Chocolate Mince Pie Brownies with fragrant herbs

We have added finely chopped lavender tips to our brownies but you can, if you if you prefer, substitute rosemary or even one of the fruity scented thymes like orange or lemon. Which ever herb you choose make sure you only use the tender tips, and chop finely as the cooking time is quite short.

A soft tempting bread which should be eaten warm the day it is made. Alternatively it can be frozen as soon as it is cool, and re-warmed and decorated when needed.

190g unsalted butter
150g good dark chocolate
1 rounded tbsp of your chosen herbs
3 large eggs
275g caster sugar
85g plain flour
45g cocoa powder
9 mini mince pies
Icing sugar to decorate

Method:

- Break up the chocolate and put it into a bowl with the butter. Microwave in short 30 second blasts until melted and combined. Alternatively, you can do this with the bowl over a pan of simmering water. Once melted mix in your herbs and allow the mixture to cool.
- Line a 20cm square baking tin with baking paper + pre-heat your oven to 180°C / 160°fan / Gas 4.
- Using an electric mixer whisk together the sugar and eggs on high speed for 3 – 4 minutes until thick and creamy.
- Very gently fold in the herby chocolate mixture with a spatula. Be careful not to knock out the air that you have beaten in. Carefully sieve in the flour and cocoa, and fold in gently until incorporated.
- Add enough of the mixture to cover the bottom of the lined tin. Add the mince pies spaced out evenly and cover with the rest of the brownie mix. Giving it a little shake to fill any spaces.
- Level off the top and bake for 25 – 30 minutes.
- The top should have an almost papery crust and the edges should be just coming away from the sides of the tin.
- Leave in the tin until completely cold and then dust with sieved icing sugar and cut into 16 squares.
- These brownies will keep for up to a week in a tin, or freeze until you have guests for tea!