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HOLIDAY EDITION

Mixing Bowl

» The makings of a delicious month, from a stacked sweet to a floral fix.

BROWNIE BONANZA

This decadent confection from Irvin Lin, author of *Marbled, Swirled, and Layered*, has something for everyone: sweetness (three kinds of chocolate), saltiness (popcorn), plus the kick of coffee and the kitsch of peppermint.

PEPPERMINT POPCORN MOCHA BROWNIES
MAKES 24 BROWNIES
ACTIVE TIME: 30 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES

Preheat oven to 325°. Coat a 9" x 13" baking pan with cooking spray and line with parchment paper. In a bowl, whisk together $\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Dutch-process cocoa powder, $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. baking powder, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. kosher salt. In a large microwave-safe bowl, microwave 6 ounces chopped unsweetened chocolate and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsalted butter for 30-second intervals, stirring between, until chocolate is melted. Add $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups granulated sugar and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup packed brown sugar. Whisk for 30 seconds. Mixing between each addition, add 4 large eggs one at a time, 1 tsp. vanilla extract, and

2 Tbsp. instant coffee. Fold in dry ingredients, then mix in 6 ounces chopped bittersweet chocolate. Spread batter in prepared pan. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out with crumbs attached, 30 to 35 minutes. Cool. In 2 large heatproof bowls, divide 1 popped bag microwave popcorn. In a saucepan, combine 1 cup granulated sugar, 2 Tbsp. corn syrup, and 2 Tbsp. water. Cook to 310°. Stir in 1 tsp. peppermint extract. Drizzle some syrup over brownie. Pour half the remaining syrup over 1 bowl of popcorn. Toss to coat, then layer on brownie. Stir 5 drops red food coloring into remaining syrup and repeat with second bowl of popcorn. Put red popcorn atop white and press down to adhere. Let cool before cutting and serving.



The movable divider helps keep flavors from mixing and mingling.

Tool to Try

TREASURE CHEST

Your leftover Manchego deserves a happier fate than turning moldy in plastic wrap. These reusable food-grade silicone storage containers (available in five vibrant colors) are designed to keep out excess moisture and let cheese breathe, so it stays fresh and no wedge goes to waste. (CapaBunga Cheese Vault, \$30; capabunga.com)



The Find Spice as Nice

In the mood for some soothing chai tea? Just grab a spoon and dig in. The ginger- and cardamom-spiced favorite now comes in handy snack form: Australian-style Noosa yogurt in limited edition Bhakti Chai, made with honey, whole milk, and cane sugar. (\$2.50 for eight-ounce container noosayoghurt.com for stores)

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KITCHEN ZEN

"Write a list of the holiday recipes you want to cook. Then make yourself a cup of tea, go back to the list, and cross off half of it. People get too ambitious. I want everyone, myself included, to have a good time."

—Nigella Lawson, author of, most recently, *Simply Nigella*



GRATE EXPECTATIONS

Don't throw out that batch of overdone cookies, says Mark Bittman, author of the new cookbook *How to Bake Everything*. Bittman has just the trick to tackle burned bits: Use a grater to gently shave off crispy edges and bottoms. Santa won't mind, and we doubt anyone else will, either.

ILLUSTRATION: GILLIAN McLEOD