

*Oven Temperature: 325°F.
Baking Time: 25 to 35 minutes*

Brownie Puddle Tart

Serves: 8

INGREDIENTS	MEASUREMENTS	WEIGHT	
		<i>ounces</i>	<i>grams</i>
<i>room temperature</i>	<i>volume</i>		
pecan pieces or coarsely chopped pecans	1 cup	4 ounces	113 grams
unsalted butter	14 tablespoons	7 ounces	200 grams
bittersweet chocolate, preferably fine quality around 62%		3 ounces	85 grams
unsweetened cocoa (preferably fine quality Dutch-processed)	1/2 cup + 2 teaspoons (lightly spooned into the cup)	1.75 ounces	50 grams
sugar	1 cup + 3 tablespoons	8.25 ounces	238 grams
3 large eggs	4.5 fluid ounces	5.25 ounces	150 grams (out of the shell)
pure vanilla extract	2 teaspoons	.	.
cream cheese, cut in pieces	(1) 3 ounce package	3 ounces	85 grams
all purpose flour, preferably Gold Medal	1/2 cup	2.5 ounces	71 grams
salt	a pinch	.	.
<i>Ganache Puddle:</i>			
bittersweet chocolate (see above), coarsely chopped	2/3 of a 3 ounce bar	2 ounces	56 grams
heavy cream (room temperature)	1/3 liquid cup	2.7 ounces	77 grams

Equipment: One 9 1/2-inch tart pan, with removable bottom, bottom greased and then lined with parchment, then lightly sprayed with Baker's Joy or non-stick vegetable shortening. Place the pan on a cookie sheet to catch any possible leaks.*

Place 1 oven rack in the middle of the oven.

Preheat the oven to 325°F.

Place the pecans on a cookie sheet and toast them, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool completely.

In a double boiler over hot water or microwave-proof bowl, melt the butter and chocolate, stirring 2 or 3 times.

Beat in the cocoa, then the sugar, beating until it is incorporated. (If you are doing this by hand, use a whisk.) Beat in the eggs and vanilla. When incorporated, beat in the cream cheese until only small bits remain. Add the flour and salt and mix only until the flour is fully moistened. Stir in the nuts; scrape the batter into the prepared pan and spread it evenly. It will fill the pan almost to the top.

Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until the batter has set. A toothpick inserted 1-inch from the side will come out clean. The mixture will puff and rise a little above the sides but sinks on cooling.

While the brownie is baking, prepare the puddles.

Melt the chocolate in a microwave, using 15 seconds bursts on high power and stirring several times, or in a double boiler over hot but not simmering water, stirring occasionally. Add the cream and stir gently until the mixture is smooth and dark. If necessary (if the cream was too cold and the mixture not entirely smooth), return it to the heat until totally fluid and uniform in color.

As soon as the brownie is removed from the oven, grease the end of a wooden spoon (1/2-inch diameter) and insert it into the brownie, at 1-inch intervals, all the way to the bottom, twisting slightly as you insert and withdraw it, to create 23 to 28 little holes. Using a small spoon to pour or a zipseal bag with a small piece of the corner cut, fill the holes until slightly rounded (you will need at least 1/2 teaspoon for each).

Place the pan on a wire rack and cool completely. The chocolate puddles will sink in as it cools and more ganache can be added, to fill in any depressions, as long as the brownie is still warm enough to melt it. (If necessary, you can set the tart under a lamp to heat the ganache puddles and make them smooth.) Unmold by placing the pan on a canister smaller than the opening for the loose bottom and pressing the sides firmly down. To remove the parchment, refrigerate the tart or allow it to sit at room temperature until the puddles are firm to the touch. Cover a flat plate with plastic wrap, spray it lightly with non-stick vegetable spray and set it on top of the tart. Invert the tart; peel off the parchment, and reinvert it onto a serving plate.

To serve, use a thin, sharp knife to cut wedges .

Temperature for a softer creamier texture.

Store: Wrap the tart tightly in plastic wrap and store it in an airtight container at room temperature, or in the refrigerator or freezer; 1 week at room temperature, 1 month refrigerated, or several months frozen. Try eating it frozen or chilled if you like a chewy brownie, room temperature for a softer creamier texture.

*A 9-inch parchment circle is perfect because the bottom of the tart pan is slightly smaller, so that the parchment goes up a little past the bottom, preventing any leaking. If non stick pan—not necessary.