

Classic Brownies

Makes 24 Brownies

Be sure to test for doneness before removing the brownies from the oven. If underbaked (the toothpick has batter clinging to it), the texture of the brownies will be dense and gummy; if overbaked (the toothpick comes out completely clean), the brownies will be dry and cakey. To melt the chocolate using a microwave, heat it with the butter at 50% power for 2 minutes; stir the chocolate and continue heating until melted, stirring once every additional minute.

1 1/4 cups (5 ounces) cake flour
3/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon table salt
6 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped fine
12 tablespoons (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, cut into 6 pieces
2 1/4 cups (15 3/4 ounces) sugar
4 large eggs
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 cup (4 ounces) pecan or walnuts, toasted and coarsely chopped (optional)

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 325 degrees. Line a 13 by 9 inch baking pan with 2 pieces of foil and spray with vegetable oil spray.
2. Whisk the flour, baking powder, and salt in a medium bowl until combined; set aside.
3. Melt the chocolate and butter in a medium heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of barely simmering water, stirring occasionally, until smooth. Off the heat, gradually whisk in the sugar. Add the egg, one at a time, whisking after each addition, until thoroughly combined. Whisk in the vanilla. Add the flour mixture in three additions, folding with a rubber spatula until the batter is completely smooth and homogeneous.
4. Transfer the batter to the prepared pan; using a spatula, spread the batter into the corners of the pan and smooth the surface. Sprinkle the toasted nuts (if using) evenly over the batter. Bake until a toothpick or wooden skewer inserted into the center of the brownies comes out with a few moist crumbs attached, 30 to 35 minutes. Cool on a wire rack to room temperature, about 2 hours; loosen the edges with a paring knife and lift the brownies from the pan using the foil sling. cut the brownies into 2 inch squares and serve. (The brownies can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days).