

Artisan Chocolate in the Philippines

Rediscover a local sweet indulgence that adds a creative touch to your baked products.

What makes artisan chocolate, truly artisan? Is it its color, texture, method of how it was produced and its distinctive quality? Declaring a product as artisan is a risky business. With that title you bring the responsibility that the product you have made is not only superior in quality, but that it is also made with excellent artistry, careful craftsmanship and superb and meticulous attention to details.

Although hard to come by, I was fortunate enough to come across the chocolate tablet produced by **Rex Puentespina** of **Malagos Farm**, with their farms based in Davao. I found their cocoa to be of a quality that makes for a smoother cocoa texture—valuable to making excellent cakes and pastries. I tried it with my brownie recipe and it came out better than the other local chocolate bars. It has a smooth texture and more chocolate flavor, though a little lighter in color.

Ethically produced (meaning no harmful chemical process that can destroy our natural resources, as well as no unlawful child labor) is practiced in the process of making this excellent cocoa. The beans are grown meticulously, to make sure that certain beans are classified so that their origins (may they be from the mountains of the Amazon or the forests of Columbia or even the cocoa farms in the Philippines). This single-origin chocolate, wherein there is no mixing or blending of other cocoa beans, as well as the production of chocolate in a form closest to its natural state, makes Malagos Premium Cocoa Liquor stand out among chocolate products and truly deserves the title of one of the authentic artisan chocolate products in the Philippines.

PHOTO BY JOJO GLORIA

TO-DIE-FOR CHOCOLATE BROWNIE

This is inspired by the award-winning brownie recipe chocolate orgasm of rosie's bakery in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

INGREDIENTS:

BROWNIE BASE

¾ cup	unsalted butter
5 oz.	unsweetened chocolate, chopped finely
2 cups	sugar
1 tsp	vanilla extract
4 pcs	eggs, large
1 cup	all-purpose flour
3 tbsp	whiskey

GLAZE

6 tbsp	heavy cream
6 oz.	bittersweet chocolate, chopped finely

PROCEDURE:

Preheat oven to 325°F.

FOR BROWNIE BASE:

1. Lightly grease with butter a 9" x 9" x 2" square pan.
2. Melt the chocolate and butter together in the top of a double boiler, placed over simmering water. Remove the mixture from the heat and let it cool for five minutes.
3. Place the sugar in a medium-size bowl and pour in the chocolate mixture. Using the mixer on medium speed, mix until blended for about 15 seconds.
4. Add vanilla extract.
5. At speed 6, add eggs one at a time beating well after each addition.
6. At low speed, add flour. Mix until blended.
7. Spread the batter evenly in the prepared pan. Bake the brownies for 45 to 50 minutes or until a thin crust forms on top and a tester inserted in the center comes out with moist crumbs.
8. Transfer the pan to a wire rack, and using a small brush, glaze the surface of the brownies with whiskey. Allow to cool for one hour.

FOR GLAZE

Heat the cream in a small saucepan over low heat, just before it reaches the boiling point. Remove from heat, add the chocolate and set aside for two minutes. Stir mixture with a whisk until smooth and shiny.

ASSEMBLY:

1. Spread the glaze evenly on top of the cooled brownies.
2. Chill for one to two hours to set the glaze.
3. Cut the brownies into 1 ½ inch squares using a plastic spatula.
4. Can be kept in the refrigerator for one week and frozen for two weeks.



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