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mississippi mudcake

makes one 11 × 15-inch sheet cake

I remember the first time I had this cake at a friend's birthday party during junior high school. The cake reminded me of my favorite ice cream, rocky road. I could have eaten the entire mud cake by myself— at thirteen years old, I remember thinking it was the best combination of ingredients I had ever tasted! Thank you, Mrs. Foster, for introducing me to one of my very favorite desserts.

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, plus more for greasing the pan

3/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons Dutch-processed cocoa powder

2 1/4 cups sugar

2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking soda

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 1/2 cups whole milk

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 large eggs

1 cup semisweet chocolate chips

2 cups miniature marshmallows

1 cup chopped pecans, toasted (see Hint/below)

1/4 recipe Chocolate Ganache (page 132/recipe below), made with semisweet chocolate

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter an 11 × 12 -inch glass baking dish, and dust with 2 tablespoons cocoa powder.

In a large bowl, whisk together the sugar, flour, baking soda, and salt.

In a medium saucepan set over medium heat, whisk together the milk, butter, and the remaining 3/4 cup cocoa until the butter is melted and the mixture is smooth, 7 to 8 minutes. Remove the saucepan from the heat. Add the vanilla and whisk the mixture into the flour mixture.



In a small bowl, whisk the eggs well. Stir them into the flour and milk mixture. Spread the batter into the prepared pan. Sprinkle with the chocolate chips.

Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, 30 to 34 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven and sprinkle the marshmallows and toasted pecans evenly over the top of the cake. Pour the ganache over the marshmallows and pecans, being careful to keep them evenly spread across the top of the cake. Cover and refrigerate overnight before serving.

hint To toast nuts: Spread the nuts out evenly on a rimmed baking sheet. Bake at 350°F for 7 minutes for lightly toasted pecans, or 9 to 10 minutes for a deeper roast. If using sliced and slivered almonds, they should be checked after 5 minutes, as they toast faster.

chocolate ganache

makes 5½ cups

This is the ganache we use at Daisy Cakes between our cake layers and in some of our frostings, except that we make it in giant gallon-sized batches! It's a great recipe using either dark or white chocolate, and it's good as a drizzle over cupcakes and cookies, too.

2 cups heavy whipping cream

1/4 cup light corn syrup

4 cups semisweet chocolate chips or white chocolate chips

In a 2-quart heavy-bottomed saucepan set over medium-high heat, heat the cream until it foams up the sides of the saucepan, 8 to 10 minutes. Whisk in the corn syrup until completely blended. Remove the pan from the heat and add the chocolate chips.

Let sit until the chips melt, 5 minutes. Whisk until smooth. Chill the ganache in the fridge, uncovered, for 3 to 4 hours so that it thickens before using. The ganache will keep in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 7 to 10 days.

Variations

mocha ganache Add 2 tablespoons espresso powder to the scalded cream along with the corn syrup.

mint ganache To a white chocolate ganache, add 1½ teaspoons of mint extract and 2 drops of green food coloring.



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