

*Oven Temperature: 350°F.
Baking Time: 30 to 40 Minutes*

Chocolate Domingo Cake

Serves: 10 to 12

INGREDIENTS	MEASURE	WEIGHT	
		ounces	grams
<i>room temperature</i>	<i>volume</i>		
unsweetened cocoa (Dutch processed) or 1/2 cup non-alkalized cocoa such as Hershey's)	1/4 cup + 3 tablespoons	1.5 ounces	42 grams
sour cream	2/3 cup	5.5 ounces	160 grams
2 large eggs	3 fluid ounces	3.5 ounces	100 grams (out of the shell)
vanilla	1 1/2 teaspoons	•	6 grams
sifted cake flour	1 1/2 cups + 1 tablespoon	5.5 ounces	156 grams
sugar	1 cup	7 ounces	200 grams
baking powder, preferably Rumford	3/4 teaspoon	•	4 grams
baking soda	1/4 teaspoon	•	1.5 grams
salt	1/2 teaspoon	•	3.5 grams
unsalted butter (softened)	14 tablespoons	7 ounces	200 grams

Equipment: One 9-inch by 2-inch cake pan or a 9-inch springform pan, greased, bottom lined with parchment or wax paper, and then sprayed with Baker's Joy or greased again and floured.

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

In a medium bowl whisk together the cocoa, sour cream, eggs, and vanilla until smooth.

In a large mixing bowl combine all the remaining dry ingredients and mix on low speed for 30 seconds to blend. Add the butter and 1/2 the cocoa mixture. Mix on low speed until the dry ingredients are moistened. Increase to medium speed (high speed if using a hand mixer) and beat for 1 1/2 minutes to aerate and develop the cake's structure. Scrape down the sides. Gradually add the remaining cocoa mixture in 2 batches, beating for 20 seconds after each addition to incorporate the ingredients and strengthen the structure. Scrape down the sides.

Scrape the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the surface with a spatula. The pan will be about half full. Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until a tester inserted near the center comes out clean and the cake springs back when pressed lightly in the center. The cake should start to shrink from the sides of the pan only after removal from the oven.

Let the cake cool in the pan on a rack for 10 minutes. Loosen the sides with a small metal spatula and invert onto a greased wire rack. Reinvert so that the top is up and cool completely before wrapping airtight.

Understanding

This formula is similar to All-American Chocolate Torte, but sour cream replaces the water to add a lovely, mellow flavor to the chocolate. Although the protein in sour cream normally acts as a flavor inhibitor in chocolate cakes, the close to double amount of butter (this includes the butterfat in the sour cream) corrects this tendency because it is a superb releaser of other flavors. Butter tenderizes cake, so I decreased the leavening to equal half the leavening power of the All-American Chocolate Torte .

Note: This cake was created at the insistence of my incomparable assistant, David Shamah. He loves the quality that sour cream gives to yellow cake and felt certain it would do something equally wonderful for chocolate unlike milk or buttermilk. He was right; sour cream, it seems, is an exception, and this has become his favorite chocolate cake.

Finished Height: 1 1/2 inches (the top of the cake will be rounded when done and will become perfectly flat on cooling).

Store: Airtight: 2 days room temperature, 5 days refrigerated, 2 months frozen. Texture is most perfectly moist the same day as baking.

Complementary Adornments: A dusting of powdered sugar and a red rose

Serve: Room temperature.