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Recipe of the month

Valentine's Day Brownies

3/4 c. unsalted butter
 4 oz. unsweetened chocolate
 4 oz. semisweet chocolate
 1/2 c. all-purpose flour
 1/2 c. unsweetened cocoa powder
 3/4 tsp. salt

6 large eggs
 1 c. granulated sugar
 1 c. packed brown sugar
 2 tsp. vanilla extract
 vanilla frosting, for decorating

Total time: 40 mins. Yield: 16 servings

- Heat oven to 350°F. Line 13-inch by 9-inch pan with foil, grease foil.
- In 3-quart saucepan, melt butter and chocolates on low, stirring. Remove from heat.
- In bowl, whisk flour, cocoa and salt. In large bowl, with electric mixer on high speed, beat eggs until blended. Gradually add sugars; beat until tripled in volume, about 10 minutes.
- Fold in chocolate mixture and vanilla, then flour mixture. Pour into pan. Bake until toothpick inserted near centre comes out almost clean, 28 to 32 minutes.
- Once cool, cut brownies into hearts freehand or using a heart-shaped cookie cutter. (Tip: Don't let the trimmings go to waste - you can even crumble them onto a sundae!)
- Pipe on store-bought frosting to create cute chocolate "conversation hearts."

Source: www.goodhousekeeping.com

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Everybody's Talking

Unusual success: A young teen from a poor family in Lucban, a town in Quezon Province, Philippines, had an unusual opportunity for success on the modeling scene. Rita "Badjao Girl" Goviola's large family received very little income from her father's job, so she had to beg for alms on the street. One day, photographer Topher Quinto Burgos took photos of her and posted them online. That was the beginning of Goviola's rise to success. Her natural beauty was noticed by several celebrities, who took her under their wing. Eventually, Goviola started modeling and acting, and she was able to afford to build a new home for her family.

Roadside bonfire: Toilet paper was in high demand and short supply during the COVID-19 pandemic. So when a transport truck carrying a large load of the stuff crashed on a highway in the state of Texas (U.S.), it would have been understandable if bystanders had helped themselves to a few of the rolls. Unfortunately, the toilet paper - reported to be the type used in businesses - caught fire. Instead of cleaning up the spilled load, onlookers ended up watching a bonfire of the important commodity. Thankfully, no one was hurt in the incident.

Food art: The Japanese art called kyaraben involves arranging food into interesting and fun designs. One creative kyaraben-maker, known as Etoni Mama, lives in Tokyo and has three children. She became famous on social media for her version of the art. While any kind of food can be used in kyaraben, Etoni's choice is fried eggs. She makes cartoon characters with runny egg yolks as the head and body, and then she adds harder, cooked pieces of yolk to serve as arms, legs, and feet. She dresses up characters with other food items, snipped and shaped to make clothing. Her children love it!

Fixing fences: Art Gladu has fixed a few fences during his time living in a house at a busy intersection in Winnipeg, Manitoba (Canada). The reason? Vehicles somehow miss the corner and end up in his front yard. It happened in the mid-2000s when a truck backed onto the property before driving off. In 2015, another car careened into the yard, hitting his pine tree. More recently, in the wee hours, Gladu woke to a loud noise, only to find that yet another vehicle had punched through his chain link fence before coming to a stop on his tree. He's hoping the city will have a guardrail installed.

Quoteable Quotes

"Let your life lightly dance on the edges of Time like dew on the tip of a leaf."
 —Rabindranath Tagore

"The fruit that can fall without shaking, Indeed is too mellow for me."
 —Lady Mary Wortley Montagu

What's Happening

Feb 1 to 28-Hypothermic Half Marathon 10K Virtual event - participate from any location you choose! Run in support of Justsocks.ca - a volunteer operated charity providing new socks to those in need across Canada.
www.hypothermichalf.com

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Trivia

- In which part of the human body will you find the anvil, hammer, and stirrup bones?
- What is the second highest mountain in the seven continents?
- What famous canal can be found in Egypt?
- Cats the Musical is based on a collection of poems by which poet?
- What is the currency of India?

(Flip bottom of page for answers)

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Your Weekly Horoscope

ARIES (March 21 - April 20)

Express yourself in writing rather than speaking. Something important may click. Reading your own thoughts could enable you to understand yourself better. Lucky numbers: 26, 29, 33, 36, 40, 43.

TAURUS (April 21 - May 21)

You may want to open your mind to new areas of communication. It might be time to convert your style by using some new technologies to get your message across. Lucky numbers: 11, 18, 22, 35, 47, 49.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

Your plans may include assistance from those close to you. Insights into your dreams and the dreams of others could be a good guideline for your potential endeavours. Lucky numbers: 25, 33, 35, 38, 41, 49.

CANCER (June 22 - July 22)

You may have to make some extra time to check out health issues, within your busy schedule. Rest and relaxation might be just what the doctor orders right now. Lucky numbers: 4, 16, 25, 27, 34, 40.

LEO (July 23 - Aug. 23)

Many influences may inspire you to reach past the immediate and find new ways to express yourself. Planning travel might influence something spiritual in you. Lucky numbers: 1, 12, 23, 44, 46, 49.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)

You may need to feel that you are in control of certain aspects of your life. Strive hard to take the reins and make decisions. Your confidence should flourish as a result. Lucky numbers: 13, 25, 27, 32, 37, 44.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)

Creative new projects may be in your immediate future. Choose your teammates carefully, as someone may try to take the credit for your hard work and ideas. Lucky numbers: 15, 24, 29, 32, 37, 41.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)

Now may be a time to laugh hard and play even harder, which might be very infectious. Recent events could show that you need to keep that child alive in yourself. Lucky numbers: 2, 19, 22, 29, 33, 42.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 21)

Your tight-knit circle of friends and family may hold your word in high honour. You should be able to recognize the power that you really possess within yourself. Lucky numbers: 7, 11, 24, 28, 35, 38.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 20)

Your strong spiritual feelings may help you positively reflect on your life. If others seem negative, you might encourage them to count all their blessings, too. Lucky numbers: 4, 7, 18, 19, 24, 37.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)

You may feel that you need to fight for what you believe in. Your message should be very clear, decisive, and convincing. Try not stir up more controversy than necessary. Lucky numbers: 5, 12, 16, 23, 41, 45.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - March 20)

Your honest heart and sense of humour may attract new friends. Play hard and work hard to help learn valuable lessons about yourself. Keep your spirit real. Lucky numbers: 13, 27, 35, 41, 42, 44.

Lucky numbers this week: This week's odds favour Cancer winners with the luckiest number being 4.

Did You Know...

Seed of Australia: Wattleseed is an Australian plant that has been used in food for 40,000 years. Pods contain small, protein-rich seeds that can be ground into powder. Used in desserts and drinks, it tastes similar to coffee, chocolate, and hazelnut.

Cheesy potatoes: In France, a favourite potato dish is called "aligot." It is made by mashing potatoes and adding quite a bit of mild cheese, along with garlic, butter, and cream. The result is a fondue-like comfort food.

Jelly's time: *Jelly's Last Jam* is a Broadway musical that first appeared in 1992. The music was written by Creole jazz composer Ferdinand Joseph LaMothe, known as "Jelly Roll Morton" (1890-1941). The musical tells his story of being an early jazz musician.

Plant place: The Berlin Botanical Garden started in 1679 as an expansion of the royal kitchen and flower garden. Today, it is one of the largest botanical gardens in the world and has about 20,000 species of plants.

Green treat: People in South Australia like to eat frogs – as long as they are made out of sugar! Called "frog cakes," these regional treats look like frogs, but are made of sponge cake, jam, and buttercream, topped with green fondant icing.

On the Lighter Side

Dan called the tinnitus hotline, but it just kept ringing....

Why is a moon rock tastier than an Earth rock? It's a little meteor.

Remember that you're positively unique. Just like everyone else.

Middle age: When you pick your cereal for the fibre, not for the toy.

Reporter: "How many people work for the government?"
Researcher: "About half."

Answers

Trivia answers: 1. Middle ear 2. Aconcagua 3. Suez Canal 4. T. S. Eliot 5. Indian Rupee

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