The best cheesecake brownies

What is the first thing that comes to your mind when thinking of indulgence? Brownies? Cheesecake? How about cheesecake brownies? Yes you heard me! Why choose one of your favourite treats when you can have both?! You are welcome! I first made this recipe back when I was a cake decorator and I can tell you it was a best seller for a reason! The brownie itself is one of the most delicious brownies I have ever tasted and I have tried a bunch of them. You can skip the cheesecake part completely and just make the delicious brownies! Personally I wouldn’t because if you are going to be naughty you might as well go all the way!

**Ingredients for cheesecake brownies**

* **Butter:** Very important for gooey and delicious brownies.
* **Chocolate:** I normally use 70% dark chocolate or a mix of 70% dark and 35% milk is fine depending on how sweet you like your brownies.
* **Coco powder**: If you can afford it buy a good quality coco powder as it will make all the difference. Cheap ones have a much higher content in sugar resulting in a very sweet brownie.
* **Caster sugar**: You can also use granulated for a ‘crunchier brownie’
* **Light brown sugar**: Gives all the gooiness this brownie needs!
* **Eggs**: Quite a large amount of eggs in the recipe and it’s why this brownie is so moist and decadent.
* **Flour:** Plain flour is perfect for this but I have also tried it with gluten free flour and it works beautifully!
* **Salt:** All your bakes need salt! This one is no exception as this brownie can be quite sickly without it.
* **Cream cheese:** Use a good full fat cream cheese. Leave the light stuff on the shelf for when your diet starts on Monday!

**For the brownies (makes a 38cm x 30cm tray)**

360g unsalted butter

150g 70% dark chocolate (or a mix of 30% and 70%)

100g coco powder

500g caster sugar

175g light brown sugar

6 medium eggs

115g plain flour (or gluten free)

1/2 tsp salt

**For the cheesecake filling**

250g cream cheese

70g caster sugar

1 medium egg

1 vanilla pod (or 1tsp vanilla essence)

**How to make the cheesecake layer**

1. Make the cheesecake layer first. In a medium bowl beat together cream cheese, egg, sugar and the seeds of 1 vanilla pod until just combined. Place in a piping bag and set aside.

**How to make the brownies**

1. Preheat oven to 150C and line a tray with parchment paper on all sides. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl melt butter and chocolate in the microwave or on a double boiler for 2-3 minutes or until just melted and whisk to incorporate.
3. Next add coco powder and whisk well to combine
4. After your mix is smooth and shiny, stir in caster and light brown sugar and beat until thoroughly incorporated.
5. Pour in the eggs one by one, making sure the first egg is fully incorporated before you add the next one.
6. Slowly add your flour into your batter and mix until it just disappears.
7. Do not over mix.

**Assemble the cheesecake brownies**

1. Now we are ready to assemble our yummy brownies!
2. Pour your brownie mix in the tray and use a palette knife to make it as flat as possible.
3. Cut a hole in your piping bag and pipe a few lines on top of your brownie.
4. Use a knife to swirl the cheesecake with brownie. Do not over swirl. You want big separate swirls of cheesecake and brownies.
5. Bake for 30 minutes or until a knife inserted in the middle of the brownies comes out mostly clean!
6. Allow to cool completely and place in the fridge for about 1-2 hours or until the cheesecake layer is set.
7. Cut with a hot knife and serve. Enjoy!

Notes

* It is always better for a really fudgy mix like this one to simply use a big bowl and a rubber spatula. This way you will be able to control how much you work your mix as every brownie’s recipe golden rule is ‘DO NOT OVERMIX’! And you also get to lick the spatula!
* So we already went through the first rule ‘DO NOT OVERMIX’. The second rule is ‘DO NOT OVERBAKE’ and it is just as important! Over baked brownies are really dry and rubbery. To avoid this nightmare, take your brownies out when they still have a wobble and you are good to go!

Meringue kisses xx

Athina