

Chocolate Almond Cake (Torta Caprese)

Preparation time 45 minutes

Bake time 35-40 minutes

Makes one 23 cm (9 in) cake



Ingredients

- 200 grams (7 ounces or 1¾ sticks) butter
- 200 grams (7 ounces) dark chocolate, chopped or broken into pieces [I used 70% cocoa chocolate]
- 4 eggs, separated
- 165 grams (¾ cup+1 tablespoon) sugar, divided
- 255 grams (9 ounces or 3 cups) almond meal
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons brewed, cold coffee
- (Optional) 2 tablespoons rum [traditionally, a liquor called Strega is used]
- Confectioners' sugar, for dusting

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 190C (375F).
2. Butter a springform cake pan (23cm / 9in) and line the bottom with parchment paper, cut to fit. Butter the parchment. Place the pan on a baking sheet and side aside.
3. Measure all the ingredients.
4. Place the butter and chocolate in a large heatproof bowl and melt the mixture over a *bain-marie* or pot of simmering water. Make sure that the mixture does not have direct contact with the flame/heat or it will burn. When the mixture is melted halfway, remove it from the heat and stir to finish melting the ingredients. (This ensures it's not too hot to add the other ingredients.) Stir until smooth.
5. In a large bowl, beat the egg yolks and half of the sugar until pale and lemon-colored for 3-4 minutes. Fold in the cooled chocolate mixture, salt and almond meal and mix until well combined. Add brewed coffee and rum, if using, and mix until combined.
6. In another large, clean bowl, whip the egg whites until the beginning stage of soft peaks. Slowly add the remaining sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time. Beat well after each addition and gradually increase the speed. Whip the egg whites until stiff peaks form (they should not be dry!).
7. Fold the whipped egg whites gently into the yolk-chocolate mixture, making sure the batter is well blended, light and airy.
8. Immediately pour the mixture into the prepared pan. Smooth out the top with an offset spatula.

9. Bake for 35-40 minutes, until the top appears dry and a skewer inserted in the middle comes out batter-free (a few crumbs are fine). It is important not to overbake this cake so that it retains its moist consistency.
10. Let the cake cool completely in the pan before handling.
11. When ready to serve, undo the sides of the spring form pan and invert the cake onto a plate, taking off the parchment and the springform pan bottom. Dust with confectioners' sugar. Serve with lightly whipped cream, if desired.
12. Store leftovers at room temperature in an airtight container for several days.

Published: 1 April 2021