

## **ROSE, CARDAMON AND COFFEE DESSERT SLICES**

*(published with permission from Chetna Makan)*

200g (7oz) chocolate digestive biscuits  
50g (1 ¾ oz) unsalted butter, melted, plus extra for greasing  
225ml (8fl oz) milk  
1 teaspoon ground cardamom  
1 tablespoon coffee granules  
3 large egg yolks  
75g (2 ¾ oz) granulated sugar  
2 tablespoons cornstarch  
3 tablespoons cocoa powder  
1 tablespoon boiling water  
2 teaspoons powdered gelatine  
250g (9oz) mascarpone cheese  
1 teaspoon rosewater  
white chocolate curls to decorate

Heat the oven to 180 ° C (350 ° F).

Grease a 20cm (8in) square cake tin and line it with nonstick baking paper. Put the digestive biscuits in a plastic bag and bash them with a rolling-pin to crush them to crumbs. Transfer the crumbs to a bowl and pour in the melted butter, mixing thoroughly so that the crumbs are completely coated. Tip the mixture into the prepared tin and press down firmly with the back of a spoon to create a smooth, even base layer. Bake for 15 minutes, then set aside to cool completely.

In a small pan, slowly heat the milk to scalding point. Add the ground cardamom and coffee granules and mix well, then remove the pan from the heat. In a bowl, whisk the egg yolks, sugar, cornstarch, cocoa and 2 tablespoons of the spiced milk together to form a smooth paste. Slowly add the remaining milk, whisking the whole time. Tip this mixture back into the saucepan and cook over a low heat for 2– 3 minutes until it thickens enough to coat the back of a wooden spoon. Strain through a sieve into a clean bowl, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 10 minutes until lukewarm.

Put the measured boiling water in a small bowl and sprinkle in the gelatine. Stir until the gelatine powder has dissolved. Add this to the lukewarm pastry cream and mix well. In another bowl, beat the mascarpone and rosewater together. Fold this into the pastry cream and pour the mixture over the biscuit base. Cover the tin with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight to set.

When ready to serve, carefully remove the cake from the tin and cut it into squares. To finish, sprinkle with white chocolate curls (or any decoration you prefer). The slices will keep, refrigerated, in an airtight container for up to 3 days.