, Red, Blue, Green, Yellow and White

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
 - 2 Lightly grease and flour a 25cm (10in) round cake tin or a 20cm (8in) square cake tin.
 - 3 To make the cake, cream the unsalted butter and the caster sugar for about 5 minutes, until it turns pale and fluffy. Mix 1 tsp vanilla extract into the creamed butter and sugar.
 - 4 Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing well between each addition. Add half the self-raising flour and then half the milk and mix until fully combined. Repeat with the remaining flour and milk.
 - 5 Pour the mixture into the prepared tin and bake for 35-45 minutes, until a light golden brown.
 - 6 Leave to cool on a wire rack.
- ### TO DECORATE
- 1 To make the cream cheese frosting, cream the unsalted butter and cream cheese together.
 - 2 Gradually add the icing sugar, continuing to cream until light and fluffy. Lastly, mix in the remaining 1 tsp vanilla extract.
 - 3 Refrigerate the cream cheese frosting for 30 minutes.
 - 4 For the cake pops, remove the crust of the cake with a sharp kitchen knife and crumble the vanilla cake finely into a large mixing bowl.
 - 5 Once you have crumbled the cake, add in one heaped tbsp of cream cheese frosting at a time, and mix with the crumbs. (You may not require all of the frosting, depending on how moist your cake is, so use a little at a time.) Keep mixing until you have a fudge-like texture. To see if it's ready, squeeze a little of the mixture in your palm – it should be pliable and not crumble. (If you add too much frosting to the mixture it will be soggy, sticky and heavy, and the cake pops will fall off the cake pop lollipop stick when you try to dip them into the melted chocolate.)
 - 6 Wrap the cake pop mixture in clingfilm and chill for at least an hour. The mixture should be firm, but not too hard when it's ready to work with.
 - 7 Break off a small piece of the mixture and roll into a ping-pong ball size with your palms. Place the cake balls on a tray lined with baking paper. Refrigerate for 15-20 minutes, or until they are firm.
 - 8 Melt the Renshaw Colour Melts in pink, white, red blue, green and yellow separately following the instructions on the back of pack.
 - 9 Take each long cake pop lollipop stick and dip one end 2cm (¾in) deep into the one of the three melted colour melts. Immediately insert the stick into the centre of each cake ball, stopping the lollipop stick half way through. Place on a tray lined with baking paper for 1-2 minutes to set.
 - 10 Take each cake pop on a stick and dip fully into either the pink, red or blue colour melts. When dipping, be sure to cover right to the top of the stick to secure the cake pop in place. Gently tap the cake pop over the bowl to remove any excess colour melt.
 - 11 Leave to set standing up in a piece of polystyrene.
 - 12 Drip or drizzle alternate colour melts over the top of each of the cake pops to decorate.

Q&A

Ask the experts

Whatever your cake and baking questions our experts can help. Email your queries to sally.fitzgerald@anthem-publishing.com

Q I can never get meringue right, do you have any tips on how I can improve my technique?

Meringues can be such delicate bakes and there are certain rules you should never break if you want to get them perfect. Firstly, never open your oven door once a meringue is in the oven. Opening the oven door, even just once, will more than likely cause your meringue to crack all over. Meringues are cooked best low and slow. I cook my meringues between 80-100°C and I also find from experience that they cook better in a non-fan oven. Too high and your meringues will brown and taste burnt. I would also recommend switching off the oven after baking, leaving the meringues in until it's completely cold. Cooking meringues is very much about drying them out and evaporating the water in the mixture.

Check your oven temperature! You may be surprised to know that the dial on your oven could be incorrect by as much as 20°C. By using an oven thermometer, you will find out the true temperature and be able to adjust accordingly for temperature sensitive recipes.

Try using icing sugar instead of caster sugar. I've found meringues much easier to mix when using icing sugar – it mixes in and dissolves a lot quicker than grainy caster.

Try the 2:1 ratio, I swear by this. Simply 2 parts sugar (or icing sugar) to 1 part egg whites. No need to complicate it by adding stabilizers such as lemon juice or cream of tartar, as some recipes suggest, if you follow the tips above you should get perfect meringues every time.

Jemma Lloyd, www.icedjems.com



Jemma Lloyd

Jemma has been writing recipes for her popular blog Iced Jems since 2010. From her beautiful pink kitchen she also runs sugarcraft and baking classes. Jemma also has a store both online and in the West Midlands selling bakeware, partyware and gifts. Visit her website at www.icedjems.com

Q I baked a gluten-free cake for my friend's birthday, but it was dry and crumbly – what can I do to make it better next time?

If you use shop bought gluten-free flour, add a little extra fat and/or milk to help overcome dryness. You can also choose a recipe containing fruit or vegetables. For instance, carrot, courgette, banana and apple are naturally moist cakes. If using shop-bought gluten-free flour, increase the amount of fruit for a moist cake.

At Honeybuns we blend our own flour using naturally moist nut and seed flours. If we can persuade you to try doing this at home, dryness and crumbliness issues will cease to bother you. Our 'go to' gluten-free flour mix is: 42.5% ground almonds, 15% ground golden flax and 42.5% sorghum flour. You then need to add the appropriate quantities of: free-range eggs, melted butter or rapeseed oil and vanilla and light brown sugar, just as you would when making a non free-from version. The ground almonds can be substituted for a blend of milled pumpkin, sunflower and linseed if you need to be nut free. Linwoods do a lovely mix you can try – visit www.linwoodshealthfoods.com. Ground seeds and nuts are full of good oils and help create moist cakes that keep well too. The nutritional benefits are also a bonus. Almonds contain high levels of vitamin E and antioxidants, plus well-researched cholesterol lowering benefits.

We've found no need to add xanthan or guar gum to our cake mixture. You can adapt it to whatever you fancy too – we have seasonal versions including: summer berry cake – add fresh raspberries and redcurrants; elderflower



Sarah Sibley

Sarah is an award winning cake maker, baking writer and columnist based in Winchester, Hampshire. She runs baking website Bake with Sarah (www.bakewithsarah.com) and a cake making business called Fantasy Fondant. She recently won gold for her cupcakes at Cake International, Birmingham.

and blackcurrant cake; extra lemony cake – add lemon juice, zest and curd; spiced pumpkin cake – add roasted butternut squash, mixed spice, and pumpkin seeds.

Emma Goss-Custard, www.honeybuns.co.uk

Q I want to experiment with colouring buttercream for my cupcakes. How do I choose between gel and liquid food colouring?

The best way to colour buttercream is with professional gel colours. Supermarkets do sometimes sell gel colours, but they aren't the same. You can pick up professional colours from a cake decorating or craft shop for around £3. Popular brands include Sugarflair, Wilton and Squires Kitchen. This kind of gel colour is much more concentrated than supermarket liquid colouring, so you only need a tiny amount.

Using a cocktail stick, add the colour gradually, mixing it in thoroughly after each addition until you achieve the colour required. Remember that this colouring can develop over time. This is especially true of dark, vivid colours like red and black. For these colours, get red to a dark pink colour or black to a dark grey colour and leave for 20 minutes before adding more colour. It can be tempting to just keep adding more colour, and gel colours don't make buttercream runny and taste horrible, but there are many additives in the concentrated gels and you should not use more than 3g of gel colour per 1kg of cake. That includes the sponge, buttercream and fondant, so be careful making things like rainbow cake and red velvet not to overdo it!

Sarah Sibley, www.bakewithsarah.com



Emma Goss-Custard

Emma Goss-Custard launched Honeybuns in 1998. It truly was a kitchen table enterprise. Today, the Honeybuns range of artisan goodies is gluten-free and Emma is currently writing her second gluten-free baking book – visit online at www.honeybuns.co.uk

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Dairy-free pecan cranberry pie

By Sarah Britton

Serves 8-10

FOR THE CRUST

150g (5½oz) rolled oats

60ml (2fl oz) coconut oil or ghee

60ml (2fl oz) pure maple syrup

¼ tsp fine sea salt

½ tsp freshly grated nutmeg

FOR THE FILLING

120ml (4fl oz) barley malt syrup

60ml (2fl oz) pure maple syrup

2 tbsp tahini or nut butter

1 tsp vanilla extract, or 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise, seeds reserved

1 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tbsp arrowroot powder

210g (7½oz) whole raw pecans

150g (5½oz) fresh or frozen cranberries

The recipes on page 110 and the chocolate cookies on page 111 are taken from *My New Roots* by Sarah Britton, published by Pan Macmillan, RRP £20. Photography © Sarah Britton.

Dairy-free chai upside-down plum cake

By Sarah Britton

Serves 10

FOR THE CAKE

90ml (3fl oz) coconut oil or ghee, melted

30g (1oz) coconut sugar

4-5 small plums, pitted and thinly sliced

300g (10½oz) whole spelt flour

2 tsp baking powder

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

1 tsp ground ginger

1½ tsp ground cardamom

1 tsp fennel seeds

¼ tsp ground cloves

2 tsp ground cinnamon

½ tsp ground star anise

½ tsp fine sea salt

¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

240ml (8½fl oz) pure maple syrup or raw honey

190ml (6¾fl oz) milk of your choice (nut, seed, rice, etc)

2 tsp vanilla extract

1 tsp apple cider vinegar

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 2 Coat the bottom of an 18cm (7in) springform cake tin with ½ tbsp of the melted coconut oil. Sprinkle the coconut sugar evenly over it to cover the base. Neatly lay the plum slices in concentric rings on the bottom of the cake tin.
- 3 In a large mixing bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, ginger, cardamom, fennel seeds, cloves, cinnamon, star anise, salt and pepper. Whisk to combine.
- 4 In a medium saucepan, melt the remaining 6 tbsp coconut oil. Add the maple syrup, milk and vanilla and whisk to combine. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and whisk to remove any lumps. Add the vinegar and whisk quickly to incorporate.
- 5 Pour the batter into the cake tin, and put the tin on a rimmed baking sheet (to catch any liquid that may seep out while baking). Bake the cake until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean, 50-60 minutes.
- 6 When the cake has cooled, loosen the springform latch to open the tin. Invert a plate on top of the cake, and swiftly invert the two together so that the plums are now on the top. Serve.

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
- 2 For the crust, put the oats in a processor and blend on high to create a rough flour. Add the other ingredients and blend to combine. When the dough comes together, gather it into a ball and put it in the centre of a 23cm (9in) pie tin. Using wet hands, press the dough to the edges and up the sides. Prick holes with a fork. Bake for 10-15 minutes, until golden. Remove from the oven and cool. Leave the oven on.
- 3 For the filling, put all the ingredients except the nuts and cranberries in the processor and blend until smooth. Add 140g (5oz) of the nuts and pulse to chop (don't fully blend). Fold in the cranberries.
- 4 Pour the filling into the cooled crust. Decorate with the remaining nuts. Bake until bubbling and evenly browned, 20-30 minutes.
- 5 Let the pie cool completely, and serve.



Salt 'n' pepper chocolate chip cookies

By Sarah Britton

Makes 16

FOR THE COOKIES

80ml (2¾fl oz) coconut oil

80ml (2¾fl oz) brown rice syrup

2 tbs water or milk of choice

1 tsp vanilla extract

250g (9oz) gluten-free rolled oats

60g (2oz) coconut sugar

½ tsp fine sea salt

1 tsp coarsely ground black pepper

½ tsp bicarbonate of soda

2 tsp gluten-free baking powder

70g (2½oz) organic dark chocolate, chopped

flaky sea salt

- 1 Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3. Line a baking sheet with baking parchment.
- 2 Melt the oil in a small saucepan over low-medium heat. Whisk in the rice syrup, water and vanilla. Remove from the heat.
- 3 Blend the oats in a processor until you have a rough flour. Transfer it to a large bowl and add the coconut sugar, salt, pepper, bicarbonate of soda and baking powder. Stir to combine. Add the coconut oil mixture to the dry ingredients and fold to combine. Fold the chocolate into the batter.
- 4 Spoon out balls of dough onto the baking sheet, leaving at least 5cm (2in) between them. Garnish each cookie with a few flakes of sea salt. Bake for 13-15 minutes, until golden brown. Remove from the oven, let sit on the baking sheet for 5 minutes, and then transfer to a cooling rack.



This recipe and those on page 112 are taken from *Deliciously Wheat, Gluten & Dairy Free* by Antoinette Savill, published by Grub Street Publishing, RRP £14.99.

Gluten and dairy-free coffee and chocolate Madeleines

By Antoinette Savill

Makes 12

FOR THE MADELEINES

125g (4½oz) lactose-free/goat's butter or sunflower dairy-free spread

100g (3½oz) icing sugar

30g (1 oz) ground almonds

30g (1 oz) gluten-free plain white flour blend

1 ½ tbs cocoa powder (check labels for allergens)

a pinch of fine sea salt

½ tbs instant coffee granules

3 large free-range egg whites

2 tsp local honey

1 tsp pure vanilla paste or extract

150g (5oz) dark chocolate, (check for allergens) broken into pieces and melted in a bain-marie

- 1 Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3.
- 2 You will need a 12-hole Madeleine pan, greased and lightly floured, or a rubber mould which is clean and dry.
- 3 Put the butter or spread into a saucepan over medium heat and allow to melt. Continue to cook until the butter turns golden brown. The spread will not do this. Remove from the heat and cool completely.
- 4 Sift the sugar, almonds, flour, cocoa powder and salt into a mixing bowl.
- 5 Whisk in the coffee granules, egg whites, honey and vanilla using a balloon whisk. Whisk in the cooled butter or spread.
- 6 Cover the bowl with clingfilm and refrigerate for 30 minutes. This helps to achieve the right texture. Spoon the mixture into the prepared Madeleine pan or rubber mould. You can chill again for another 15 minutes, which helps to make a firm skin when baked.
- 7 Bake the Madeleines in the oven for about 10-15 minutes.
- 8 Allow to cool completely in the pan/moulds and then gently turn them out onto a wire rack to cool.
- 9 Melt the chocolate until smooth and glossy and cool slightly. Dip half of each Madeleine into the chocolate, so that one side is completely and thickly coated.
- 10 Allow the chocolate to set before serving.



Gluten and dairy-free cranberry, pecan and pear upside-down pudding

By Antoinette Savill

Serves 10

FOR THE TOPPING/BASE

75g (2½oz) lactose-free/goat's/sheep's butter or dairy-free sunflower spread

115g (4oz) caster sugar

900g (2lb) tin of pear quarters, drained

125g (4½oz) dried cranberries or 140g (5oz) fresh cranberries

85g (3oz) shelled pecans

FOR THE CAKE

115g (4oz) lactose-free/goat's butter or dairy-free sunflower spread

200g (7oz) caster sugar

2 large free-range eggs, separated

2 tsp pure vanilla extract

200g (7oz) white gluten-free plain white flour blend

3 tsp gluten-free baking powder (check label for allergens)

185ml (6½fl oz) lactose-free/goat's/sheep's milk or dairy-free soya milk

1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas Mark 5.

2 You need a non-stick 30cm (12in) heavy-based, ovenproof sauté pan or tarte tatin dish. Melt the butter or spread and sugar in the pan over low heat. Meanwhile, pat dry the pears on paper towels. Place the pears on top of the butter mixture. Increase the heat and cook until slightly caramelized. Scatter with cranberries and pecans.

3 For the cake, cream the butter or spread and sugar and add the egg yolks and vanilla. Mix in half the flour along with the baking powder. Add the milk and then the remaining flour. Mix gently until smooth. Beat the egg whites until they form peaks and then fold quickly into the cake mix with a large metal spoon.

4 Gently spread the batter over the fruit and bake in the oven for 35-40 minutes, or until an inserted skewer comes out clean.

5 Leave the pudding to cool for 10 minutes before turning out onto a serving plate, otherwise the caramelized fruit will stick to the pan. If this does happen, just scrape off the mixture and pack it back onto the top of the pudding. Serve warm.

Gluten and dairy-free raspberry custard tartlets

By Antoinette Savill

Makes 12

FOR THE PASTRY

12 pastry tartlets made with gluten-free shortcrust pastry

FOR THE FILLING

2 heaped tbsp gluten-free custard powder mix

1 tbsp caster sugar

60ml (2fl oz) goat's/sheep's/lactose-free milk or dairy-free almond and coconut milk

175ml (6fl oz) of the milk used above

60ml (2fl oz) of creme de framboise

FOR THE TOPPING

255g (8oz) fresh, hulled, ripe raspberries (never use frozen or canned as they go mushy and leak)

1 For the pastry, you need a 12-hole, non-stick, deep-bun mould baking tray, non-stick baking paper and baking ceramic balls. Make some gluten-free shortcrust pastry, roll it out and cut to fit the 12 tart tins. Bake blind at 180°C/Gas Mark 4 for about 15 minutes.

2 Make the custard by mixing the powder, sugar and smaller amount of milk in a non-stick pan. Stir in the larger amount of milk. Cook gently over low heat until the custard is thick, smooth and glossy. Stir in the creme de framboise and beat until smooth. Cool for 10 minutes, then spoon the custard evenly into the tartlets and smooth over.

3 Cool for 10 minutes and top with an inspired arrangement of raspberries. Serve at room temperature and eat on the same day. Delicious served with suitable cream.



ON SALE
7 JANUARY

Cake Decoration

HEAVEN



Next issue

Fairytale baking

Recreate enchanting scenes
from favourite childhood stories

BEGINNER BASICS

Get to grips with filling and covering cakes, stacking tiers and icing cake boards

JULIET SEAR

Discover the key to working with colour from the founder of Fancy Nancy

Valentine's Day & Easter designs

How to set up a cake business – part 2!

Photography © Fairytale Baking: More than 50 Enchanting Cakes, Bakes, and Decorations by Ramla Kahn (Apple Press, £12.99)
* Contents subject to change



IN THE KITCHEN WITH...

Lily Jones

Not many of us end up doing our dream job by accident, but that's how things happened for Lily and she's made the most of it with the thriving Lily Vanilli Bakery...

Q When did you start baking?

When I was around six, with my grandmother. She was a master of very English and Irish baking, always the same things, but to perfection. Soda bread, Victoria sponge, jams, scones, tea loaf... I thought it was all very magical.

Q Why did you decide to set up your bakery?

It was never intentional, I was just selling a few cakes to make ends meet and it was picked up by the press very early on. After a year or so I realised it had become my full time job, but I was still very slow on the uptake. Things like a logo and a website came a lot further down the line, it was always word of mouth growth.

Q How do you decide what to bake for it?

I change what I'm baking, week-to-week and season-to-season, depending on what's new and interesting. From the beginning it has evolved and we make everything, from sweet and savoury tarts and pies, to celebration cakes, ice creams, confectionery, sweet doughs and canapes. People come to us because we're versatile and they want something bespoke and original, so I'm often working on something new, which I love.

Q How did your baking books come about?

I had been making some gory cake sculptures and was approached to make a zombie cake book. I hired an illustrator and a designer friend and we made a B-movie inspired, zombie-themed cake decorating book that I'm really proud of. The second book, *Sweet Tooth*, was with Canongate, who gave me a lot of freedom. I put all my heart into it and months of hard work. It goes into great detail on the foundations of baking –

how things work, the science behind it, arming the reader with the skills to have confidence and freedom with what they're baking, and then demonstrating how far you can take a single simple skill with a set of my own recipes.

Q Where did you learn your bakery skills?

From books, lots of practise, YouTube – I'm self taught, which I think has its advantages, as long as you are passionate and focussed. From the beginning you can take your education in different directions, depending on where your interests lie. It means you can develop a style that's uniquely yours from the start.

Q What's your favourite thing to bake and why?

My winter carrot cake. It fills the whole house with the most glorious Christmas smell, which is warm and comforting – it's also delicious and lasts over a week in the fridge after it's baked.

Q What are the YBF awards?

I co-founded the YBFs and it is an award that celebrates creativity, craftsmanship and innovation in UK food and drink. We're going into our fifth year and in the last two years have had a wonderful partnership with the Tate, hosting our events at Tate Britain.

Q Why did you decide to launch them?

Amy Thorne, Chloe Scott-Moncrieff and I felt the existing food and drink awards overlooked what was happening at grassroots level – the independent businesses, where we felt something truly exciting was happening that could really benefit from recognition. We were sitting around waiting for someone else to do it and then finally decided just to do it ourselves. The support from



All images © Lily Vanilli

the industry was huge and we have the most incredible set of judges. In the last four years we have been able to support some amazing young businesses and seen the industry standard pushed higher and higher in bounds.

Q Have you learnt anything in particular from the people you've met through doing YBFs?

What I've learnt from the YBFs is that the standard of quality and innovation keeps taking leaps, year on year. I feel that we've seen British food transform in the space of a decade, from a bit of an international joke to being home to some of the world's best restaurants and producers. It's very impressive.

Q How do you go about developing new recipes?

I start with an idea or an ingredient and think about how best to realise it – my kitchen is experimental and there are always lots of new ingredients around, along with wild and varied briefs from clients, which means we're always looking at ways to make something new.

Q Any advice for anyone looking to open a bakery?

Try and find a style that is uniquely yours. If there is something that interests you, read up on it, master all the skills you can, then combine them to bring something original to the table.

Find out more by visiting lilyvanilli.com



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Edible Glue

Edible Glitters

Colour Flo Liquid Colours

ProGel Concentrated Colours

Available from all good cake decorating shops