

Old-Fashioned Chocolate Layer Cake

Recipe by: Marcel Desaulniers

Makes 12 servings

1/2 lb., plus 2 Tbsp. butter, divided
8 egg yolks
1 1/4 cups sugar, divided
6 egg whites
1 1/2 cups cake flour, sifted
10 oz. finely grated semi-sweet chocolate, divided

Icing:

1/2 lb. unsalted butter
3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa
1/4 tsp. salt
4 cups powdered sugar
1/2 cup half and half
1 tsp. vanilla

Cake:

Melt 2 Tbsp. butter and lightly coat insides of two 9-inch round cake pans. Line bottom of each pan with parchment, then lightly coat parchment with more melted butter. Set aside. Preheat oven to 325 deg. F.

Heat 1 inch of water in bottom half of double boiler over medium heat. Place 1/2 lb. butter in top half of boiler. Heat butter slowly, stirring continuously until it is melted, but not separated. Remove from heat.

Place yolks and 3/4 cup sugar in bowl of electric mixer fitted with balloon whip. Whisk on high until slightly thickened and lemon-colored, about 1 minute. Adjust mixer speed to low and continue to mix. Meanwhile, hand-whisk egg whites in separate large stainless or copper bowl until soft peaks form, about 3 minutes. Add remaining 1/2 C. sugar to egg whites and continue to whisk until stiff but not dry, about 2 to 3 minutes.

Gradually add flour to egg yolks while mixing on low. Add melted butter and continue to mix on low for 10 seconds. Increase speed to medium and mix 5 seconds. Remove bowl from mixer. With rubber spatula mix a third of beaten egg whites into yolks. Gentle fold in remaining egg whites and 8 oz. grated chocolate.

Divide batter between prepared pans, spreading evenly, and bake until toothpick test says they're done, about 25 to 30 minutes. Cool cakes in pans 20 minutes. Invert pans on rack and let cake rounds cool to room temp, about 20 minutes. Remove parchment from layers and refrigerate cake 30 minutes.

Icing:

Place butter, cocoa and salt in bowl of electric mixer fitted with paddle. Cream mixture on low until thoroughly combined, about 3 minutes. Add p. sugar, cream and vanilla. Combine on low for 10 seconds. Increase speed to medium and beat 10 seconds. Adjust speed to high and beat until icing is light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Remove from mixer and keep at room temp. until needed.

To assemble cake, slice each cake horizontally into 2 equal layers. Place 1 Tbsp. icing in center of 1 cake layer. Place second layer of cake onto dab of icing and gently press into place. Evenly spread 3/4 C. icing over second layer. Repeat steps for remaining layers. After top cake layer is in place, spread remaining icing evenly over top and sides of cake. Press reserved 2 oz. grated chocolate into icing on sides of cakes, coating evenly.