

Chocolate Layer Cake with Chocolate Buttercream (Popular Recipe!)

Cook: 23–26 minutes

A super moist, deeply chocolate two-layer cake with a light, fudgy crumb, finished with silky chocolate buttercream. Optional chocolate chips add a final hit of texture and triple-chocolate decadence.

Ingredients

- 1 3/4 cups (219 g) all-purpose flour (spooned and leveled)
- 3/4 cup (62 g) unsweetened natural cocoa powder
- 1 3/4 cups (350 g) granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons espresso powder (optional)
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) vegetable oil (or canola oil or melted coconut oil)
- 2 large eggs (at room temperature)
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup (240 ml) buttermilk (at room temperature)
- 1 cup (240 ml) strong hot coffee (freshly brewed; regular or decaf (or use hot water))
- 1 1/4 cups (282 g) unsalted butter (softened to room temperature)
- 3 1/2 cups (420 g) confectioners' sugar
- 3/4 cup (62 g) unsweetened cocoa powder (natural or dutch process)
- 3–5 tablespoons (45–75 ml) heavy cream (at room temperature (or half-and-half or milk))
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- as desired semi-sweet chocolate chips (for decoration (optional))

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (177°C). Grease two 9-inch round cake pans, line with parchment paper rounds, then grease the parchment.
2. Make the cake: In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, cocoa powder, granulated sugar, baking soda, baking powder, salt, and espresso powder (if using).
3. In a separate bowl (or using a mixer), whisk the oil, eggs, and vanilla until combined. Add the buttermilk and mix until combined.

4. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients, add the hot coffee (or hot water), and whisk or beat on low speed until the batter is completely combined. Batter will be thin.
5. Divide the batter evenly between the prepared pans.
6. Bake for 23–26 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
7. Cool the cakes in the pans on a wire rack for about 30 minutes, then remove from the pans and cool completely.
8. Make the chocolate buttercream: Beat the softened butter until smooth and creamy. Gradually add confectioners' sugar and cocoa powder, then add 3 tablespoons cream, salt, and vanilla; beat until light and creamy, adjusting with additional cream to thin or confectioners' sugar to thicken as needed.
9. Assemble: If needed, level the cooled cake layers. Place one layer on a serving plate, spread frosting on top, add the second layer, and frost the top and sides.
10. Optional: Decorate with semi-sweet chocolate chips.

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