



Chocolate Semifreddo

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

For a chocolate semifreddo that's rich and creamy but isn't overly complicated, we started by preparing a custard-style base of whole eggs, sugar, cream, and water directly on the stovetop (rather than over a fussy water bath). We conveniently melted the chocolate by straining the hot custard directly over it. To ensure a rich, creamy, and sliceable semifreddo that was also cold and refreshing, we had to balance fat and water: Using whole eggs instead of yolks and cutting the cream in the custard base with a bit of water were key. Garnishing the semifreddo with a sweet cherry sauce and crunchy candied nuts added contrast and made for an elegant presentation.

INGREDIENTS

- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped fine
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon instant espresso powder
- 3 large eggs
- 5 tablespoons sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

INSTRUCTIONS

The *semifreddo* needs to be frozen for at least 6 hours before serving. We developed this recipe with our favorite dark chocolate, Ghirardelli 60% Cacao Bittersweet Chocolate Premium Baking Bar. Do not whip the heavy cream until the chocolate mixture has cooled. If the semifreddo is difficult to release from the pan, run a thin offset spatula around the edges of the pan or carefully run the sides of the pan under hot water for 5 to 10 seconds. For tips on folding in the whipped cream, see "The Best Way to Fold," below. If frozen overnight, the semifreddo should be tempered before serving for the best texture. To temper, place slices on individual plates or a large tray, and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Serve

SERVES 12

- 2** cups heavy cream,
chilled
- ¼** cup water

the semifreddo as is or with our Cherry Sauce. For some crunch, sprinkle each serving with Quick Candied Nuts.

1. Lightly spray loaf pan with vegetable oil spray and line with plastic wrap, leaving 3-inch overhang on all sides. Place chocolate in large heatproof bowl; set fine-mesh strainer over bowl and set aside. Stir vanilla and espresso powder in small bowl until espresso powder is dissolved.

2. Whisk eggs, sugar, and salt in medium bowl until combined. Heat ½ cup cream (keep remaining 1½ cups chilled) and water in medium saucepan over medium heat until simmering. Slowly whisk hot cream mixture into egg mixture until combined. Return mixture to saucepan and cook over medium-low heat, stirring constantly and scraping bottom of saucepan with rubber spatula, until mixture is very slightly thickened and registers 160 to 165 degrees, about 5 minutes. Do not let mixture simmer.

3. Immediately pour mixture through strainer set over chocolate. Let mixture stand to melt chocolate, about 5 minutes. Whisk until chocolate is melted and smooth, then whisk in vanilla-espresso mixture. Let chocolate mixture cool completely, about 15 minutes.

4. Using stand mixer fitted with whisk attachment, beat remaining 1½ cups cream on low speed until bubbles form, about 30 seconds. Increase speed to medium and beat until whisk leaves trail, about 30 seconds. Increase speed to high and continue to beat until nearly doubled in volume and whipped cream forms soft peaks, 30 to 45 seconds longer.

5. Whisk one-third of whipped cream into chocolate mixture. Using rubber spatula, gently fold remaining whipped cream into chocolate mixture until incorporated and no streaks of whipped cream remain. Transfer mixture to prepared pan and spread evenly with rubber spatula. Fold overhanging

plastic over surface. Freeze until firm, at least 6 hours.

6. When ready to serve, remove plastic from surface and invert pan onto serving plate. Remove plastic and smooth surface with spatula as necessary. Dip slicing knife in very hot water and wipe dry. Slice semifreddo $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick, transferring slices to individual plates and dipping and wiping knife after each slice. Serve immediately. (Semifreddo can be wrapped tightly in plastic wrap and frozen for up to 2 weeks.)

Technique: The Best Way to Fold

When folding an aerated ingredient, such as whipped cream, into a dense mixture as in our Chocolate Semifreddo recipe, we first whisk in part of the aerated component to lighten and loosen the dense ingredient before folding in the rest of the aerated ingredient. We found that this lightening technique gave our finished semifreddo a smooth texture and roughly halved the number of folds required to combine the whipped cream and custard (30 folds versus 57). Follow the steps below for efficient folding.



1. In large, wide bowl, whisk approximately one-third of whipped component into denser base component until just combined.



2. Add remaining whipped component. Using flexible rubber spatula, start in center of bowl and cut through both components to bottom of bowl.



3. Pull spatula toward you, scraping along bottom and up side of bowl to edge.



4. Once spatula has been lifted out of mixture, rotate it so any mixture clinging to blade falls back into center of bowl.



5. Rotate bowl quarter turn and repeat folding process until components are just combined, scraping down sides of bowl as needed.