

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

Wednesday, March 19, 2008 ■ Volume 02; Issue 1 ■ www.lamorindaweekly.com



The daffodils have bloomed and with spring in the air, it's time to start thinking about picnics and outings at Briones Dam, the Lafayette Reservoir or any one of the great little municipal parks in the area. And, when I think of picnics I always think of brownies for dessert. They're easy to transport and

everyone seems to love them. But I never understand why anyone would settle for a boxed brownie when the real McCoy is so easy to make. Here are two excellent, rich brownie recipes that take a matter of minutes to prepare.

Directions

Melt bittersweet chocolate, cocoa powder, butter and almond paste in medium-sized pot on low heat on stovetop and stir until well blended. Remove from heat. Add salt and sugar and stir until both are dissolved into chocolate-butter mixture. Add two eggs, one at a time, beating well after each. Add vanilla and flour and mix well. Stir in nuts (optional) at this time.

Pour batter into an 8-inch baking pan, prepared with cooking spray. Sprinkle slivered almonds over top of batter. Bake in 350-degree oven for 18 minutes. Test with cake tester and if brownies still seem too wet, bake for one minute longer. If they seem just right, turn off oven and leave them in the oven for another minute. The brownies should be just slightly wet in the center when they are done baking.

Remove from oven and cool completely on baking rack. Cut into bite-sized brownies, 1 to 1½ inches square.

Gram's Brownies with Almond Paste

Ingredients

- ◆ 3 ½ ounces bittersweet chocolate, broken into bits, or use chips
- ◆ 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- ◆ 1" slice of almond paste (Odense makes one that can be found in the baking section of most markets and comes in a toothpaste-shaped box)
- ◆ 1 cube unsalted butter
- ◆ dash of salt
- ◆ ½ cup granulated sugar
- ◆ 2 eggs
- ◆ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ◆ ½ cup unbleached flour
- ◆ ½ cup slivered almonds, or pecans, coarsely chopped (optional)



If you think Gram's are chocolatey ... just wait for these!

"Easy as Boxed" Brownies

Ingredients

- ◆ ½ bag (6 ounces) bittersweet chocolate chips
- ◆ 1 stick unsalted butter (1/2 cup)
- ◆ 2 large eggs
- ◆ 1 cup granulated sugar
- ◆ 1 tablespoons cocoa powder
- ◆ 2 teaspoons vanilla
- ◆ ½ teaspoon salt
- ◆ 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ◆ ½ cup chopped toasted pecans or walnuts *optional
(toast nuts in a 325-degree oven for 5-10 minutes, or until barely toasted.)

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a glass or tin 8-inch square baking dish.

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, melt chocolate and butter, stirring occasionally to blend and keep from burning. Remove from heat and set aside to cool.

In a large bowl mix eggs, sugar, cocoa powder, vanilla and salt. Add cooled chocolate and mix well. Blend in flour. Pour into prepared pan and bake for 20-25 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Cut into small squares, as these are quite rich!

