

Whipped Cream Cake

Serves: 8 to 10

Baking Time: 25 to 35 minutes

This unusual old-time recipe was sent to me by chef Anthony Stella, a restaurateur in Delaware, who asked if I could perform a makeover on it. What intrigued both of us about the recipe was that at first glance it seemed to contain no butter or oil. But on closer analysis, I discovered that the butterfat contained in the cream was more than equal to the usual amount of butter added. My makeover involved a nip and tuck, decreasing the sugar and baking powder and increasing the salt to compensate for the saltiness previously provided by a higher amount of baking powder. I also increased the overall yield by one and a half times and baked the cake in a fluted tube pan to give it an attractive appearance and more center support. The result is a perfectly even and exceptionally moist and tender cake.

Batter

	VOLUME	WEIGHT	
cake flour (or bleached all-purpose flour)	2¼ cups (or 2 cups), sifted into the cup and leveled off	8 ounces	225 grams
baking powder	2 teaspoons	2 teaspoons	2 teaspoons
salt	¾ teaspoon	¾ teaspoon	¾ teaspoon
heavy cream, cold (see Notes, page 30)	1½ cups (12 fluid ounces)	12.3 ounces	348 grams
3 large eggs, at room temperature	½ cup plus 1½ tablespoons (4.7 fluid ounces)	5.3 ounces	150 grams
pure vanilla extract	1 teaspoon	1 teaspoon	1 teaspoon
superfine sugar	1 cup plus 2 tablespoons	8 ounces	225 grams

Special Equipment

One 10-cup fluted metal tube pan, coated with baking spray with flour

Preheat the Oven

Twenty minutes or more before baking, set an oven rack in the lower third of the oven and preheat the oven to 375°F/190°C (350°F/175°C if using a dark pan).

Mix the Dry Ingredients

In a medium bowl, whisk together the cake flour, baking powder, and salt and then sift them together to make the mixture easier to incorporate.

Mix the Liquid Ingredients

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk beater, whip the cream, starting on low speed, gradually raising the speed to medium-high as it thickens, until stiff peaks form when the beater is raised.

In a medium bowl, whisk the eggs and vanilla just until lightly combined. On medium-high speed, gradually beat the egg mixture into the whipped cream. The mixture will thicken into mayonnaise consistency (unless high-butterfat cream is used). Gradually beat in the sugar. It should take about 30 seconds to incorporate it.

Make the Batter

Add half the flour mixture to the cream mixture and, with a large silicone spatula, stir and fold in the flour until most of it disappears. Add the rest of the flour mixture and continue folding and mixing until all traces of flour have disappeared. Using a silicone spatula or spoon, scrape the batter into the prepared pan. Run a small metal spatula or dull knife blade through the batter to prevent large air bubbles, avoiding the bottom of the pan. Smooth the surface evenly with a small metal spatula.

Bake the Cake

Bake for 25 to 35 minutes, or until a wooden toothpick inserted between the tube and the side comes out completely clean and the cake springs back when pressed lightly in the center. The cake should start to shrink from the sides of the pan only after removal from the oven.

Cool and Unmold the Cake

Let the cake cool in the pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. With a small metal spatula, loosen the top edges of the cake and invert the cake onto a wire rack that has been coated lightly with nonstick cooking spray. Cool completely. The cake requires no adornment, but I love to serve it with a light dusting of powdered sugar or a large dollop of lightly sweetened Whipped Cream (page 115).

Notes: Do not chill the bowl and beaters for the heavy cream because the eggs will not emulsify as readily if the whipped cream is too cold.

High-butterfat (40 percent) heavy cream produces a finer, more tender crumb. This cream is generally available only to bakeries and restaurants, but it is certainly worth asking your local baker to sell you a container.

Rose Red Velvet Cake

Serves : 8 to 10

Baking Time: 25 to 35 minutes

I long resisted the charms of this cake, believing it to be merely a layer cake tinted red with a bottle of food coloring. But when several people on my blog sang its praises, I decided to investigate it more thoroughly. It turns out that there is more to this cake than its shocking color. This beloved southern cake is traditionally prepared with oil, a mere suspicion of cocoa, and a teaspoon of white vinegar, which raises the acidity of the batter and intensifies its color. The liquid component is usually buttermilk, which is thought to raise the acidity as well, although the baking soda normally used neutralizes most of the acidity and makes the crumb more coarse and the color darker. So, when I created my version of this classic, I used only baking powder to employ the full acidity of the buttermilk, making vinegar unnecessary. I also used half oil and half butter for the flavor-enhancing qualities of butter and the moist, softening quality of the oil. The resulting cake is as flavorful and tender as you can hope for and stays soft enough to eat even straight from the fridge. A heart-shape pan is perfect for Valentine's Day. And the contrast of the white chocolate cream cheese buttercream against the red cake is alluring.

Batter

	VOLUME	Weight	
3 large egg whites, at room temperature	¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons (3 fluid ounces)	3.2 ounces	90 grams
red food color (1 bottle); see Notes,	2 tablespoons (1 fluid ounce)	1 ounce	30 grams

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pure vanilla extract	1½ teaspoons	1½ teaspoons	1½ teaspoons
cake flour (or bleached all-purpose flour)	2 cups (or 1¾ cups), sifted into the cup and leveled off	7 ounces	200 grams
superfine sugar	1 cup	7 ounces	200 grams
baking powder	3 teaspoons	3 teaspoons	3 teaspoons
unsweetened cocoa powder (see Notes, page 85)	1 teaspoon .	1 teaspoon .	1 teaspoon .
salt	½ teaspoon	½ teaspoon	½ teaspoon
canola or safflower oil, at room temperature	¼ cup (2 fluid ounces)	2 ounces	58 grams
unsalted butter (65° to 75°F/19° to 23°C)	4 tablespoons (½ stick)	2 ounces	57 grams
low-fat buttermilk	½ cup (4 fluid ounces)	4.2 ounces	121 grams

Special Equipment One 9 by 2-inch heart-shape or round cake pan (8 to 8^{2/3} cups), encircled with a cake strip, bottom coated with shortening, topped with parchment cut to shape, then coated with baking spray with flour

Preheat the oven

Twenty minutes or more before baking, set an oven rack in the lower third of the oven and preheat the oven to 350°F/175°C.

Mix the Liquid

Ingredients In a medium bowl, whisk the egg whites, red food color, and vanilla just until lightly combined. (Caution: Be careful with the red food color: it stains effectively, but also unmercifully.)

Mix the Dry Ingredients

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder, cocoa, and salt.

Make the Batter In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the flat beater, mix the oil and butter on medium speed for 1 minute. It will not be completely smooth. Add the flour mixture and buttermilk. Mix on low speed until the dry ingredients are moistened. Raise the speed to medium and beat for 1½ minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Starting on medium-low speed, gradually add the egg mixture to the batter in two parts, beating on medium speed for 30 seconds after each addition to incorporate the ingredients and strengthen the structure. Using a silicone spatula, scrape the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the surface evenly with a small offset spatula.

Bake the Cake

Bake for 25 to 35 minutes, or until the wire cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean and the cake springs back when pressed lightly in the center. The cake should start to shrink from the sides of the pan only after removal from the oven.

Cool and Unmold the Cake

Let the cake cool in the pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Run a small metal spatula between the sides of the pan and the cake, pressing firmly against the pan, and invert the cake onto a wire rack that has been coated lightly with nonstick cooking spray. To prevent splitting, reinvert the cake so that the top side is up. Cool completely.

Dreamy Creamy White Chocolate Frosting
 Makes : almost 1 cup/7.6 ounces/216 grams

	VOLUME	WEIGHT	
white chocolate containing cocoa butter, chopped		. 3 ounces	85 grams
cream cheese, softened but still cool		. 4 ounces	113 grams
unsalted butter, softened but still cool (65°F/19°C)	2 tablespoons	1 ounce	28 grams
crème fraîche or sour cream	½ tablespoon	0.2 ounce	7 grams
almond extract	⅛ teaspoon	⅛ teaspoon	⅛ teaspoon

Melt the White Chocolate

Heat the chocolate until almost completely melted. Use a small microwavable bowl, stirring with a silicone spatula every 15 seconds (or use the top of a double boiler set over hot, not simmering, water, stirring often—do not let the bottom of the container touch the water).

Remove the white chocolate from the heat and, with the silicone spatula, stir until fully melted. Allow it to cool until it is no longer warm to the touch but is still fluid.

Make the Frosting

In a food processor, process the cream cheese, butter, and crème fraîche for a few seconds until smooth and creamy. Scrape down the sides. Add the cooled melted white chocolate and pulse it in a few times until it is smoothly incorporated. Add the almond extract and pulse it in.

Highlights for Success

Use white chocolate containing cocoa butter, such as Green & Black’s with vanilla seeds or Valrhona.

The frosting becomes more firm in the refrigerator.

For a whiter frosting without the subtle flavor of the white chocolate, you can replace the white chocolate with 1 cup (lightly spooned into the cup)/4 ounces/115 grams powdered sugar and ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract.

Compose the Cake

When the cake is completely cool, set it on a serving plate. Frost the top with swirls of buttercream.

Notes

Some people have a problem with the idea of using red food color and use beet juice in its place. In recipes using baking soda, the beet juice would turn brown, but with this highly acidic batter, the crumb will stay red, though not as pretty a red as offered by the

food color. The best way to harvest beet juice is to roast the well-washed beets in their skins, leaving an inch of root and stems, in an aluminum foil package at 350°/175°C for about 45 minutes for medium beets, up to about 1 hour and 15 minutes for large ones. Remove the beets and use the foil to pour the beet juice into a small container.

For a distinct chocolate flavor, you can use up to ¼ cup cocoa/0.7 ounce/21 grams, sifted before measuring, but decrease the flour by the same amount. The color will be a much darker red.

German Chocolate Cake

Serves : 14 to 16

Baking Time: 25 to 35 minutes

I used to think German Chocolate Cake was too sweet. Then one day after skiing in Utah at Deer Valley, I visited baker Stephanie Kirzus and the Windy Ridge Bakery in Park City and I discovered how absolutely addictive this cake could be. For my version, I started with the classic filling, but then I needed the perfect chocolate cake. I began a quest for a cake that would use oil instead of butter so that it would maintain a good texture when refrigerated but would still be delicious. I based it on a chiffon cake but with less liquid, to give it enough structure so you can bake it without using a tube pan. This cake showcases a breakthrough technique of adding unbeaten egg whites to the batter, which gives the cake the ideal structure (the cake doesn't collapse). Another virtue is that the cake stays soft even when chilled. You can use this batter to make cupcakes (page 303) or even a wedding cake (page 409).

Plan Ahead

Make the filling at least 3 hours before using.

Batter

	VOLUME	Weight	
unsweetened (alkalized) cocoa powder	¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons (sifted before measuring)	2.3 ounces	66 grams
boiling water	½ cup (4 fluid ounces)	4.2 ounces	118 grams
canola or safflower oil, at room temperature	½ cup (4 fluid ounces)	3.7 ounces	108 grams
about 4 large eggs, separated, plus 2 whites, at room temperature:			
yolks	¼ cup (2 fluid ounces)	2.6 ounces	74 grams
whites	¾ cup (6 fluid ounces)	6.3 ounces	180 grams
pure vanilla extract	1 teaspoon	1 teaspoon	1 teaspoon
cake flour (see Note, page 139)	¾ cup (sifted into the cup and leveled off)	2.6 ounces	75 grams

bleached all-purpose flour	$\frac{2}{3}$ cup (sifted into the cup and leveled off)	2.6 ounces	75 grams
superfine sugar	1½ cups	10.6 ounces	300 grams
baking powder	2 teaspoons	2 teaspoons	2 teaspoons
baking soda	1 teaspoon	1 teaspoon	1 teaspoon
salt	$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon	$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon	$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon

Special Equipment

Two 9 by 2-inch round cake pans, encircled with cake strips, bottoms coated with shortening, topped with parchment rounds. (Leave the sides uncoated to prevent the tops of the cakes from shrinking inward.)

Preheat the oven

Twenty minutes or more before baking, set an oven rack in the lower third of the oven and preheat the oven to 350°F/175°C.

Mix the Cocoa and Liquid Ingredients

In the bowl of a stand mixer, by hand, whisk the cocoa and boiling water until smooth. Cover with plastic wrap to prevent evaporation and cool to room temperature, about 30 minutes. To speed cooling, place it in the refrigerator. Bring it to room temperature before proceeding. Add the oil and yolks to the mixer bowl. Attach the whisk beater. Starting on low speed, gradually raise the speed to medium and beat for about 1 minute, or until smooth and shiny, and resembling a buttercream. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Beat in the vanilla for a few seconds.

Mix the Dry Ingredients

In a medium bowl, whisk the cake flour, all-purpose flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Sift the flour mixture onto a large piece of parchment. Add half of the flour mixture to the chocolate mixture and beat on low speed until the dry ingredients are moistened. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Repeat with the remaining flour mixture. Raise the speed to medium-high and beat for 1 minute. Scrape down the sides and the bottom of the bowl. The mixture will be very thick. On low speed, add the egg whites. Gradually raise the speed to medium high and beat for 2 minutes. The batter will now be like a thick soup. Using a silicone spatula, scrape the batter into the prepared pans. Each will be about one-quarter full (17.5 ounces/495 grams).

Bake the Cakes

Bake for 25 to 35 minutes, or until a wooden toothpick inserted in the centers comes out clean and the cakes spring back when pressed lightly in the centers. During baking, the batter will rise almost to the top of the pans and a little higher in the middle. They will start to lower just before the end of baking. To prevent the collapse of the delicate foam structure, while still hot, the cakes must be unmolded as soon as they have baked. Have ready a small metal spatula and three wire racks that have been coated lightly with nonstick cooking spray. Leave the oven on to toast the pecans.

Unmold and Cool the Cakes

Immediately run a small metal spatula between the sides of the pans and the cakes, pressing firmly against the pans, and invert the cakes onto the prepared wire racks. Remove the parchment and immediately reinvert them onto the racks so that the firm upper crusts keep them from sinking. Cool completely.

Note

This cake has essentially the same ratio of ingredients as a layer cake but about double the egg and less baking powder. Cake flour results in more tenderness, and the all-purpose flour offers more moist fudginess, so I like to use a combination of the two. Alternatively, use 1 cup/4 ounces/114 grams bleached all-purpose flour and ½ cup/2.5 ounces/72 grams cornstarch. Use ⅛ teaspoon more baking powder.

Dissolving cocoa in boiling water unlocks all the flavor of the cocoa and produces a moist, light, almost fudgy, and powerfully chocolate cake.

The cake batter is exceptionally thin, and it fills the pans only about one-quarter full but bakes up to the top of the pan.

Classic German Chocolate Cake Filling

Makes: almost 3 cups/27 ounces/760 grams

	VOLUME	Weight	
pecan pieces, broken medium coarse	1 cup	4 ounces	114 grams
sweetened condensed milk (1 can); see Note	1 cup plus 3 tablespoons (9.5 fluid ounces)	14 ounces	400 grams
about 3 large egg yolks	3½ tablespoons (1.7 fluid ounces)	2 ounces	56 grams
unsalted butter, cut into about 4 pieces (65° to 75°F/19° to 23°C)	8 tablespoons (1 stick)	4 ounces	113 grams
pure vanilla extract	1 teaspoon	1 teaspoon	1 teaspoon
Baker's Angel Flake coconut or Mounds	1¾ cups	4.6 ounces	130 grams

Toast the Pecans

Spread the pecans evenly on a baking sheet and bake for about 7 minutes to enhance the flavor. Stir once or twice to ensure even toasting and avoid overbrowning. Set aside.

Make the Filling

In a medium heavy saucepan, whisk together the condensed milk and yolks. Add the butter and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly with a silicone spatula, reaching well to the edges and bottom. As soon as the mixture starts to simmer, lower the heat or occasionally remove the pan from the heat to keep it from cooking too fast or burning. Simmer for about 5 minutes, or until thickened enough to pool slightly on the surface before disappearing (about 175°F/79°C). It still will be pourable. Stir in the vanilla, coconut, and pecans and continue cooking on medium heat for 1 minute. Scrape the mixture into a large bowl. (The mixture will become tan and slightly translucent.) Cover it with a towel and allow it to cool to room temperature, or just barely warm, stirring occasionally to prevent a skin from forming. (It will take about 3 hours at room temperature, but it will reach spreading consistency faster if refrigerated or if stirred over ice water for 5 minutes.) The filling thickens as it cools.

If it is refrigerated for more than 2 hours, it will need to be softened over hot water or heated for a few seconds in the microwave.

Note

If you have only evaporated milk, use one 12-fluid-ounce can/13.2 ounces/372 grams and add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup/5.3 ounces/150 grams sugar. It will take about 25 minutes to reach the proper consistency. This will result in slightly more caramelization.

Compose the Cake

Spread a little filling on a 9-inch cardboard round or serving plate and set the first layer on top. If making the ganache variation below and using the plate, slide a few wide strips of wax paper or parchment under the cake to keep the rim of the plate clean. Frost with half the filling (it will be about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick). Place the second layer on top and press gently down on it, allowing a little of the filling to ooze out the sides. Frost the top layer with the remaining filling, spreading it right up to the edge so that a little oozes luxuriously over the side, but leave the rest of the sides bare. Cover the cake with a cake dome to keep the sides from drying.

Variation

Ganache-Covered German Chocolate Cake

To keep the sides of the cake moist, frost them with Dark Ganache (page 181) before putting the filling on top. For an extra glossy and smooth appearance, refrigerate the cake to set the ganache and then run a metal spatula, first rinsed with hot water, around the sides. If using the paper strips, slowly slide them out from under the cake.