

Mandarin Orange Chocolate Cake

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Ingredients

- 1 ¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1¾ cups sugar
- ¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 Tbsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 cup buttermilk (or 1 cup milk mixed with 1 Tbsp. lemon juice)
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 8 oz. strong chai (or other cinnamon) black tea
- 2-3 dashes hot sauce (optional)
- 1 recipe mandarin orange frosting (see below)
- 1 recipe mandarin orange curd (see below)
- 1 recipe mirror glaze (see below)



Directions

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F. Grease or line two 9" round cake pans with parchment paper.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, cinnamon, baking soda, baking powder, and salt. Set aside.
3. Beat together the buttermilk, oil, eggs, and vanilla until combined. Fold in the dry ingredients just until combined (do not overmix). Stir in the brewed tea and hot sauce.
4. Divide the cake batter between the two prepared cake pans. Drop each pan on the counter several times to release any air bubbles. Bake for 23-27 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
5. Allow the cakes to cool for 15 minutes, then run a sharp knife around the edge. Remove the cakes from the pans and cool them completely on a cooling rack.
6. When the cakes are completely cool, wrap them in plastic wrap and freeze while preparing clementine frosting according to the recipe below.
7. When cakes have firmed in the freezer, level the top of each cake and place one on a serving plate. Spread a thin, smooth layer of frosting on top of the cake and pipe a 1" high dam of frosting around the edge. Carefully spread a layer of clementine curd (see below) inside the dam, then center the second cake on top of it upside down. Frost the top and sides of the entire cake with a thin layer of frosting. Refrigerate the cake for at least 1 hour to set the crumb coat.
8. While the cake is chilling, prepare the mirror glaze (see below).
9. When the crumb coat of frosting is set, use remaining frosting to fill in any holes and smooth the entire surface of the cake. Return the refrigerator until the mirror glaze has reached the required temperature.
10. When the mirror glaze is ready, transfer the cake to a cooling rack set over a roasting pan or rimmed cookie sheet. Carefully pour the glaze onto the center of the cake, letting it drip down the sides and spreading with a spatula as needed. Add drops of liquid food coloring and swirl if desired. Leave the cake on the cooling rack until the mirror glaze has mostly set, then carefully transfer it back to a serving dish. Cut slices with a clean, sharp knife and refrigerate leftovers for up to 5 days.

Mandarin Orange Frosting

Ingredients

- 8 oz. (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup mandarin orange juice
- grated zest of 3 mandarin oranges
- 6-8 cups powdered sugar

Directions

1. In a stand mixer, beat the butter until it is creamy, about 3 minutes. Add 4 cups of powdered sugar and beat until fluffy. Add the clementine juice and zest and beat until smooth and creamy, about 3-5 minutes. Add the remaining powdered sugar, 1 cup at a time, beating for 2 minutes after each addition. Beat on low until desired consistency is reached.

Mandarin Orange Curd

Ingredients

- 6 large egg yolks
- zest of 3 mandarin oranges
- ½ cup mandarin orange juice
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 1 stick cold, unsalted butter, cubed

Directions

1. Set a medium, metal bowl inside a larger bowl filled with ice water. Set aside.
2. In a medium saucepan, whisk together egg yolks, mandarin orange zest, juice, and sugar until smooth. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until the mixture is thick enough to coat the back of a wooden spoon (approximately 5-7 minutes).
3. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the butter one cube at a time until completely smooth.
4. Pour the curd into the medium bowl in the ice bath through a fine-mesh strainer. Let stand until cool, stirring frequently to prevent a skin from forming on top.
5. Press a piece of plastic wrap directly onto the surface of the curd and refrigerate for at least 1 hour before use.

Mirror Glaze

Ingredients

- 3 packets unflavored gelatin (20 grams)
- ¼ cup water
- 7 oz. corn syrup
- 1 cup plus 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar
- ⅔ cup water
- ⅔ cup (½ can) sweetened condensed milk
- 10.5 oz. white chocolate, chopped
- liquid food coloring

Directions

1. Gently stir together gelatin and ¼ cup water in a small bowl and set aside to bloom.
2. In a medium saucepan with candy thermometer attached, stir together sugar, remaining water, and corn syrup and bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat. Once the temperature reaches 217°F, remove the saucepan from the heat and whisk in the gelatin mixture, then the sweetened condensed milk, until smooth.
3. Place the chopped white chocolate in a large, heat-proof bowl and pour the hot mixture over it. Let sit for 5 minutes, then stir until fully-incorporated. If necessary, process on high speed in a food processor until smooth. Transfer the glaze to a container with a pour spout and stir in food coloring if desired.
4. Leave glaze to cool to approximately 85°F, stirring occasionally to prevent a skin from forming, before use.