

FROM SCRATCH BROWNIES (WITH A CARAMEL PECAN OPTION)

INGREDIENTS

1/3 cup Dutch-processed cocoa
1 1/2 teaspoons instant espresso (optional)
1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons boiling water
2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, finely chopped
4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter, melted
1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 large eggs
2 large egg yolks
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 1/2 cups sugar
1 3/4 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon table salt
6 ounces bittersweet chocolate, cut into 1/2-inch pieces

For the Caramel Pecan (optional)

1 teaspoon vanilla extract
24 individually wrapped caramels, unwrapped
1 cup pecans, coarsely chopped

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat oven to 350F degrees. Make a foil sling for your 13 x 9 inch pan. Spray with nonstick cooking spray.

Whisk cocoa, espresso powder (if using), and boiling water together in large bowl until smooth. Add unsweetened chocolate and whisk until chocolate is melted. Whisk in melted butter and oil. Add eggs, yolks, and vanilla and continue to whisk until smooth and homogeneous. Whisk in sugar until fully incorporated. Add flour and salt and mix with rubber spatula until combined. Fold in bittersweet chocolate pieces.

Scrape batter into prepared pan and bake until toothpick inserted halfway between edge and center comes out with just a few moist crumbs attached, 30 to 35 minutes. Transfer pan to wire rack and cool 30 minutes.

If making the caramel pecan option: In saucepan over low heat, melt caramels, stirring until smooth. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla. Drizzle over brownies and sprinkle pecans onto the caramel. Let set for at least 30 minutes.

Using foil overhang, lift brownies from pan. Return brownies to wire rack and let cool completely, about 1 hour more. Cut into 2-inch squares and serve.