



HIGHLAND WHOLEFOODS - INVERNESS

Highland Wholefoods is a workers co-operative situated in the city of Inverness. Founded in 1989, we have a total of 11 worker/members. The company is wholly owned by its employees and is democratically run with a non-hierarchical structure. We supply vegetarian, vegan, organic, ethical and environmentally friendly food, drinks and household products to the Highland and Islands of Scotland.

Kevin's Anecdote:

I think it was in Alston, Cumbria, circa 1990 that a worker co-op event was held. There was workers from Highland

Wholefoods, GreenCity, Nova, Bath Co-op as well as many others. The event involved an overnight stay, and the demon drink played quite a part in the evening...

...I remember being in a room with Stephen (Highland), Alain and Dicken from Nova and Harvest Bath. Alain and Dicken were discussing the merits of joining up the two co-ops. Stephen and myself joined in the sparkling conversation in strong support of joining up and in trying to convince everyone of the merits! It was a very enjoyable drunken discussion, but I like to think it played a part in the formation of Essential Trading.

Helen's Vegan Brownies

Helen's vegan brownies are a firm favourite in the highland wholefoods staff room. They are rich and delicious. This recipe was adapted from one on Rainbow Plant Life.

120 ml aquafaba (liquid from a can of chickpeas, use unsalted chickpeas - I use Essential canned chickpeas)
 290g Essential organic cane sugar
 170g 65-75% dark chocolate, roughly chopped
 112g vegan butter, cubed
 180g plain flour
 42g cocoa powder
 ¾ teaspoon fine sea salt
 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
 1 teaspoon espresso coffee (instant powder)
 85g chocolate chips, or finely chopped dark chocolate

Line an 8x8-inch square baking pan with parchment paper and ensure there is some overhang on the sides (this will make it easy to lift the brownies out of the pan). Preheat the oven to 175°C.

Sift the flour and cocoa powder together in a medium bowl.

Add the aquafaba and sugar to a large mixing bowl. Use an electric handheld mixer or a stand mixer on high speed and beat the mixture for 2 ½ to 3 minutes until thickened, glossy, and wavy ribbons frequently appear in the bowl.

Add in the vanilla, salt, and espresso powder, and fold with a silicone spatula until well combined (the espresso will continue dissolving into the mixture as it rests).

Assemble a double boiler. Grab a heatproof bowl that can be nestled into a saucepan. Fill the saucepan up with a few inches of water – not so much that the bottom of the bowl would touch the water. Heat the water on the stove and keep at a rapid simmer.

Add the chopped dark chocolate and

cubed vegan butter to the bowl on top of the saucepan. Allow the chocolate mixture to melt, whisking occasionally until smooth and the chocolate is completely melted.

Pour the warm butter-chocolate mixture over the aquafaba-sugar mixture and fold together with the silicone spatula.

Add the flour-cocoa mixture to the wet ingredients and stir until just combined. Fold in the chocolate chips. Pour the batter into the lined pan and smooth out the surface with the spatula.

Bake the brownies in the preheated oven for 34 to 37 minutes. If the batter is still liquidy or runny, though, the brownies need about 5 more minutes in the oven.

To avoid overbaking and since every home oven varies, I err on the side of underbaking and check the brownies 5 minutes before I think they're going to be done. My oven usually takes 34 minutes.

Transfer the brownies to a wire rack to cool for 25 to 30 minutes. Then carefully lift the brownies out of the pan using the parchment paper handles onto the wire rack. Allow to cool for a further 25 to 30 minutes before slicing. Slice the brownies and enjoy!

