

# Sweets for Your Sweetie

Valentine's Day is the day we show our love and adoration to our family and friends. This year be creative and give the gift of homemade goodies. Growing up, my Granny made the best Red Velvet Cake in the county...or at least in my opinion! It was always saved for special occasions such as birthdays, Christmas, Easter, and most certainly Valentine's Day.

This year I have found two amazing recipes that add a twist to the traditional Red Velvet cake. They are both very simple and can be made the day before. Don't forget that how you present your food gift is also important in order to creative that special touch, but it doesn't have to be pricey. Look for inexpensive platters, boxes, or bowls to present your food in and then wrap it tightly with cellophane and add a festive bow. Keep in mind food safety precautions if the food item needs to be kept hot or cold.

Both of these recipes will surely win over the heart of your special Valentine!

## **Red Velvet Swirl Brownies**

### **Ingredients**

1 tablespoon unsalted butter, for pan

### **Red Velvet Brownie Layer:**

1 stick unsalted butter  
1 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
¼ cup cocoa powder  
Pinch salt  
1 tablespoon red food coloring  
1 teaspoon vinegar  
2 eggs  
¾ cup all-purpose flour  
¼ cup chopped toasted walnuts

### **Cream Cheese Layer:**

8 ounces cream cheese, softened  
¼ cup sugar  
1 egg  
1/8 teaspoon vanilla extract  
Special equipment: 8 by 8-inch baking pan

### **Directions**

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Butter an 8 by 8-inch baking pan and set aside.

**Brownie layer:** In a saucepan on medium heat melt the butter. Remove the butter to a large bowl and add the sugar, vanilla, cocoa powder, salt, food coloring, and vinegar, in that order, mixing between additions. Whisk the eggs in a small bowl and stir it into the cocoa mix. Fold in the flour until lightly combined. Stir in the walnuts and pour the batter into the prepared baking pan, saving ¼ cup of the batter for the top.

**Cream cheese layer:** Blend together the cream cheese, sugar, egg and vanilla in a medium bowl. Gently spread the cream cheese layer on top of the brownie batter in the pan. Dollop the remaining brownie batter over the cream cheese layer. Using a skewer or the tip of a knife, drag the tip through the cream cheese mixture to create a swirl pattern. Bake the brownies for 30 minutes. Remove to a cooling rack and allow them to cool completely before cutting.

## **Red Velvet Cheesecake**

### **Ingredients**

#### **For the crust:**

1 ½ cups finely crushed chocolate wafer cookies (about 28 cookies)  
5 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted  
1/3 cup sugar  
Pinch of salt

#### **For the filling:**

4 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened  
1 ¼ cups sugar  
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour  
4 large eggs  
1 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder  
1 teaspoon red food coloring

### **Directions**

**Make the crust:** Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Mix the cookie crumbs, melted butter, sugar and salt in a bowl. Press into the bottom and 1 inch up the sides of a 9-inch springform pan. Put the pan on a baking sheet and bake until set, about 10 minutes. Let cool completely.

**Make the filling:** Reduce the oven temperature to 325 degrees F. Beat the cream cheese, sugar, lemon juice and vanilla in a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment until smooth, 4 to 5

minutes. Add the flour, then beat in the eggs one at a time. Transfer 2 cups batter to a bowl; stir in the cocoa powder and food coloring. Pour the red batter into the crust, then pour the white batter on top. Using a spoon, pull some of the red batter up from the bottom of the cake and swirl. Bake until the edges are set but the center is still wobbly, about 1 hour, 20 minutes. Turn off the oven but keep the cake inside to cool, 20 minutes. Run a knife around the edge of the pan (don't remove the springform side), then transfer to a rack to cool. Refrigerate at least 4 hours before slicing.

For more information on these recipes or any Texas A & M AgriLife Extension Service education program, please call our office at 903-473-4580 or visit our website at [rains.agrilife.org](http://rains.agrilife.org). Also, check our Facebook Page at [facebook.com/pages/Rains-County-Family-Consumer-Sciences](https://facebook.com/pages/Rains-County-Family-Consumer-Sciences) and [facebook.com/Rains4HClub](https://facebook.com/Rains4HClub).