

Butterscotch shortbread

Makes 30

310g softened unsalted butter,
plus extra for greasing

100g caster sugar

350g plain flour, plus extra
for dusting

80g light brown sugar

45ml strong coffee

1 tbsp golden syrup

Preheat the oven to 160°C/gas mark 3. In a large bowl, cream together 250g of the butter with the caster sugar for 2 mins, until creamy and fluffy. Mix in the flour to form a thick paste.

Knead for 2 mins to bring the dough together.

On a floured surface, roll out the mixture to fit a 31cm x 21.5cm oven tin. Grease it with butter and line with baking paper, then transfer the shortbread to the tin. Flatten the mixture down to make it fit. Using a table knife, score the shortbread into fingers by drawing two lines across and nine down. Bake for 40 mins, until firm and golden. Re-score the lines lightly, allow to cool for 5 mins, then place on a wire rack.

In a small saucepan, melt the remaining butter and add the brown sugar, coffee and golden syrup. Simmer for 1 min, until the sugar has dissolved. Bring to the boil, keeping on a rolling boil for 2 mins, until thickened. Stir, until smooth, off the heat.

Pour the glaze over the shortbread immediately, spreading with a spatula to form a thin covering. Allow to cool, then remove the shortbread from the tin using the baking paper, and transfer to a flat surface. Using a large carving knife, cut over the scored lines to separate the pieces. Serve when completely cool.



BROWN BUTTER With its delicious, nutty taste, brown butter enhances both sweet and savoury dishes, and is easy to make. Butter is melted over a medium heat in a pan, preferably with a light-coloured base so the liquid can be checked as it changes colour. The pan is swirled occasionally to ensure the butter cooks evenly. As the butter melts, it begins to foam, and the colour will change from yellow to caramel and finally, brown. Once the nutty aroma is evident, the pan is removed from the heat. The milk solids will have cooked faster and settled on the bottom of the pan, so a meshed strainer is used to transfer the butter to a bowl to cool. It can be kept refrigerated for several weeks in an airtight container. If reheated, a low setting should be used to prevent it from burning. Brown butter adds richness to cakes, biscuits and sauces, and can be spooned over fish, chicken or vegetable dishes.