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# A Perfect Minty Treat for the Little Leprechaun in All of Us

By Susie Iventosch



Girl Scout Thin Mint-crust St. Patty's Day Brownies

Photo Susie Iventosch

I finished my grocery shopping at Safeway last week, and lo and behold, there were the Girl Scouts, situated right outside the door, ready for another big cookie-selling season! Naturally, being a Girl Scout alum who earned a cooking badge back in the third grade, I wanted to support the cause and picked up a box of our favorite Thin Mints and a box of the new Rah Rah Raisins. (You never want to buy too many boxes on the first go-around, because you will probably run into another Girl Scout you want to support on your very next errand!)

The Rah Rahs appear to be new and a bit lower in calories and fat, but they also taste lower in calories and fat. The Thin Mints, on the other hand, are as good as ever! I thought it would be fun to try to make a new dessert using the Thin Mints as one of the key ingredients. So, I took my mom's brownie recipe and added a Thin Mint crust and a fudgy frosting. What resulted was amazing ... and the perfect treat to leave for the wee Leprechauns who visit your house on St. Patty's Day!

### INGREDIENTS

#### Brownies

1 sleeve of Girl Scout Thin Mint cookies (about 17 or 18), pulverized in food processor  
2 tablespoons butter, melted  
4 ounces bittersweet chocolate  
2 tablespoons cocoa powder  
1 cube (1/2 cup or 1/4 pound) unsalted butter  
Dash of salt  
1/2 cup granulated sugar  
2 eggs  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/2 cup unbleached flour

#### Frosting

6 tablespoons butter, room temperature  
6 tablespoons cocoa powder  
1 1/2 to 2 cups powdered sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1-2 tablespoons milk

### DIRECTIONS

#### Brownies

Grease an 8 by 8 inch baking dish with cooking spray or butter.

Mix cookie crumbs with melted butter and pat into the bottom of the baking dish, making a thin layer to cover the entire bottom of the pan. Set aside.

In a saucepan, melt butter and chocolate, along with cocoa powder over medium heat, until butter and chocolate are melted. Stir well to blend. (Can melt in the microwave, too.) Remove from heat.

Add sugar and salt, and stir until dissolved into chocolate mixture.

Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each. (I just used a wooden spoon for this ... no beaters necessary.) Add vanilla and flour and mix well.

Pour batter over cookie crust and smooth out evenly.

Bake for approximately 18-22 minutes, depending upon your oven. Brownies will still be very moist, but set in the center and will firm up as they cool. Cool completely before frosting.

#### Frosting

In a large mixing bowl, beat butter with cocoa powder until smooth. Add powdered sugar alternately with milk, a little bit at a time, until well integrated and just the right spreading consistency. Stir in vanilla. Spread on cooled brownies. Chill before cutting.

\*These are very rich, so you can cut them quite small.

Susie Iventosch is the author of Tax Bites and Tasty Morsels, which can be found at Across the Way in Moraga, www.amazon.com, and www.taxbites.net.

Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com).  
**This recipe can be found on our website:**  
[www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com). If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.



## Does Your 11th Grader Really Need a Resume?

By Elizabeth LaScala, PhD

“Does my 11th grader really need a resume?” is a question I sometimes hear from parents in my counseling sessions. Parents, quite reasonably, wonder why a young student would need a resume, what benefits it could serve, and whether this is just one more contrivance to make college admissions more stressful and competitive. Many of the same parents also tell me they do not know how to help their students focus and identify a major or a program of interest in college. The resume is a remarkably good tool that supports this process!

High schools often require that students complete a ‘brag sheet’ on which they record their activities and accomplishments over their high school careers. So, too, do college applications have sections in which to list academic awards, honors and extracurricular activities. I encourage high school juniors to go beyond the mere listing of activities and develop an early version of a resume, so that the student can organize and communicate their competencies in an authentic way unique to their skills and experiences. Over time, the resume can be used to organize a student's strengths so that common themes can be identified. Let's take a concrete example: A student may take Introduction to Computer Science as an 11th grader, enroll in a JAVA coding class at community college the following summer, and then register for AP Computer Science in 12th grade. The same student may identify the need for a computer science club for those with similar interests and head one up for her high school community. She may even volunteer to peer tutor underclassmen taking the introductory class she took in 11th grade. By recording this information in a resume over time, a strong and consistent theme will appear. A counselor or teacher who has a copy, and is writing a recommendation letter, would be hard pressed to miss it! And an admissions reader at a college the student sends an application would surely make note of it as well. If the student was applying to a department where a computer science background was considered an advantage (e.g. engineering, mathematics, statistics, economics or computer science itself) it would, no doubt, strengthen the student's admission chances.

I am not suggesting a student be pressed into performing activities for the benefit of supporting their college applications.

I am suggesting that students follow their passions and develop successive resume drafts that summarize their academic and extracurricular activities in order to be able to document the emergence of common threads over time. If the effort to develop a resume is systematic, a cohesive picture of their interests will emerge. As the computer science example above illustrates, a resume is a far more effective approach to highlighting one's competencies than a mere listing of activities on a form. Development of a resume encourages the student to summarize her activities and accomplishments—in effect, a snapshot of one or more important aspects of her world. And a resume often can help get more effective counselor and teacher letters of recommendation. This is certainly an advantage to students in larger public high schools where the student to counselor ratio is a few hundred to one; but it is also an asset in smaller, private settings. While it is not polite or ethical to put words into a counselor's or teacher's mouth, a clear and concise resume can accomplish much the same objective. It can help the recommender to clearly recognize a student's special strengths, and these may well be incorporated into the letter. In addition, many selective summer programs for high school students request a resume, such as NYU's Tisch School Summer Arts Program. When an application deadline looms large in the second week of February for an 11th grader, having a well-developed resume will be a lifesaver. And, later next fall, when a senior is looking at a blank admissions application with no idea where to start, having a resume handy will help kick start the process with confidence. For part-time jobs, internships and as a foundation for the many resumes to come in a young person's future, a high school student with an effective resume is off to a good start.



Elizabeth LaScala, Ph.D. is an independent college advisor who draws upon 25 years of higher education experience to help guide and support the college admissions process for students and their families. Dr. LaScala is a member of NACAC, WACAC and HECA. She can be contacted at (925) 891-4491 or [elizabeth@doingcollege.com](mailto:elizabeth@doingcollege.com). Visit [www.doingcollege.com](http://www.doingcollege.com) for more information about her services.

## Oscar Nominated Film, 'Timbuktu,' in Orinda for One-Week Engagement

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The movie opens with the destruction of local artifacts by a group of Jihadists. It's reminiscent of Daesh recently destroying ancient relics at a museum in the Iraqi city of Mosul or the Taliban's destruction of Bamiyan Buddhas. Sissako aims to show that the Jihadists' first victims are the local Muslim population and their original civilization. In an interview with French media, he said, “The movie is called ‘Timbuktu’ – a mythical city that's a thousand years old, a city of commerce, gathering and exchange that holds monuments and manuscripts as important as the giant Afghani Buddhas. In Timbuktu, the human values were threatened; it had to be passed on.”

The movie centers on the Touareg family who lives near town in their tent, raising their cattle. All they want is a peaceful life, but the rising frustrations and tensions lead them to conflict and to their demise. Many other stories are intertwined in the film: The woman who sells fish in the market and is ordered to cover her hands, the boys who

play soccer with a phantom ball, the man who gets 20 lashes because he owns a football, the young people caught playing music and who are punished in front of everybody, the girl who is abducted against her parents' will and is forcefully “married.” The local Imam tries to protect the population, appealing to the religious fundamentalists' faith, but he is often powerless.

The movie is esthetically well mastered and worthy of a large screen. Many of the actors were amateurs, some of them coming from the refugee camp of M'bera in Mauritania where 70,000 people live, including the very touching 12-year-old Layla Walet Mohamed. Sissako compares her in the movie to a gazelle – a graceful creature, vulnerable, and a perfect target for collateral damage.

“Timbuktu” will play at the Orinda Theatre during its Contra Costa premiere for one week starting March 20. It was one of the four nominees for Best Foreign Film at the 2015 Academy Awards.

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