

Make your own memories with Bittersweet Brownie Pudding

By Susie Iventosch



Brownie Pudding

Photo Susie Iventosch

A few weeks ago, my sister called to see if I had our mom's brownie pudding recipe. She wanted to surprise our parents with this old family favorite, but my recipe file was not with me that day. Actually, I had completely forgotten about brownie pudding, which was one of our favorite desserts when we were kids. I was so excited to make it again, and when I finally found and made the recipe, it tasted awful, with some sort of metallic taste. This was not at all how it tasted when we were young! What happened?

After some investigation, I discovered that I had used a baking powder that contained aluminum (aluminum sodium sulfate or aluminum sodium phosphate) and for some reason, it did not mix well with the other ingredients. Maybe it was the interaction with the cocoa powder, but whatever the case, I threw the entire batch out and vowed to try again the

next week, while I was down visiting my mom.

If you've ever had that metallic taste, or just an off-taste with your baked goods such as muffins, scones, breads or pancakes, check your baking powder. Those that contain aluminum can develop this taste during the baking, even if the batter or dough tastes perfectly fine. This has happened to me over the years, so I became curious as to what was happening and learned that the devil is in the baking powder.

Rumford makes an aluminum-free, double acting baking powder, and Trader Joe's also packages an aluminum-free baking powder. You can also make your own by combining baking soda with cream of tartar or cornstarch, but you may have to experiment, because the quantities of each differ quite a bit from one source to another.

What began as a walk down

memory lane with the revival of our old recipe, became a quest to make a better, gooier brownie pudding, with more chocolate, less sugar, more water and aluminum-free baking powder. My mom loves chocolate, and the more the better, so we used melted bittersweet chocolate in addition to the cocoa powder called for in the original recipe. We decided to use a little bit more boiling water, too, which created more of the gooey sauce to spoon over ice cream. After four attempts, we finally landed a really great new version of this old favorite!

Here is the link to an Epicurious article by David Tamarkin that offers a great explanation of why some baking powders contain aluminum in the first place: <https://www.epicurious.com/ingredients/why-aluminum-free-baking-powder-is-better-article>

Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com. This recipe can be found on our website: www.lamorindaweekly.com. If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.



INGREDIENTS



Brownie Layer

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, melted
- 2 teaspoons baking powder (use one with no aluminum like Rumford's)
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup milk
- 2 tablespoons canola oil (or can use melted butter)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup chopped pecans (or walnuts)

Topping

- ¾ cup (packed) light brown sugar
- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 ¼ cups boiling water

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Grease an 8x8x2 inch baking pan and set aside.
2. In a medium bowl, mix together flour, granulated sugar, baking powder and salt.
3. Stir in the milk, oil and vanilla. Mix well.
4. Add the melted chocolate and chopped nuts.
5. Spread batter out evenly into the prepared pan.
6. In small bowl mix brown sugar and cocoa powder and spread evenly over top of brownie batter.
7. Slowly pour boiling water over the top.
8. Bake for 35 minutes or so, until top is crackly, but bottom is still gooey.
9. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream or frozen yogurt.

Acalanes' Blueprint awarded for excellence in journalism

By John T. Miller



Members of the Blueprint staff at Acalanes High School pose after being recognized at the Dean Leshler High School Journalism Awards banquet held recently. Back row, from left: Sarah Westergren, Lisa Burciaga, Kahren Eloyan, Larry Freeman (advisor), Gareth Kwok, Claire Gallagher and Clare Fonstein; front row: Christine Mitroff, Clara Kobashigawa, Maddie McDonagh, Sierra Fong-Horvath and Natalie Starzcewski.

Photo Blueprint photographer Nell Kessenich

In its 78 years in existence, the venerable Blueprint, a student-driven Acalanes High School newspaper, received a lion's share of awards this spring to cap off a successful year.

Blueprint advisor Larry Freeman, as quoted in an article by Online Feature Editor Sofia Olsson, said, "Thinking of this as an avalanche of awards isn't the right perspective. It's a testament to other people thinking that the Blueprint is doing a great job in its mission of journalism."

Kiara Kunnes, who will take over as a print editor next year said, "It was an impressive year. The stories we tackled were unique for a high school paper and stood out." She expressed gratitude to all the editors and their advisor. "We wouldn't have been so successful without their leadership."

Freeman added, "The group I had this year is one of the best high-powered, collaborative journalists I've ever had in my 28 years here."

In the prestigious Quill and Scroll contest run by the Uni-

versity of Iowa, the Blueprint - vying with 2,065 entries from across the country - fared well, winning nine awards or honorable mentions.

In addition, the American Scholastic Press Association awarded the paper with a First Place with Special Merit award out of more than 250 entrants.

The Blueprint also won AS-PA's Outstanding Theme for an Issue for their January 2018 series, "Profiles on Courage," detailing 14 Acalanes students who faced adversity.

One of the more impressive awards was garnered by Print Editor Sierra Fong-Horvath, who was named California Journalist of the Year by the Journalism Education Association of California. The JEAC also awarded Gareth Kwok for Best Web Content.

Locally, the newspaper won eight first-place awards and 17 overall in the Dean Leshler High School Journalism Awards, including first place in Overall Excellence and in Best Website. Ten Contra Costa high schools

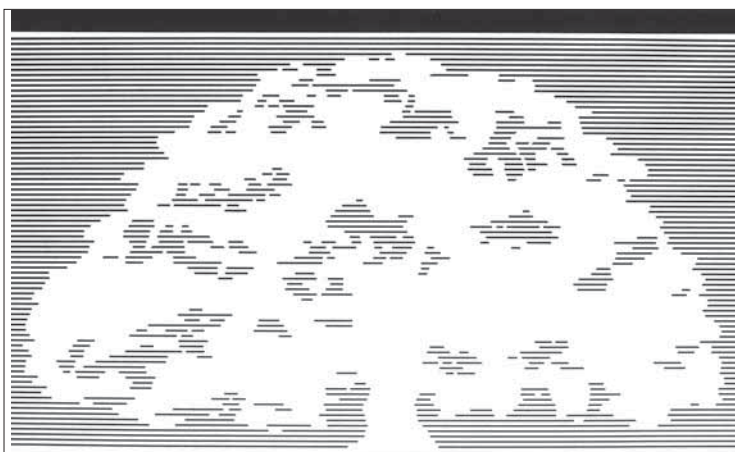
participated.

Fong-Horvath won the Leshler CCC Journalist of the Year, along with first place for Best Feature Writing and second place for Best Feature Writing with fellow Print Editor Clara Kobashigawa.

Fong-Horvath and Kobashigawa teamed with Maddie McDonagh and Kahren Eloyan to garner first place in Best Editorial/Opinion Writing for their coverage of the Parkland Shooting entitled, "To the Survivors in Florida: We Stand With You."

Other first place awards included Best Sports Writing by Kobashigawa and Kwok; Best Personal Column by Sarah Westergren; Best In-depth or Investigative Reporting by Lisa Burciaga and Karen Rosenberg; and Best Editorial Cartoon by Christine Mitroff.

With the graduation of this year's seniors, Freeman now looks forward to rebuilding with his next batch of editors, writers, photographers and designers.



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