The Blackboard

MEXICAN MOLE

MUFFINS

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Baking time: 20 minutes
Use: 12-hole muffin tin, 24 paper muffin cases
Makes: 12 muffins

100g (3½ oz) milk chocolate, preferably 34% cocoa solids

10g ($\frac{1}{2}$ oz) or more fresh red chillies (thumb- or finger-length chillies are likely to be medium hot)

200g (7oz) plain flour

25g (1oz) good-quality cocoa powder

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon salt

110g (4oz) caster sugar

2 medium eggs

100ml (31/2 fl oz) sunflower oil

225g (8fl oz) milk

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6. Line a 12-hole muffin tin with double muffin cases.

Coarsely grate the milk chocolate. Finely dice the red chillies, discarding the seeds and membrane, being careful not to touch the flesh of the chillies. It is best to use rubber gloves.

Sift the flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt into a bowl, and stir in the sugar, grated chocolate and diced chilli. Make a well in the centre.

In another bowl, beat the eggs and sunflower oil until foamy, then gradually beat in the milk and vanilla extract. Pour the dry ingredients into the well and stir until just combined. Don't be tempted to overmix, otherwise they will not have the rough texture of a traditional muffin.

Spoon the mixture into the paper cases, filling each three-quarters full. Bake for approximately 20 minutes, until the muffins are well-risen and springy.

Let the muffins cool in the tin for a few minutes and serve them warm, or turn them on to a wire rack to cool completely.

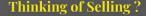
HINT: If you do touch the flesh of the chillies with your bare hands be extra careful not to touch your eyes.







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From 1983 through to 2009, Jasmine Sergeant enjoyed a successful career both as a Fine Dining Chef and as a Hospitality Consultant.