

Dark Chocolate Ceili Cake with Fig Ganache

Ingredients

Cake:

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plus 4 Tbs. Dutch Process Cocoa Powder (I use Droste.)
- 1 cup strong coffee, cooled.
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plain yogurt
- 3 medium eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup avocado or sunflower oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk
- 3 tsp. vanilla extract



Chocolate Fig Ganache:

- 16 oz. chocolate chips (dark preferred)
- 1 cup whipping cream (I used the alternative Silk Heavy Shipping Cream – dairy free)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fig jam

Chocolate Swiss Meringue Buttercream:

- 3 egg whites
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup unsalted organic butter, cut into cubes.
- 4 oz. dark chocolate chips melted and cooled slightly.

Toppings:

- washed lemon grass leaves (florist); stems wrapped in plastic wrap for extra care.
- washed eucalyptus leaves w/seeds on branches (florist); stems wrapped in plastic wrap for extra care.
- fresh figs, cut in half.
- blackberries
- pomegranate arils (seeds)
- thin golden ribbon for bottom

Directions:

Cake:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and grease and line two 8" pans (or experiment with other sizes) with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, whisk flour, cocoa, sugar, salt, baking powder, and baking soda until combined.
3. In a large bowl, pour coffee, add eggs, yogurt, milk, oil, and vanilla extract and stir to combine.
4. Form a well in the center of the dry ingredients and pour the wet ingredients into the center and stir to combine; evenly divide batter between cake pans and place in oven; bake for 30-35 minutes until a toothpick comes out clean from the center.
5. Let the cakes cool in the pans for ten minutes before removing; transfer cakes to a cooling rack; cool completely; wrap cakes tightly and put in fridge; chill for an hour or more.

Ganache:

1. Place chocolate chips in a large bowl and place cream into a saucepan and place over low heat. Heat cream to a low simmer and immediately pour over the chocolate chips and let sit, undisturbed, for a few minutes; stir the chocolate into cream until smooth; stir in fig jam and set aside.
2. Let ganache sit at room temperature for 3 hours to achieve a spreadable consistency.

Chocolate Swiss Meringue Buttercream:

1. Place egg whites and sugar in a large heatproof bowl.
2. Fill a saucepan with water and bring it to a low simmer and place the bowl over the pan to create a double boiler; whisk the sugar and egg whites together until the sugar dissolves and the mixture becomes opaque; don't heat too aggressively or you'll cook the egg (a bit tricky, but bear with it or start again).
3. Pour the egg white mixture into a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment and whisk the egg white on high until thoroughly cooled; add portions of butter, 3 to 4 at a time, only adding more when the butter dissolves.
4. Whisk until the frosting reaches a spreadable consistency; fold in the melted chocolate and continue to whisk (if not thick enough, place in the fridge for a few minutes and try again).

5. Spread a thick layer of ganache on the bottom layer of cake and place the second on top; smooth away any ganache that squeezes out and transfer cake to the fridge to chill for half an hour.
6. Cover the cake in a thin layer of the buttercream frosting (crumb coat); return the cake to the fridge and chill for another thirty minutes (or if it looks good to go, forget chilling and spread the rest of the cake with the frosting).
7. Frost away and be creative and decorate with all the festive toppings!
Chill until ready to serve.