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Decorated and decadent brownies make a festive dessert

By Susie Iventosch



Brownies with Cranberries, White Chocolate and Pistachios Photo Susie Iventosch

When the sweet tooth hits, it's hard to go wrong with a good old-fashioned brownie! They check all of the boxes - rich, sweet, chocolate and decadent. This is a really fun twist on your favorite brownie recipe and it's festive for the holidays. White chocolate chips, dried cranberries and roasted pistachios add a bit of chewiness and crunchiness. To top off the goodness, I like to add white chocolate icing with more goodies decorating the top for a holiday flair.

This is our favorite brownie recipe, but you can use any brownie recipe you love best, even if that means box mix brownies, and then add the goodies. And, if you are not a huge white chocolate fan, you can substitute dark chocolate chips and frosting.

When it comes to white chocolate, though, be sure to buy real white chocolate, one made with cocoa butter and not just white baking chips. If you cannot find the chips, then find a white chocolate bar and cut it into small chunks, and that will be perfectly satisfying!

INGREDIENTS

- Brownies
- 4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chips or chunks
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 cube unsalted butter
- Dash of salt
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup unbleached flour
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped roasted unsalted pistachios
- 1/2 cup white chocolate chips (best if you can find actual white chocolate and not white baking chips)
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries (pour 1 cup boiling water over for 15 minutes to plump up, then squeeze out excess liquid)
- Frosting
- 1/2 stick 2 oz. unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
- 4 oz. white baking chocolate melted and cooled
- 1 cup confectioners powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon milk +/-
- Toppings
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped roasted unsalted pistachios

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350 F. Grease or spray an 8-inch baking pan. Set aside.
- Put the dried cranberries for the brownie batter in a bowl and pour 1 cup boiling water over them. Let them sit for about 15 minutes to plump up and then squeeze excess liquid from cranberries. Set aside.
- Melt bittersweet chocolate, cocoa powder, and butter in medium-sized pot over low heat on the stovetop and stir until well blended. Remove from heat. Add salt and sugar and stir until both are dissolved into the chocolate-butter mixture. Add two eggs, one at a time, mixing thoroughly after each. Stir in flour and vanilla and mix well. Fold in chopped pistachios, white chocolate chips, and cranberries.
- Pour batter into the prepared pan and bake in a 350-degree oven for 18 minutes. (If you use a glass baking pan, reduce heat to 325 and bake slightly longer.) Test with a cake tester and if brownies still seem too wet, bake for one minute longer. If they seem just right, turn off the oven and leave them in the oven for another minute. The brownies should be just slightly wet in the center when they are done baking.
- Remove from oven and cool completely on rack. Once completely cooled, spread frosting (recipe below) over the entire pan of brownies. Sprinkle dried cranberries and chopped pistachios evenly over frosting.

Frosting Directions

- In a medium-sized bowl, cream together melted, cooled white chocolate and butter until fluffy. Beat in powdered sugar until integrated. It will be a bit lumpy at this point. Add vanilla and milk, and beat well. You may need a little more or less milk, to get to the desired spreading consistency. Spread over cooled brownies.



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