

THE ULTIMATE FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE CAKE

Ingredients for the cake:

Unsweetened natural cocoa powder, sifted if lumpy, to prepare the pan
10 ounces bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped (2 cups)
12 tablespoons (6 ounces) unsalted butter, cut into 6 pieces
4 large eggs, at room temperature
1/2 cup (3 1/2 ounces) granulated sugar
2 tablespoons bourbon (or 2 tablespoons water along with 1 1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract)
1/4 teaspoon table salt

Ingredients for the glaze:

4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped (2/3 cup)
4 tablespoons (2 ounces) unsalted butter, cut into 3 pieces
1 tablespoon corn syrup or Lyle's golden cane syrup

Directions:

Make the cake

1. Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 300° degrees F. Lightly grease the bottom of an 8-inch by 2-inch round cake pan. Line the bottom with parchment, then lightly grease the parchment and the sides of the pan. Dust the sides and bottom with some of the cocoa powder.
2. Put the chocolate and butter in a medium heatproof bowl and melt in the microwave (or put in a medium metal bowl set over a pan of simmering water), stirring with a spatula until smooth. (If using the microwave, heat for 10 to 15 seconds at a time, stir, and heat again.) Set aside to cool slightly.
3. Put the eggs, sugar, bourbon (or vanilla and water), and salt in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment (or in a large bowl using an electric handheld mixer fitted with wire beaters) and beat on medium-high speed until the mixture is pale in color and tripled in volume, 3 to 4 minutes. Reduce the speed to medium-low and gradually pour in the chocolate mixture and continue beating until just blended, about 30 seconds. Remove the bowl from the mixer and use a silicone spatula to gently fold the batter until well-blended.

Bake and assemble the cake

1. Pour the batter into the pan and spread into an even layer. Gently tap the pan against the countertop several times to settle the batter and release any air bubbles.
2. Bake until a pick inserted in the center comes out looking wet with small gooey clumps, 33 to 36 minutes. Move the pan to a rack and let cool until warm enough to handle but not hot, 30 to 40 minutes.

3. Run a small knife around the edge of the pan to loosen the cake. Cover the cake pan with a wire rack and invert. Remove the pan and parchment. Using your fingertips, gently press any stray crumbs back onto the sides, top, and edge of the cake. Let the cake cool completely (or, for faster cooling, pop it into the fridge).

Glaze the cake

1. Put the chocolate, butter and corn syrup in a small heatproof bowl or measuring cup and melt in the microwave (or put in a small metal bowl set over a pan of simmering water), stirring with a small whisk or spatula until smooth. Set aside to cool slightly.
2. Set the cake rack over a sheet pan or large plate. Pour the warm glaze onto the center of the cooled cake and, using a small offset spatula, spread the glaze evenly over the top allowing it to droop over the edge in places. Set aside until the glaze is set, about 1 hour (or, for faster cooling, pop it into the refrigerator).
3. Using two long metal spatulas, transfer the cake to a flat serving plate. Loosely cover and refrigerate the cake until very cold, at least 6 hours or overnight.

To serve

1. About 3 or 4 hours before serving, remove the cake from the refrigerator and let it come to room temperature. To serve, cut the cake into small slices using a hot knife.

Make Ahead Tips

- The unglazed cake layer can be baked, cooled, and refrigerated for three days or wrapped in plastic and frozen for up to three months. If frozen, thaw in the refrigerator for one day before glazing.
- The glazed cake can be prepared and refrigerated for three days ahead of serving. Leftovers are delicious for days. Slices can also be frozen on a small cookie sheet then stowed in a freezer bag or container for up to a month. Thaw your slices at room temperature. The glaze won't be glossy but the cake will still taste delicious.

Serving Tips

- For the fullest flavor and smoothest texture, make sure to serve the cake when fully at room temperature and, yes, depending on the ambient temps in your home, it can take a long time.
- To cut this cake (or any thick, sticky cake) into clean slices, heat the knife first, either by dipping it in a tall container of very hot water or by holding it under hot running water for a few seconds. Then wipe it dry before cutting the cake. The knife will cool quickly so expect to wipe the knife clean and reward it between cuts.
- Serve small slices – This cake is rich!
- Garnish with a few fresh raspberries and a dollop of whipped cream or whipped mascarpone cream.

Serves 8-10.

Credit: MVmagazine.com