

martha stewart

The Ultimate Devil's Food Cake

Not for the faint of heart, our version of devil's food cake is infused with melted chocolate (in addition to the usual cocoa powder) and sour cream to create a richer chocolate flavor and help it stay moist. Get our step-by-step guide here.



Yuki Sugiura

Ingredients

3 sticks unsalted butter, room temperature, plus more for pans

1 cup boiling water

3/4 cup unsweetened Dutch-process cocoa powder

4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped (3/4 cup)

3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

3/4 teaspoon baking soda

1 1/2 teaspoons coarse salt

2 cups packed light-brown sugar

4 large eggs, room temperature

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

1 cup sour cream

6 1/4 cups Chocolate Swiss Meringue Buttercream Frosting

Directions

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Butter two 9-inch round cake pans. Line bottoms with parchment rounds; butter parchment. Stir together boiling water, cocoa, and chocolate in a bowl. Let cool 10 minutes. Whisk together flour, baking powder and soda, and salt in another bowl.

In a mixing bowl, beat butter with sugar on medium-high until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes. Beat in eggs, one at a time, scraping down sides of bowl. Beat in vanilla, then chocolate mixture. Reduce speed to low; beat in flour mixture in two additions, alternating with sour cream, until just combined.

Divide batter evenly between prepared pans, smoothing tops with an offset spatula. Bake until a tester inserted in centers comes out with moist crumbs attached, 35 to 40 minutes.

Let cakes cool in pans on a wire rack 20 minutes. Turn out onto rack, top-sides up; let cool completely. With a serrated knife, trim tops of cakes so they're level.

Line the edges of a cake stand or plate with strips of parchment. Place one cake layer on stand, trimmed-side up, and spread 1 1/2 cups buttercream evenly over top. Top with remaining cake layer, trimmed-side down.

Spread a thin layer of buttercream over top and sides. Refrigerate until firm, about 30 minutes (this ensures a crumb-

free finish). Spread remaining frosting evenly over top and sides. Cake can be stored in refrigerator up to 1 day; bring to room temperature before serving.

Cook's Notes

Dutch-process cocoa powder produces darker, smoother-tasting chocolate than the natural variety.

Variations

If you like your frosting sweeter and fluffier, you'll be tempted by the cloud-like **Seven-Minute Frosting**, which is often paired with devil's food cakes.

Or, for a purely chocolate finish, try whipped chocolate ganache: Chop 24 ounces bittersweet chocolate into 1/4-inch pieces; transfer to a heatproof bowl. Heat cream in a saucepan just until simmering. Pour over chocolate; let sit for 2 minutes, then stir to combine. Let cool completely, stirring occasionally. Whisk chocolate mixture until lightened; do not overmix. Use immediately. (Makes about 6 cups.)