

Chocolate Cherry Layer Cake

Ingredients

Cake:

- 2 cups sugar
- 7.4 ounces all-purpose flour sifted, 7.4 ounces = 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsweetened cocoa powder sifted
- 2 teaspoons baking soda sifted
- 1 teaspoon baking powder sifted
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 cup strong black coffee
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable oil
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Filling:

- 15 ounces ricotta cheese room temperature, 15 ounces = 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons Grand Marnier
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter melted
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup candied red cherries chopped medium-fine
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup semi-sweet mini chocolate chips

Icing:

- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup powdered sugar

Directions

Grease and flour (with cocoa powder or all-purpose flour) two 9-inch round cake pans.

Preheat oven to 350° F.



CAKE

Sift flour, cocoa, baking soda, and baking powder in mixing bowl. Stir in sugar and salt. With mixer running, add eggs, buttermilk, coffee, vegetable oil, and vanilla.

Beat on medium for about 5 minutes, scraping bowl occasionally, until oil is well-combined in batter.

Batter will be very thin. Divide batter evenly between the two cake pans. Bake 30-35 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Cool 10 minutes, then remove from pans.

FILLING

In mixing bowl, use whisk attachment to combine ricotta cheese, sugar, and Grand Marnier. With mixer running, drizzle in melted butter.

Mix 8-10 minutes or until ricotta is very smooth. Stir in by hand chopped cherries and mini chocolate chips. Transfer to another bowl and set aside.

Wash and dry mixing bowl and whisk attachment.

ICING

In mixing bowl, use whisk attachment to whisk heavy cream and powdered sugar until stiff peaks form.

ASSEMBLE

Slice cake layers in half horizontally.

Use floss or a bread knife to gently cut about an inch into cake all the way around, then continue to work around cake, cutting until cake is evenly cut through.

Place one layer of cake on plate or platter. Spread $\frac{1}{3}$ of the ricotta/cherry filling evenly on top.

Repeat with two more layers. Add last layer to cake and spread whipped cream icing evenly on top. Decorate with additional cherries and colored sugars/sprinkles, if desired.