

I'm working on a menu for an upcoming three-day catering job, and my mind is full of all sorts of different baking for this group. Besides their three meals a day, we keep a fresh fruit, baking & beverage counter stocked for them all weekend. Muffins, cookies, coffee cakes, and then always something yummy mid-afternoon, to be sure they don't feel faint before dinner. This is one of the afternoon treats they'll be getting, great with a cup of coffee, or a glass of milk. Lots of flavour with the molasses, spice, and coffee, with a familiarity that always pleases. Top the squares with Brown Butter Icing for a lovely nutty finish.

Coffee - Gingerbread Squares

24 ~ 2" squares

Ingredients

2 c flour
1 t baking soda
1½ t ginger
1 t cinnamon
1 t ground cloves
1 c butter (room temperature)
1 c sugar
2 eggs (room temperature)
½ c fancy molasses
1 c hot coffee

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°, with the rack in the center of the oven.
Line the base and two ends of a 9" x 13" pan with parchment, leaving the ends a bit long for lifting the squares out of the pan after they're cooled and iced, ready for cutting.
Lightly grease the two long sides.
Whisk together the flour, baking soda, ginger, cinnamon and cloves.
In a mixer bowl, beat the butter until creamy.
Add in the sugar, and beat for 2 minutes.
Add in the eggs, and continue beating until well incorporated, scraping down the sides as needed.
Add in the molasses, and mix until uniform.
Add in the hot coffee and mix well.
Add in the dry ingredients, and beat until you have a smooth batter.
Pour into the prepared pan, smoothing the batter evenly.
Bake for 30 minutes.
Let cool.
Ice with Brown Butter Icing.
Remove whole of the cake from the pan, by lifting on the parchment "handles".
Set it on a level surface, and cut into squares, cutting into 4 lengthwise, and 6 crosswise.
Store in a covered container at room temperature, for up to 5 days.

Brown Butter Icing

Ingredients

2 oz butter (56 gr / ¼ c)
2 c icing sugar (240 gr / 8½ oz)

½ t vanilla

2 T water

Directions

On low heat, in a small saucepan cook the butter until light golden brown, stirring slowly and constantly.

The butter should bubble gently all over, and then foam slightly as it browns. Stirring over low heat is essential, and don't let it scorch.

When it is golden, no longer yellow, remove from heat.

Add in the sugar, vanilla & water.

Blend until smooth (adding a small amount more water if needed).

Spread over a cooled 9 x 13 cake.