

Traditional 13-ingredient Mincemeat

175g raisins
175g dried cranberries
175g currants
175g sultanas
100g mixed peel
1 large Bramley apple, peeled, cored and grated
4 balls of stem ginger, grated
1 tablespoon ginger syrup
125g unsalted butter, cubed
Zest of 1 orange
200ml brandy
225g dark muscovado sugar
1 teaspoon mixed spice

Measure all the ingredients except the alcohol and ginger syrup into a large pan. Gently heat until the butter has melted, simmer over a low heat for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat and allow to cool completely. Stir through the alcohol and ginger syrup. Spoon the mincemeat into sterilised jars, seal tightly and store in a cool place.

Mincemeat Brownies

100g unsalted butter
100g unrefined dark muscovado sugar
150g unrefined light muscovado sugar
5 tablespoons maple syrup
275g dark chocolate (at least 70 per cent cocoa), roughly chopped
4 medium free-range eggs, beaten
70g plain flour
½ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
200g good quality mincemeat
For the brandy butter icing
75g salted butter, softened
100g icing sugar
3 tablespoons brandy or orange juice
50g white chocolate, melted, at room temperature

Line a 20cm square tin with baking parchment. Heat the oven to 170C. Melt together the butter, both sugars and the maple syrup in a large heavy-based pan until the sugar has dissolved and the mixture is just bubbling. Remove from the heat, add the chopped chocolate and mix well to combine. Leave to cool slightly, then add the beaten eggs and beat until smooth. Add the flour and spices and mix well until fully incorporated. Pour into the prepared tin, then tap on the work surface to level the mixture. Using a stick blender, purée the mincemeat until smooth. Spoon or pipe the purée over the top of the brownie mixture, then use a cocktail stick to swirl it lightly into the brownie batter. Bake for 20-25 minutes until the brownie feels just set. Leave to cool fully, then chill for at least 2 hours.

Meanwhile, make the brandy butter icing. Using an electric mixer, whisk the butter in a mixing bowl until very soft. Whisk in half the icing sugar until combined, then whisk in the rest. After the second addition, whisk on a high speed for 5 minutes until very light and fluffy. Add the brandy, then whisk for 1 minute more. Add the melted chocolate and whisk again until thoroughly combined. Spoon the brandy butter icing over the top of the brownie, creating snowdrift-like peaks. Chill for an hour until set firm.

