

Fig, Rum and Cacao Nib Brownies

(adapted from a recipe in David Lebovitz' [Ready for Dessert](#))

- 90g unsalted butter
- 225g dark chocolate, chopped or in callets
- 150g white sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract (I used homemade)
- 2 large (59g) eggs, at room temperature
- 40g plain (AP) flour
- 150g Turkish figs, soaked in rum (see below)
- 40g cacao nibs



Note: I made these with 70% cacao bittersweet chocolate, but the basic brownie recipe works best with semisweet (I normally use Callebaut 811 with 54% cacao). With the higher cocoa fat content, the batter has a tendency to split, resulting in a pool of oil on the top of the finished brownies. 70% seems to hold together - just - but when I tried using a 75%, the mix split completely and had to be thrown away. Having said that, in this instance I really wanted a bittersweet chocolate to offset the figs...

1. The night before, place some Turkish figs in a clean jar, and top it up with rum. You'll need seven or eight well-intoxicated figs, although I try and keep a jar full at all times (for emergencies, you understand).
2. Preheat the oven to 160C with fan. Line a 20cm square pan with parchment paper. Chop the figs up, discarding the stems.
3. In a medium saucepan, soften the butter, then add the chocolate and stir over low heat until combined and smooth. Remove the pan from the heat and, using a silicon spatula or wooden spoon, stir in the sugar and vanilla.
4. Beat in the eggs one at a time, working quickly so that you don't end up with scrambled eggs. Add the flour, and stir vigorously for one minute (this bit is important) - the mixture will change from grainy to smooth and glossy in that time.
5. Add in the chopped figs and cacao nibs, stirring well. Scrape the batter into the prepared pan and bake until just set - about 25 minutes. Do not overbake.
6. Cool in the pan, before removing the brownies and cutting into squares for serving.

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Fig Jam and Lime Cordial

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