



'Christmas Gifts' with Sian Hindle of La Crème Patisserie

Nougat

Turkish Delight Vodka

Sweet & Spicy Nuts

Pickled Pink Shallots

Red Velvet Christmas Cupcakes

Turkish Delight Vodka

Ingredients

1 Litre bottle Vodka

1tsp Rose Water

1tsp Caster Sugar

100g Turkish Delight, chopped

Method

1. Pour 100ml out of the vodka bottle (you can keep this in the freezer for Christmas Cocktails.) Mix the Rose Water and Caster Sugar together until the sugar dissolves, then pour into the vodka bottle using a funnel.
2. Wash any sugar off the Turkish delight, then place it in the bottle. Screw on the lid and leave to mature for one month. Swirling occasionally until the Turkish delight dissolves.
3. Serve with soda water and ice, or drizzle neat over vanilla ice-cream for a boozy treat.

***Top Tip from the Chef!** After one month, sieve out any remaining Turkish delight and keep for up to a year. To give as a gift, decant into smaller bottles, adding fresh cubes of Turkish delight. Tie with pink ribbon and a rose.*

Sweet & Spicy Nuts

Ingredients

1tbsp Sunflower Oil

1tsp ground Cinnamon

½ tsp Mixed Spice

400g Mixed Nuts – Almonds, Brazil nuts and Cashews

2tbsp Welsh Honey

Method

1. Heat the oven to 120°C/Gas 1. Mix the oil with the spices, then stir in the nuts and drizzle over half of the honey.
2. Spread over a baking sheet and cook for 10 minutes.
3. Remove from the oven and drizzle with the remaining honey, then return to the oven and cook for a further 10 minutes. Allow to cool completely.
4. Pack in clean jars or little cellophane bags tied with ribbon. Keeps for up to two months.

Nougat

Ingredients

Rice Paper	250g Granulated Sugar	150g Welsh Honey
1tbsp Liquid Glucose	2 large Egg Whites	1tsp Vanilla Extract
175g Blanched Almonds, toasted	125g Pistachio Nuts, toasted	50g Candied Peel

Method

1. Line an 8" Square tin with Cling film, overlapping the sides of the tin.
2. Cover the base with rice paper.
3. Place the sugar, honey, glucose and 125ml cold water into a pan over a low heat, stir to dissolve.
4. Bring to the boil, cook until the mixture reaches 143°C on a thermometer. Remove from the heat at once.
5. Just before the sugar reaches the correct temperature, whisk the egg whites until stiff.
6. Keeping the motor running, carefully pour in the syrup in a thin stream, add the vanilla.
7. Fold in the nuts and peel, the mixture should be stiff.
8. Spoon mixture into tin, cover the top with more rice paper.
9. Put another baking tin on top to weigh it down. Leave in a cool place overnight or store for up to two weeks in the fridge.
10. To wrap, turn onto a board and remove clingfilm. Cut into pieces and pack into boxes lined with waxed paper. Keeps for up to 2 weeks.

Pickled Pink Shallots

Ingredients

700g Shallots	75g Sea Salt	600ml Distilled Vinegar
175g Light Brown Sugar	Blade on Mace	½ tsp each of Sichuan and White Peppercorns
1 Star Anise	Fresh Bay leaves	

Method

1. Place the shallots and salt in a large bowl. Add 600ml boiling water. Cover with clingfilm and leave to stand overnight.
2. Put remaining ingredients in a pan. Bring to the boil and simmer uncovered for 3 minutes.
3. Drain the shallots and add to the pan. Simmer for 5 minutes until transparent but still firm and crisp. Remove with a slotted spoon.
4. Fill sterilised jars two-thirds full with shallots.
5. Pour over cooking liquid, adding a few peppercorns to each jar, and a star anise and a bay leaf.
6. Leave in a cool dark place for a month. Keeps for up to three months once opened.

Red Velvet Cupcakes

Ingredients

2 ½ cups of Supreme Sponge Flour	1 heaped tsp baking powder	3 ½ tbsp Unsweetened Cocoa Powder
1 bottle (38ml) Red Food Colouring	½ cup Unsalted Butter, softened	1 ½ cups Caster sugar
2 Eggs	1tsp Vanilla Extract	1 cup Buttermilk
1 small tsp White Wine Vinegar	1 small tsp Baking soda	
<i>For the Frosting</i>		
250g Cream Cheese	1-2 cups Royal Icing Sugar, sifted	200g White Chocolate

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C. Line two 12 cup muffin tins with cupcake liners.
2. Sift the cake flour, baking powder and salt into a medium bowl and set aside. In a smaller bowl, mix the food colouring and cocoa powder to form a thin paste without lumps and set aside.
3. In a large bowl, or using an electric mixer, beat the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, then beat in the vanilla and the red cocoa paste, scraping down the bowl with the spatula as you go. Add one third of the flour, then beat well, beat in half of the buttermilk, then another third of the flour, then the remaining buttermilk. End with the last third on the flour mixture. Beat well until combined, making sure you scrape down the bowl with a spatula.
4. In a small bowl, mix the vinegar with the baking soda. Be careful as it will fizz up. Add to the cake batter, then stir well to combine. Fill the cupcake cases to ¾ full.
5. Place in the preheated oven, baking for @ 20 minutes until well risen and firm to touch.
6. Cool for 10 minutes in the tins, then on a wire rack until completely cold.
7. For the Frosting, melt the white chocolate in the microwave, stirring often, allow to cool slightly.
8. In a mixing bowl, beat the butter and cream cheese, add the white chocolate and mix until combined.
9. Slowly add the sugar until you reach the consistency and flavour required.
10. Pipe or spoon the frosting over the top of the cooled cupcakes. Decorate as you wish.
11. Chill to set in the fridge.
12. Display in a cupcake box to give as a gift.
13. Freezes well decorated or undecorated.