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# Red Velvet Cake

Published: February 5, 2019 · Modified: May 4, 2020 by John Kanell

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A light chocolate cake with lots of addictive cream cheese frosting and a crown of buttercream roses. This cake is moist but so light and fluffy, it really is the perfect match for all that delicious frosting! You can make this without any food coloring and it will be a light tan color, not quite red, but it will be eaten just as quickly!



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I did a lot of recipe testing for this much-requested cake but in the end I lightly adapted the recipe for the batter from a New York Times recipe. Wonderful moist fluffy sponge, and I loved the typo saying it made 8 inch layers! LOL, even the best of us make mistakes...Check out my [Chocolate Beet Cake](#) to see what happens when you skip the food coloring!

## HOW TO MAKE RED VELVET CAKE

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Butter and cocoa powder three 6-inch cake pans. Add 1 cupcake paper to a pan. In a standing mixer fitted with a paddle attachment,



2. In a large bowl, sift the flour (or cake flour if thats what you have), salt and baking soda then whisk together and set aside.

3. Sift the cocoa powder into the butter mixture and cream together.

4. Add red food coloring and vinegar to the buttermilk then whisk together.



5. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the flour mixture and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the wet to the butter mixture until combined. Add the red buttermilk mixture and beat. Pour the batter for the cake layers into the three prepared round cake pans. Add any extra batter to a cupcake paper. This will be used for the crumble. Bake for about 30-35 minutes or until the centers are springy to the touch and a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Bake the crumble cupcake for about 15-20 minutes. When done, let them cool in their pans for about 5 minutes, then invert them out onto a wire rack.

6. In a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, cream the butter. Sift confectioners sugar into a large bowl. Add the cream cheese to the creamed butter. Add vanilla and a pinch of salt. Beat together. Add the confectioners sugar in cups. Mix until combined. If you're wanting a stronger buttercream, keep adding more sifted confectioners sugar until you reach a desired consistency. Transfer the buttercream to a piping bag and snip off the tip.



7. To create the crumbs, you can either break up the cupcake by hand or use a grater. I find that using the grater gives you a more consistent crumb for decorating.

8. In a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, cream the room temperature butter until smooth. Sift in the confectioner's sugar. Beat until you get to a desired consistency. Add the rose water. Make sure the buttercream is thick. Dye a few batches yellow, soft pink and pink with gel food coloring. Use some matcha powder to create a natural leaf color. Transfer the green buttercream to a bag fitted with a 68 tip. Cut a square of parchment paper. Use a tiny bit of buttercream to glue down the paper onto a piping nail. For the roses, place a small cone of very thick buttercream in the middle of the square. Add bits of yellow in the middle for added dimension. Pipe the petals using a 127 tip.



9. Pipe a thick layer of frosting between each layer. Cover the cake in frosting.

10. Use a bench scraper and offset spatula to smooth out the cake. Transfer to the fridge to chill for about 10 minutes or until the frosting is a bit set. If you're in a warm climate, let your cake chill for even longer!



11. Using your hand, scoop crumbs onto the side and top of the cake until it's completely covered.

12. Arrange the flowers on top of the cake. Pipe in leaves using the green buttercream.





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measure your flour correctly. Measuring too much flour to the recipe is the most

common mistake. The best, and easiest way to measure flour is by using a scale. If you don't have one then fluff your flour with a spoon, sprinkle it into your measuring cup, and use a knife to level it off.

- If you're not using 6-inch pans, double the recipe for 8-inch pans or triple the recipe for 9-inch pans.
- Skip the food coloring if you want a great tasting cake that isn't red.
- To get **FLAT** layers that are moist inside and out try using cake strips! You can buy a set on the [shop page](#) or make your own from foil and paper towels at home. I made a whole [blog post on it](#) so check it out if you're interested!
- For nice *uniform crumbs* for decorating use the fine grater, or just whip out that cheese grater!
- This red velvet cake recipe also makes an **AWESOME sheet cake**! You'll save tons of time and you can pour less sugar into the frosting since you won't have to worry about consistency. I would use approximately a 9×13 inch pan if you're making this as a sheet cake.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### IS A RED VELVET CAKE JUST A CHOCOLATE CAKE?

It's a much lighter chocolate cake with a tangy note from the cream cheese frosting. Some people have stopped adding chocolate to the batter as it interferes with the



## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHOCOLATE CAKE AND RED VELVET CAKE?

Aside from having much less chocolate taste, a red velvet cake will also have vinegar and buttermilk in the batter, which reacts with the leavening agents to give you a fluffier cake. Originally the cakes had a dusty maroon hue from the acid reacting with cocoa powder but as time went on that became a bright red color with the addition of red dye to the batter.

## WHAT IS THE FLAVOR LIKE?

Red velvet cake is indeed a very mild chocolate flavor since it possesses very little cocoa powder. The main flavor note actually comes from the frosting. You're getting bites of fluffy moist cake with a very creamy delicate frosting giving a really wonderful mouthfeel.

## IF YOU LOVE THIS RECIPE TRY THESE OUT!

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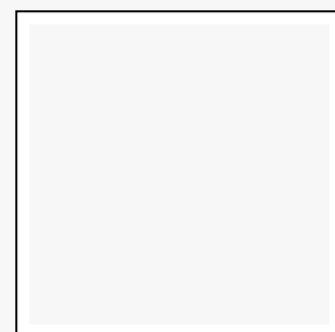


If you've tried this red velvet cake recipe then don't forget to rate the recipe and let me know how you got on in the comments below, I love hearing from you!

## Best Red Velvet Cake

A light chocolate cake with a moist, fluffy crumb and decadent cream cheese frosting.

 <b>Course</b>	Dessert
 <b>Cuisine</b>	American
 <b>Prep Time</b>	15 minutes
 <b>Cook Time</b>	35 minutes
 <b>Total Time</b>	50 minutes
 <b>Servings</b>	10
 <b>Calories</b>	370kcal
 <b>Author</b>	John Kanell



 Print



5 from 1102 votes

## Ingredients

### INGREDIENTS:

#### For the Cake:

- ☐ ½ cup butter 113 grams, room temperature,
- ☐ 2 tsp vanilla extract 10mL
- ☐ 1 cup buttermilk 240ml, room temperature



- ☐ 2 ½ cups flour 300g
- ☐ 1 ½ cups granulated sugar 300g
- ☐ 2 tsp powdered red food coloring
- ☐ 1 tsp kosher salt 6g
- ☐ 1 tsp baking soda 6g

**For the Cream Cheese Frosting:**

- ☐ 3 sticks butter 340g, room temperature unsalted
- ☐ 1 ½ lb confectioners sugar 550g, sifted
- ☐ 16 oz cream cheese 455g, room temperature
- ☐ 1 tsp vanilla extract 5mL
- ☐ 1 pinch kosher salt

**For the American Buttercream:**

- ☐ 1/2 cup unsalted butter 113g, room temperature
- ☐ 1 ½ cups Confectioners sugar 550g, sifted
- ☐ 1/2 tsp rose water 2mL
- ☐ pink, yellow, orange food coloring
- ☐ matcha powder

**Instructions****INSTRUCTIONS:****For the Cake:**

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Butter and cocoa powder three 6-inch cake pans.
2. In a standing mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, cream your room temperature butter. Add in sugar and mix on medium until combined.
3. Add eggs in one at a time and beat. Add vanilla extract.
4. Add red food coloring and vinegar to the buttermilk.



7. Add ½ of the dry and ½ of the wet to the butter mixture until combined.
8. Add the red buttermilk mixture and mix until combined.
9. Pour the batter into three prepared pans. Add any extra batter to a cupcake paper. This will be used for the crumble. Add damp baking strips.
10. Bake for about 30-35 minutes or until the centers are springy to the touch. When done, let them cool in their pans for about 5 minutes, then dump them out onto a wire rack.
11. Bake the crumble cupcake for about 15-20 minutes.

### **For the Cream Cheese Frosting:**

1. Cream the butter. Sift confectioners sugar into a large bowl.
2. Add room temperature cream cheese to the creamed butter. Add vanilla and a pinch of salt. Beat together.
3. Add the confectioners sugar in cups. Mix until combined. If you're wanting a stronger buttercream, keep adding more sifted confectioners sugar until it's stiff. Transfer buttercream to a piping bag and snip off the tip.

### **For the American Buttercream:**

1. In a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, cream the room temperature butter until smooth.
2. Sift in the confectioner's sugar. You can add the sugar in two batches.
3. Beat until you get to a desired consistency. Add a few drops of rose water. Make sure the buttercream is thick.
4. Dye a few batches yellow, soft pink and pink. Use some matcha powder to create a natural leaf color. Transfer the green buttercream to a bag fitted with a 68 tip.
5. Transfer buttercream to piping bag fitted with a 120 and 127 tip to make the petals.



7. For the roses, place a small cone of very thick buttercream in the middle of the square.

8. Add bits of yellow in the middle for added dimension. Pipe the petals using a 120 and 127 tip.

### For the Assembly:

1. To create the crumbs, you can either break up the cupcake by hand or use a cheese grater. I find that using the grater gives you a more consistent crumb for decorating.
2. Pipe a thick layer of cream cheese frosting between each layer. Cover the cake in frosting.
3. Use a bench scraper and offset spatula to smooth out the cake. Transfer to the fridge to chill for about 10 minutes or until the frosting is a bit set. If you're in a warm climate, let your cake chill for even longer!
4. Using your hand, scoop crumbs onto the side and top of the cake until it's completely covered.
5. Arrange the flowers on top of the cake. Pipe in leaves using the green buttercream.

### Video







## Notes

- If you're not using 6-inch pans, double the recipe for 8-inch pans or triple the recipe for 9-inch pans.
- Skip the food coloring if you want a great tasting cake that isn't red.
- To get FLAT layers that are moist inside and out try using cake strips! You can buy a set online or make your own from foil and paper towels at home. I made a whole [blog post on it](#) so check it out if you're interested!
- For nice *uniform crumbs* for decorating use the fine grater, or just whip out that cheese grater!

## Nutrition

Serving: 3oz | Calories: 370kcal | Carbohydrates: 49g | Protein: 4g | Fat: 18g | Saturated Fat: 9g | Cholesterol: 15mg | Sodium: 390mg | Sugar: 37g | Vitamin A: 200IU | Vitamin C: 6.6mg | Iron: 1.4mg

\*[Nutrition Disclaimer](#)



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Abi says

February 10, 2022 at 9:21 am

Hi John

Thanks for this recipe – I've not made it yet as there's part of the recipe I don't understand. It's probably me being really thick, but could you explain the following please.

In the steps for the cake you say:

7. Add ½ of the \*dry\* and ½ of the \*wet\* to the butter mixture until combined.  
then

8. Add the red buttermilk mixture and mix until combined.

So in step 7 you add half of the \*dry\* flour mixture plus half of the \*wet\* red buttermilk mixture – is that what you mean by wet and dry?

In step 8 you say to add the red buttermilk mixture – I'm assuming this means other half of the \*wet\* – is that correct?

When do you add the other half of the \*dry\*?

Thanks in advance for your reply.

Abi 😊

Reply



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Thanks for stopping by! I'm John Kanell, a husband, dad to twins Lachlan and George, Los Angeles native, and an avid baker and cooker of all things delicious thanks to a life long education from my mother. This blog is where I share all of my kitchen creations!

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