



THE OFFICIAL GREAT IRISH BAKE RECIPE BOOK

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MEET SAOIRSE

Saoirse loves baking - and dreams of owning her very own cupcake shop one day.

Saoirse was born on 29th January 2015 after a normal delivery and **was a healthy baby**. In late February 2016, **she became unwell with a kidney infection** that led to hospitalisation and later progressed to pyelonephritis. Because her father has Alport syndrome, a hereditary kidney condition, Saoirse was placed under the care of a paediatrician and later referred to Children's Health Ireland at Temple Street. In 2018, **a kidney biopsy confirmed that Saoirse also had Alport syndrome**, and she continued to attend regular clinics.

From then on, her care focused on preserving kidney function. Over time, clinic visits became more frequent, and by **June 2024 it was no longer possible to manage without dialysis**. Following a routine clinic visit, Saoirse was admitted to hospital, had a peritoneal dialysis catheter inserted and began dialysis shortly afterwards.

In May 2025, she became very sick and was admitted again for around ten weeks, during which **she transitioned from peritoneal dialysis to haemodialysis**. Since then, she has been **travelling from County Clare to Temple Street three days a week for treatment**.

During her time in hospital, **Saoirse was supported by staff on the ward** and in the haemodialysis unit, who **created an environment filled with fun, talk and activities**. Play specialists, nurses and the wider team ensured she always had things to look forward to. **Saoirse is now on the donor transplant list**, and her family is **waiting for the call that will change everything**.

By taking part in Great Irish Bake, you are making a real difference to sick children like Saoirse and their families across Ireland.

Aprons on... **Why not try one of Saoirse's favourite recipes** - her much-loved Double Choc Chip Oat Cookies?

We hope you enjoy every moment in the kitchen - and don't forget to **share your creations with us by tagging #GreatIrishBake** on social media.



EVERY BAKE COUNTS

VISIT CHILDRENSHEALTH.IE/GREATIRISHBAKE

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Saoirse's Favourite Recipe by Gem



DOUBLE CHOC CHIP OAT COOKIES



PREP TIME: 10 - 15 MIN
BAKE: 15 MINS
SERVES: 12 - 14

INGREDIENTS:

- 200g Gem granulated sugar
- 185g Gem plain flour
- ½ tsp Gem baking powder
- 135g rolled oats
- 2 medium eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract, optional
- Pinch of salt
- 100g (1 bag) Gem milk chocolate chips
- 100g (1 bag) Gem white chocolate chips

KITCHEN TOOLS:

- 2 baking trays lined with baking paper
- Large bowl
- Cooling rack

METHOD:

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C fan and line 2 baking trays with baking paper then set aside.
- 2 In a large bowl, beat the butter and sugar until soft and creamy. Add in the eggs and vanilla and mix until combined.
- 3 Add flour, oatmeal, and baking soda as well and mix all ingredients together until you get a thick cookie dough.
- 4 Finally, add in the chocolate chips and give it another good stir.
- 5 With the use of 2 tablespoons, scoop spoonfuls of the dough onto the large baking trays, spacing them 2 - 3 cm apart from each other. You should get 12 - 14 cookies, depending on how big you make them. The more you flatten them on the tray the bigger and thinner they will get. Thin or thick, doesn't matter, both are delish.
- 6 Bake cookies for about 15 minutes, until they turn light gold.
- 7 Transfer them to a cooling rack and enjoy while they last.

Top Tips:

- Add a glass of cold milk to complete the taste sensation!
- Make a large batch and keep them in a container for up to 5 days.



by Shane Smith - Gem Brand Ambassador



GEM GIANT WHEEL CAKE



"This Giant Homemade Gem Wheel is my tribute to one of the most nostalgic treats of the 80s and 90s, crisp biscuit, fluffy marshmallow, sweet raspberry jam and a generous coating of dark chocolate.

I hope this fun, feel-good bake inspires you to roll up your sleeves, get baking, and raise some much-needed funds for this year's Great Irish Bake."

Shane Smith

METHOD:

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C /160°C fan. Grease and line the base and sides of your baking tins.
- 2 Place the flour, sugar, butter and vanilla into a food processor and blitz until a soft dough forms. You may need to add a few drops of cold water to help bring it together.
- 3 Divide the dough into two and press each half evenly into the base of the prepared tins.
- 4 Prick all over with a fork and bake for 30 minutes, or until lightly golden brown.
- 5 Remove from the oven and allow to cool in the tins. Carefully remove one biscuit disc from its tin and place it in the fridge to firm up.
- 6 Place the marshmallows and one tablespoon of water into a heatproof bowl. Microwave in short bursts until melted and smooth.
- 7 Spread a layer of jam over the biscuit base that is still in its tin, then spoon the melted marshmallow on top. Spread evenly to cover, then place the chilled biscuit disc on top to sandwich.
- 8 Melt 125g of the dark chocolate with 1 tablespoon of oil and spread it over the top. Refrigerate for 4 hours until everything has firmed up.
- 9 Once fully chilled, carefully remove from the tin and turn upside down onto a wire rack with parchment underneath.
- 10 Melt the remaining chocolate with the oil until smooth and pour over the exposed biscuit, allowing it to run down the sides.
- 11 Leave to set at room temperature for about 10 minutes, then slice and serve.

BAKE: 30 MINS
CHILL: 4 HOURS
SERVES: 10 - 12

INGREDIENTS:

- 200g cold butter
- 300g Gem plain flour
- 100g Gem caster sugar
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp raspberry jam
- 140g white mini marshmallows
- 400g Gem dark chocolate
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil

KITCHEN TOOLS:

- Mixing bowls
- Weighing scales
- Whisk
- Spatula
- 2 x 8" round cake tins
- Food Processor





RAINBOW SURPRISE CUPCAKES



"For The Great Irish Bake, we've created a bake for the whole family that will make everyone's eyes light up. They're simple enough for little hands to make, but impressive enough to look like something straight out of a bakery window. Aprons on, oven warming... let's bake some magic."

Jolene & Lil's

METHOD:

For the Cupcake

- 1 Preheat oven to 160°C fan and line a 12-cup muffin tin with paper cases.
- 2 Beat the butter and Gem caster sugar until pale and fluffy.
- 3 Beat in the eggs one at a time, then mix in the vanilla and milk.
- 4 In a separate bowl, stir together the Gem plain flour, Gem baking powder and salt.
- 5 Add the dry ingredients and mix gently until smooth.
- 6 Spoon into cases, filling about $\frac{2}{3}$ full.
- 7 Bake for 18 – 20 minutes until springy, then cool completely.

Buttercream & Decoration

- 1 Beat the butter and icing sugar until very fluffy, then add the vanilla and salt.
- 2 Beat until smooth and pipeable. Add a little more icing sugar or milk if needed.
- 3 Divide into 3 bowls and colour with food colouring.

Fill the Cupcakes

- 1 Scoop a small hole from the centre of each cupcake.
- 2 Spoon or pipe buttercream inside.
- 3 Replace the cake "lid" on top.

Rainbow Swirl

- 1 Lay plastic wrap flat and spread each colour in strips side-by-side.
- 2 Roll into a log, twist the ends and snip one side open.
- 3 Place inside a piping bag fitted with a star tip.
- 4 Pipe swirls and enjoy the rainbow magic!

PREP TIME: 30 MIN
BAKE: 18 – 20 MINS
SERVES: 12

FOR THE CUPCAKES:

- 115g unsalted butter
- 150g Gem caster sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 160g Gem plain flour
- 1 tsp Gem baking powder
- Pinch of salt
- 120ml milk
- 1 tsp vanilla essence

FOR THE BUTTERCREAM:

- 150g unsalted butter
- 300g Gem icing sugar
- A little milk, if needed
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Tiny pinch of salt
- Food colouring – red, yellow, blue



by Sarah Butler

SULTANA & COCONUT TRAYBAKE WITH HOMEMADE CUSTARD

"This easy Sultana and Coconut Traybake is soft, buttery and full of flavour. Studded with Gem Gourmet sultanas, Gem desiccated coconut and other Gem essentials, it's a simple, comforting bake that's perfect served on its own or with custard for dessert."

Sarah Butler



FOR THE TRAYBAKE:

PREP TIME: 10 MIN
BAKE: 25 – 30 MINS
MAKES: 15 SQUARES

- 200g butter, softened
- 200g Gem caster sugar
- 4 eggs
- 180g Gem self-raising flour
- 1 tsp Gem baking powder
- 80g Gem Gourmet sultanas
- 30g Gem desiccated coconut
- 50ml milk
- 20g Gem flaked almonds
- 1 tsp Gem icing sugar powder, for dusting

FOR THE CUSTARD:

PREP TIME: 5 MIN
BAKE: 5 MINS
SERVES: 4

- 100ml double cream
- 350ml milk
- 2 egg yolks
- 1½ tbsp Gem cornflour
- 100g Gem caster sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract



METHOD:

For the Traybake:

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C / 160°C fan / gas mark 6.
- 2 Line a traybake tin with baking parchment.
- 3 Beat the butter and caster sugar together until pale and fluffy.
- 4 Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition.
- 5 Sift in the self-raising flour and baking powder.
- 6 Add the Gourmet sultanas, desiccated coconut and milk.
- 7 Mix until fully combined, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed.
- 8 Spoon into the prepared tin, level the surface and sprinkle with flaked almonds.
- 9 Bake for 25 – 30 minutes, until golden and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.
- 10 Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack and cut into squares. Dust with icing sugar before serving.

Top Tip: Soak the Gem Gourmet sultanas in hot tea for 10 minutes, then drain well before baking for extra juiciness.

For the Custard

- 1 Gently warm the milk and double cream in a saucepan. Do not boil. Remove from the heat.
- 2 In a large bowl, whisk together the egg yolks, Gem cornflour and Gem caster sugar until smooth.
- 3 Gradually whisk in the warm milk mixture to prevent lumps.
- 4 Return the mixture to the saucepan and cook over a medium heat, stirring constantly.
- 5 After a few minutes, the custard will thicken and bubble.
- 6 Remove from the heat, stir in the vanilla extract and serve.

Top Tip: If the custard thickens too much, whisk in a splash of warm milk to loosen.

by Shane Smith - Gem Brand Ambassador



TROPICAL COCONUT CAKE

"If you're a fan of coconut, this tropical celebration cake is definitely for you. Its made up of two coconut sponges and sandwiched with a velvety smooth vanilla buttercream. I coated the outside and top of the cake with desiccated coconut to add the most beautiful finish & flavour."

Shane Smith



PREP TIME: 30 MIN

BAKE: 25 MINS

SERVES: 10

FOR THE SPONGE:

- 130g butter, soft
- 200g Gem caster sugar
- 2 large eggs
- Dash vanilla essence
- 300g Gem self-raising flour
- 160ml milk
- ½ lemon zest
- 80g Gem desiccated coconut

FOR THE BUTTERCREAM:

- 300g soft butter
- 300g Gem icing sugar
- Dash vanilla

FOR THE GARNISH:

- 125g Gem desiccated coconut
- Dried coconut slices
- Edible flowers

METHOD:

- 1 Preheat your oven to 180°C / 160°C fan.
- 2 Grease and line two 8" tins with butter and parchment paper.
- 3 For the sponge, into a mixing bowl add the butter and sugar and cream until soft & pale.
- 4 Add the eggs, one by one, mixing between each addition.
- 5 Add the vanilla and lemon zest and mix through.
- 6 Sieve in the flour.
- 7 Add the desiccated coconut and mix.
- 8 Finally add the milk and mix to form a soft batter.
- 9 Divide between the tins and bake in the preheated oven for 25 - 30 minutes.
- 10 Once baked, remove and allow to cool.
- 11 To make the buttercream, simply cream the butter, sugar and vanilla together until soft, creamy and smooth.
- 12 Sandwich and cover the two sponges with buttercream
- 13 While the buttercream is still soft, cover the outside and top of the covered cake with more desiccated coconut and chill until needed.
- 14 To serve, remove from the fridge 60 minutes before eating. You can top the cake with dried coconut slices and edible flowers.





Orla Drumgoole – Irish Mammy Cooks



CHOCOLATE & RAISIN SHORTBREAD CRUMBLE



PREP TIME: 25 MIN
BAKE: 35 – 40 MINS
SERVES: 12 – 16

INGREDIENTS:

- 200g very soft butter
- 200g Gem plain flour
- 100g Gem cornflour
- 100g Gem icing sugar
- 50g Gem gourmet raisins
- 50g Gem milk or dark chocolate chips

KITCHEN TOOLS:

- A large bowl and a smaller bowl
- Weighing scales
- Knife, teaspoon, spatula
- 7 or 8 inch - (18 or 20 cm) square tin
- Parchment paper or silicon liner

METHOD:

- 1** Start with your butter. Make sure it is completely soft and the spatula can mash it without resistance.
- 2** Add the flour, cornflour and icing sugar to it and using your hands, mix until it all comes together and forms a very soft dough.
- 3** At this point take all but 200g of that mix out and pat into the lined square tin. Add the raisins on top and squish them into the dough as much as possible, dotting them evenly about the tin. Leave to the side but don't refrigerate.
- 4** Add the chocolate chips into the remaining 200g of dough and mix them through well. Place this dough in the fridge for at least half an hour to harden.
- 5** Preheat the oven now to 160°C fan.
- 6** When ready to bake, add the chocolate chip mix in crumbled pieces on top of the base in the tin.
- 7** Bake for 35 - 40 minutes - keep an eye that the top doesn't brown too much.

Top Tip: You can add ½ tsp of vanilla or lemon extract if you'd like - put it in along with the butter.

by Shane Smith - Gem Brand Ambassador



STRAWBERRY & LEMON SQUARES

PREP TIME: 30 MIN
BAKE: 30 - 35 MINS
MAKES: 15

FOR THE SPONGE:

- 115g butter, soft
- 200g Gem granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 lemon zest
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 240ml buttermilk
- 120g Greek yoghurt
- 280g Gem plain flour
- 2 tsp Gem baking powder
- ½ tsp Gem bread soda

FOR THE BUTTERCREAM:

- 130g fresh strawberries
- 1 tbsp Gem granulated sugar
- 220g butter, soft
- Dash vanilla
- 350g Gem icing sugar

TOPPING:

- 6 strawberries
- 1 lemon

METHOD:

- 1 Preheat your oven to 180°C / 160°C fan.
- 2 Line your 9"x13" baking tin with parchment and set aside.
- 3 To make the sponge, cream the butter and sugar together until smooth.
- 4 Add the lemon zest and vanilla, mix to combine.
- 5 Gradually add the eggs, mixing between each edition.
- 6 Add the yoghurt and the buttermilk and mix well.
- 7 Sieve in the flour, baking powder and bread soda, fold to combine.
- 8 Spoon into the tin and bake in the preheated oven for 30 - 35 minutes or until lightly golden brown. Allow to cool fully.
- 9 To make the strawberry buttercream, firstly to make the strawberry puree.
- 10 Add the fresh strawberries and sugar into a saucepan and cook for 5-6 minutes on medium heat until you have a smooth thick puree. Leave to chill.
- 11 Place the butter, vanilla and icing sugar in the bowl of your mixer fitted with the paddle attachment and beat for 8-10 minutes. Don't forget to scrape the sides.
- 12 Once the buttercream is soft and fluffy, add the cold strawberry puree and mix to combine.
- 13 Spread this blush pink buttercream over the cooled sponge and chill for 10 minutes.
- 14 Portion into bite sized pieces, top with lemon and summer strawberries.



HOMEMADE ALMOND COCOA SPREAD & SODA-STYLE FOCACCIA



METHOD:

For the Soda-Style Focaccia

- 1 Preheat to 200°C / 180°C fan. Generously oil a 9 x 13-inch baking tray.
- 2 In a large bowl, combine the flour, salt, sugar, and bread soda.
- 3 Whisk the yoghurt with the water until smooth and pourable.
- 4 Add the yoghurt mixture and olive oil to the dry ingredients. Mix gently until just combined. The dough should be soft and slightly sticky.
- 5 Press the dough into the oiled tray to a thickness of about 2–3 cm. Use fingertips to dimple the surface.
- 6 Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle lightly with flaky sea salt. Bake for 25 – 30 minutes, until pale golden and set.
- 7 Allow to rest for 10 minutes before slicing for the best texture for spreading.

For the Almond Cocoa Spread

- 1 Roast whole almonds at 180°C for 10 – 12 minutes until fragrant. Allow to cool slightly. (If using Gem ground almonds, skip this step.)
- 2 Melt the chocolate chips in a heatproof bowl over simmering water or in the microwave.
- 3 Add the almonds, cocoa powder, sugar, vanilla, salt, melted chocolate, and oil to a blender. Blend until smooth and creamy.
- 4 Add a little extra oil or water if needed, blending until the desired consistency is reached.
- 5 Spoon into a clean, airtight jar.

Storage

Almond Cocoa Spread: Keeps in the fridge for up to 2 weeks

Focaccia: Keeps for up to 4 days in an airtight container

PREP TIME: 25 MIN

BAKE: 30 MINS

SERVES: 8

FOR THE FOCACCIA:

- 450g Gem plain flour
- A good pinch of fine salt
- 20g Gem caster sugar
- 1 tsp Gem bread soda
- 240g full-fat natural yoghurt
- 120ml water (to loosen the yoghurt)
- 3 tbsp olive oil (plus extra for topping)
- Flaky sea salt, for sprinkling

FOR THE SPREAD:

- 200g whole almonds or 200 g Gem ground almonds
- 30g cocoa powder
- 80g Gem soft dark brown sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- ¼ tsp fine salt
- 50ml neutral oil (sunflower, rapeseed, or light olive oil)
- 100g pack Gem dark chocolate chips, melted



FLUFFY CHOCOLATE & BANANA TRAYBAKE

PREP TIME: 10 MIN
BAKE: 30 MINS
SERVES: 8

INGREDIENTS:

- 100g butter
- 100g soft banana
- 100g Gem self-raising flour
- 25g Gem cornflour
- ½ teaspoon Gem baking powder
- 40g Gem dark chocolate chips
- 60g Gem caster sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2tsp vanilla extract

For the topping: 20g Gem demerara sugar

KITCHEN TOOLS:

- Large bowl
- Weighing scales
- Knife, wooden spoon, spatula
- 2lb loaf tin
- Parchment paper or liner

METHOD:

- 1 Preheat the oven to 160°C fan.
- 2 Soften butter in the microwave so it is melted well but not hot.
- 3 Add the banana to the bowl and use a knife to smash it but not mash it.
- 4 Then add the Gem flour, the cornflour, the baking powder, the baking powder, caster sugar and the chocolate chips.
- 5 Mix the dry ingredients together with the banana and butter. Try to coat the chocolate in the dry ingredients to help them float in the mixture.
- 6 Finally add the eggs, vanilla extract and mix thoroughly to form a nice batter.
- 7 Pour into the parchment lined loaf tray.
- 8 Top with the Demerara sugar and bake for half an hour. When cool, slice down the middle and into 4 for traybake style presentation.





Gem has been proudly supporting **The Great Irish Bake** for eight years in a row.



It's inspiring to see communities, schools, workplaces, and families across Ireland come together to bake for such an important cause. Every bake sale — big or small — helps make a real difference in the lives of sick children and their families.

We encourage everyone to get involved, host a bake sale, and support this incredible initiative. Together, we can help create brighter futures for children who need it most.

EVERY BAKE COUNTS

VISIT [CHILDRENSHEALTH.IE/GREATIRISHBAKE](https://www.childrenshealth.ie/greatirishbake)



★ THANK YOU FOR BAKING A DIFFERENCE! ★



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