

Best Brownie in the World

1. Getting Ready: Adjust oven rack to the middle position and preheat to 175°C. Line a 23 x 33 x 5 cm anodized aluminum baking pan with foil to cover the bottom and long sides of the pan (it's all right to leave the short sides exposed). If you like, grease lightly with pan spray.

2. In a 2 liter stainless steel saucier, melt the butter over medium-low heat. When completely melted, increase to medium and simmer, stirring with a heat resistant spatula while the butter hisses and pops. Continue cooking and stirring, scraping up any brown bits that form along the pan, until the butter is golden yellow and perfectly silent. Remove from heat and stir in the chocolate; it will seem quite thin.

3. Making the Batter: Combine white sugar, brown sugar, salt, eggs, vanilla, and instant espresso (if using) in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Whip on medium-high until extremely thick and fluffy, about 8 minutes. (The whipping time can vary significantly depending on bowl size, batter temperature, and mixer wattage, so use the visual cues as your primary guide.)

4. Meanwhile, sift together the flour and cocoa powder. When the foamed eggs are fluffy and thick, reduce speed to low and pour in the warm chocolate-butter. Once incorporated, add the cocoa-flour all at once and continue mixing until roughly combined. Finish with a flexible spatula, scraping and folding to ensure the batter is well mixed from the bottom up.

5. Pour into the prepared pan and bake until the brownies are glossy and just barely firm, about 30 minutes or to an internal temperature of 95°C (take care that the probe is inserted at a sharp angle to avoid touching the bottom of the pan). The timing of this recipe is based on anodized aluminum, and will vary significantly with glass, ceramic, or non-stick pans, materials that will also affect the brownie's consistency.

6. Cool the brownies to room temperature to allow their crumb to set before slicing. Slide a butter knife between the brownies and the short ends of the pan; gently tug on the foil, then lift to remove the brownies from the pan. Cut into twenty four 6 cm squares, and store in an airtight container with a sheet of wax paper between each layer, about 1 week at room temperature.

340 g unsalted butter

170 g finely chopped 72% dark chocolate

450 g white sugar

55 g light brown sugar

1 3/4 teaspoons (4g) Diamond Crystal kosher salt; for table salt, use about half as much by volume or the same weight

6 large eggs, straight from the fridge (295g)

Vanilla extract

1 teaspoon instant espresso powder

125 g all-purpose flour

115 g Dutch process cocoa