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When it comes to chocolate, it is fair to say that the majority of the population love nothing more than indulging themselves with an occasional sweet treat. Be it a bar of milk chocolate, a gooey chocolate cake or a more decadent truffle, chocolate in all its varieties never fails to hit the spot when we are craving a comforting fix of sugar.

So what are some of the more popular chocolate based recipes out there? With plenty to choose from it may be hard to pick a top three that everyone agrees with, however the ones that instantly spring to mind are chocolate brownies, truffles and fondue. Brownies are loved by children and adults alike, they are easy to make and have no strict recipe to follow meaning you can add any type of chocolate from white buttons to dark chunks, even throwing in some nuts to give extra crunch. There is surely nothing more delicious than a moist, warm brownie eaten straight from the oven with a dollop of ice cream.

Truffles provide a more grown up version of a chocolate fix, being both indulgent and exquisite and with hand rolled varieties proving the connoisseursâ€™ choice. These are relatively easy to make at home (providing you have patience and donâ€™t mind mess) and are the perfect end to a dinner party. Your guests will surely be fighting each other for rights to the last one!

Finally, we come to chocolate fondue. Whatâ€™s not to love? Pure, unadulterated chocolaty goodness, with a variety of titbits to dip that can be anything from strawberries to marshmallows. Great fun and a really social dish to share with friends and family, you donâ€™t need a fountain to pull this off, a pan of melted chocolate will do just as well!

Perhaps the biggest challenge when it comes to baking with chocolate is the infamous Chocolate Fondant. This indulgent pudding is a seductive dish characterised by its melting chocolate centre which should ooze out the cake when cut open. While it may seem simple enough in theory (the only ingredients are butter, eggs, sugar and naturally, chocolate) many have tried and failed to achieve the molten middle when attempting to bake this glorious pud. Timing and attention to detail are key in this dish. If you are following a recipe (there are hundreds of different ones available online) then do so to the letter and do not leave in the oven for a second longer than recommended unless you want to fall foul of a stodgy centre!

Of course, not all of us have the patience (or culinary skills) to whip up chocolate fondants and the like in our kitchen at home. It may be an idea to look out for chocolate making and dessert cookery classes running in your area if you want to develop your skills. However, for the less ambitious of us, this is definitely where eating out comes in pretty handy. Whether or not you choose to dine at Oxford restaurants or Aberdeen Brassieresâ€™, you are guaranteed there will be at least one chocolaty treat on the dessert menu. And who says you need to eat a main when you go out for food? There is something deliciously decadent about making a reservation simply for cocktails and dessertâ€¦

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