

# Coffee-Praline Crunch Ice Cream Cake

By Samantha Seneviratne

**YIELD** 8 to 10 servings

**TIME** 25 minutes, plus at least 5 hours' cooling and freezing

Inspired by butter-pecan ice cream, this cake combines crunchy praline with graham crackers, coffee ice cream and fudge sauce to make an impressive, but easy to assemble dessert. Store-bought pralines are perfect here, but if you can't find them, you can [make them from scratch](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1013403-microwave-pralines) (<https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1013403-microwave-pralines>) with pantry staples. While they can be a little tricky, even a failed praline tastes great nestled in an ice cream cake, but toffee brickle or even just plain chopped nuts could stand in for the praline, too. While you could certainly buy fudge sauce, it's the one component that is definitely better homemade, just sweet enough and deeply chocolatey. Make a double batch for future sundaes.

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## INGREDIENTS

FOR THE FUDGE SAUCE:

**1½ cups/355 milliliters heavy cream**  
**¾ cup/145 grams light or dark brown sugar**  
**2 tablespoons unsalted butter**  
**½ teaspoon salt**  
**¾ cup/70 grams Dutch-process or natural cocoa, sifted**  
**1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract**

FOR ASSEMBLY:

**Nonstick cooking spray**  
**1½ quarts/48 ounces coffee ice cream (about 3 pints)**  
**10 graham crackers (about 6**

## PREPARATION

### Step 1

Prepare the fudge sauce: Set a fine-mesh sieve over a medium bowl. In a medium saucepan, combine the heavy cream, sugar, butter and salt. Cook over medium heat, stirring, until the butter is melted and the sugar has dissolved, about 2 minutes.

### Step 2

Whisk in the cocoa powder and cook for another minute or two, whisking occasionally, until the mixture is thick and glossy. Run the sauce through the sieve into the bowl, working out any lumps directly in the sieve. Stir in vanilla. Let cool completely, about 1 hour. (You should have about 2 cups.) About 30 minutes before you assemble the cake, remove the ice cream from the refrigerator to soften.

### Step 3

To assemble the cake, spray a 9-by-5-inch loaf pan lightly with nonstick cooking spray. (This is just to help keep the plastic in place.) Press plastic wrap into the pan, making it as smooth as possible against the bottom and sides of the pan, leaving a 3-inch overhang on each of the two long sides.

ounces/160 grams)

**2 cups/340 grams chopped  
store-bought or homemade  
praline  
(<https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1013403-microwave-pralines>), plus more for  
serving**

**¾ cup/180 milliliters cold  
heavy cream, whipped to stiff  
peaks just before serving**

#### Step 4

Spread one third of the softened ice cream (about 2 cups) evenly over the bottom of the pan. (If your ice cream is still too firm to spread, cut it into slices, arrange them in a layer and smooth using an offset spatula.) Lay 3 crackers over the top, breaking them to fit as needed. Top with ⅓ of the fudge sauce (about ⅔ cup), using an offset spatula to spread evenly, and half of the praline, patting into an even layer. Top with another ⅓ of the ice cream, 3 more crackers, ⅓ more fudge sauce and the remaining praline. Finish with the remaining ⅓ of ice cream and 4 more crackers. Use the plastic overhang to wrap the cake up tightly and freeze until firm, at least 4 hours and preferably overnight.

#### Step 5

To serve, unwrap the plastic wrap, then quickly rub the outside of the pan with a warm, moistened kitchen towel to loosen. Flip out onto a serving plate and remove the plastic wrap. Top with whipped cream and more chopped praline. Cut slices with a knife dipped in hot water. (If too hard to slice, let sit for a few minutes to soften.) Serve with the remaining fudge sauce, warmed, if desired.

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#### PRIVATE NOTES

Leave a Private Note on this recipe and see it here.

12/31/22 Good fudge sauce  
Used mint ice cream, 2x recipe in 8:1 → 9:1 pan  
Deeper stacked Remains' bottom was nice