

**REVIEW** Lianne Kolirin finds her son Nathan's baking class at The Kid's Kitchen a relaxing experience — and he enjoyed it too

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# My pre-schooler played with beetroot while I drank tea

**THE BLURB:** The website says: "We want to show kids how much fun cooking can be and... encourage them to try new foods".

**EXPECTATION:** Nathan loves cooking, and I loved the idea of a sociable cookery class where someone else gets to clear up. I also hoped the group setting of the pre-school class would indeed encourage him to sample new foods.

**ON OFFER:** Each hour-long workshop introduces a different ingredient — ours was beetroot. The session starts with a song, and then it is straight into the hands-on experience. While the food is in the oven there is usually a game, story or

an activity, and everyone tastes the dish of the day before the class comes to an end.

**WHAT WE DO:** Pouring, mixing, weighing, icing cakes and the all-important button-pressing on the mixer. Nicole Freeman, who runs The Kids' Kitchen, which is based in north London, is also very good at explaining to the children about the importance of hygiene in the kitchen and clearing up.

**WHO WAS THERE:** Nicole caters for up to 10 pre-schoolers with accompanying adults, but there were only three other children when we went. With the aid of several large steps to

stand on, each had their own little area around Nicole's spacious island worktop.

**NOSH:** Amazingly, Nicole incorporated the beetroot into a chocolate cupcake recipe. Afterwards

she talked about the colourful vegetable and got the kids "painting" with its roots. The kids sat at a small table to eat their cakes and also tried roasted beetroot, beetroot dip and beetroot crisps, while we

mums enjoyed a cuppa and a mini cake (or three).

**TAKE AWAY:** Nathan took home four cupcakes, which his brothers devoured in seconds. He also received a certificate and recipe card.

**VERDICT:** It was great fun and an hour was perfect. The best thing is that classes are run on a drop-in basis, which means you do not pay for a term up-front.

**TOP TIP:** Who knew that beetroot works so well

with chocolate?!

**KOSHER?** Yes, everything is dairy or parev.

**COST:** £10

**CONTACT:** www.thekidskitchen.net  
Tel: 07976 268 520.  
Email: nicole@thekidskitchen.net



## BEETROOT AND CHOCOLATE MINI MUFFINS

A great way of introducing kids to beetroot — both taste-wise and toilet-humour-wise! Don't worry if the kid's wee and poo go pink. This is called beeturia and is caused by the body's inability to digest the beetroot's pink colour.

### FOR THE CAKES

125g cooked beetroot (roast yourself or use pre-cooked packets, but not ones in vinegar)  
2 eggs

1 tsp vanilla extract  
100ml sunflower oil  
40g cocoa powder  
90g plain flour  
125g caster sugar  
1 tsp baking powder

### FOR THE ICING

75g butter  
125g icing sugar  
2 tbsp drinking chocolate powder  
1 tbsp cocoa

2 tsp hot water  
1 tsp vanilla extract

### METHOD

- Grease a mini muffin tin or line with paper cases.
- Puree the beetroot in a food processor.
- Slowly add the eggs, vanilla and oil and whiz until smooth.
- Add in the cocoa, flour, sugar and baking powder and whiz until well combined.

- Pour or spoon into the mini muffin tins
- Bake at 180°C / fan 160°C for about 15 minutes until a skewer comes out clean. Leave to cool.
- Make the icing by mixing together all the ingredients until smooth. This is easiest done in the food processor.
- When the cakes are cool, you can pipe a little swirl of icing using a piping bag and nozzle, or spread on the icing with a knife.