

Dense Is Good Chocolate Cake

(I've enjoyed making this recipe for years. It is from The Cuisine of California by Diane Rossen Worthington, published by Tarcher Press 1983, with significant alterations based on experience. Contributed by Ellen Kirk, Long Beach.)

For cake:

16 ounces semisweet chocolate- up to 70% is good. Use the good stuff, you'll taste it.

¼ cup strong coffee

6 large eggs

½ cup sugar- use raw, not refined white

OPTIONAL 3-4 tablespoons black cocoa powder (available from Baker's Catalog on line)

1 cup whipping cream

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

For chocolate whipped cream:

1 cup whipping cream

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 ounces semisweet chocolate, melted and cooled

For garnish:

10 chocolate covered coffee beans, or chocolate curls or leaves...

Method:

Pre heat oven to 350 F.

Butter a 9 inch spring form pan. Wrap exterior, bottom and sides, of spring form pan with heavy duty aluminum foil. Fit spring form pan inside a roasting or other large pan that will hold the spring form and allow you to create a bain marie: to fill the outer pan with water that will rise half way up the sides of the spring form pan. Set aside.

In a standing mixer, whip 1 cup whipping cream to stiff peaks. Add and whip vanilla until blended. Set aside in refrigerator.

In top of double boiler, combine 16 oz of chocolate and coffee above hot water over a low heat. Leave until melted, stirring occasionally. Or microwave chocolate and coffee for about 1 minute on high. Don't let this stuff burn.

In mixer (don't bother to wash it from left over whipped cream), beat eggs until frothy. Slowly add the sugar and beat until thick and creamy- about 5 minutes until it is a light and lemony colored. Then, if you like, add the cocoa).

Beat chocolate and coffee mixture until shiny and add to eggs. Fold in whipped cream until well combined.

Pour into spring form pan. Add hot water to outer pan, filling until water is half way up the sides of the spring form pan.

Bake about 1 hour- test for doneness like you would a cheese cake, then let it cook a little longer. When judged done (doming, pulling slightly from sides, but center is still pliable), turn off oven and let cake sit in oven for 15 minutes. Then remove cake from oven and let cool on a rack for at least 30 minutes. You can chill the cake, but the texture will change significantly- not a bad thing, just different. Once the cake is fully cooled to at least room temperature, remove sides of spring form. If you feel brave, remove the bottom too, but this can get tricky.

For chocolate whipped cream, whip cream in a chilled bowl until soft peaks form. Add vanilla and whip another minute or until fairly stiff. Fold in cooled chocolate and blend well.

Serve cake and pass chocolate whipped cream separately, or pipe rosettes of chocolate whipped cream on top of the cake and decorate with beans, curls or leaves.