

## Chocolate Espresso Fudge Cake

<http://userealbutter.com/2008/09/18/chocolate-espresso-fudge-cake-recipe/>

*modified from Death by Chocolate by Marcel Desaulniers*

### **chocolate cake**

4 oz unsweetened chocolate, chopped  
8 tbsps unsalted butter, room temperature  
2 tps unsalted butter, melted (for pan prep)  
2 cups cake flour (I used all-purpose flour at 8500 feet elevation)  
2 tps cake flour (for pan prep)  
2 tps baking soda (I used 1/2 tsp baking soda at 8500 feet elevation)  
1/2 tsp salt  
2 cups light brown sugar, very tightly packed  
4 eggs  
1 tsp pure vanilla extract  
1 cup water  
1 cup sour cream

### **espresso ganache**

1 cup heavy cream  
2 tbsps unsalted butter  
2 tbsps granulated sugar  
8 oz semisweet chocolate, chopped  
1 tbsp instant espresso powder

### **chocolate espresso buttercream**

8 oz semisweet chocolate, chopped  
2 oz unsweetened chocolate, chopped  
2 tps instant espresso powder  
1 lb. unsalted butter, room temperature  
5 egg whites  
1 cup granulated sugar

**Cake:** Preheat oven to 350°F. Heat 1 inch of water in the bottom half of a double boiler over medium heat. Place 4 ounces unsweetened chocolate in the top half of the double boiler and heat for 5 to 6 minutes. Remove from heat and stir until smooth. Lightly coat the insides of 2 9×2-inch cake pans with melted butter. Flour each pan with 1 tsp cake flour, shaking out the excess. Combine together in a sifter the remaining 2 cups of flour, the baking soda, and salt. Sift onto wax paper and set aside. Combine the brown sugar and 8 tablespoons of butter in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a paddle. Beat on low for 3 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl, then beat on high for 2 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl again and beat on high for another 1.5 minutes. Add 4 eggs, one at a time, beating on high for 30 seconds after adding each egg. Scrape down the bowl after each addition, then beat on high for 2 more minutes. Add the melted chocolate and the vanilla. Beat on low for 30 seconds, then scrape down the

bowl. Heat 1 cup water to a boil in a 1 1/2-quart saucepan. While the water is heating, operate the mixer on low while adding a third of the sifted flour and 1/2 cup sour cream; allow to mix for 30 seconds. Add another third of the flour and the remaining sour cream and mix for another 30 seconds. Add the remaining sifted flour and the boiling water and mix for an additional 30 seconds before removing the bowl from the mixer. Use a rubber spatula to finish mixing the batter, until it is smooth and thoroughly combined. Pour the cake batter into the prepared pans, spreading it evenly. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 45 to 50 minutes. Remove the cakes from the oven and cool in the pans for 15 minutes at room temperature. Invert onto cooling racks and refrigerate uncovered until needed. (I didn't refrigerate mine).

**Ganache:** Heat the heavy cream, 2 tablespoons butter, and 2 tablespoons sugar in a 2 1/2-quart saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Bring the mixture to a boil. Place 8 ounces semisweet chocolate and 1 tablespoon instant espresso powder in a stainless steel bowl. Pour the boiling cream over the chocolate and espresso. Let sit for 10 minutes, then stir until smooth. Keep at room temperature until ready to use.

**Buttercream:** Heat 1 inch of water in the bottom half of a double boiler over medium heat. Place 8 ounces semisweet chocolate, 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, and 2 teaspoons espresso powder in top half of double boiler. Allow to heat for 8 to 10 minutes, transfer to a stainless steel bowl and stir until smooth. Set aside until needed.

*Marcel's method:* Place 1 pound of butter in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a paddle. Beat the butter on low for 2 minutes then on medium for 3 minutes. Scrape down sides of the bowl. Beat on high until light and fluffy, about 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer the butter to a large stainless steel bowl. Set aside until needed. Heat 1 inch of water in the bottom half of a double boiler over medium heat. Place 5 egg whites and 1 cup sugar in the top half of the double boiler. Gently whisk the egg whites until they reach a temperature of 120°F, about 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer the heated egg whites to the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a balloon whip. Whisk on high until stiff peaks form, about 4 minutes. Remove from mixer. Fold melted chocolate into the butter, using a rubber spatula to thoroughly combine. Fold in the whipped egg whites until thoroughly combined. Set aside.

*Jen's method:* Place egg whites and sugar in a Kitchenaid mixing bowl. Set bowl over 1 inch of water in a saucepan over medium heat. Whisk gently until mixture reaches 140°F. Remove from heat and set on Kitchenaid mixer with balloon whisk. Whisk on speed 4 until stiff. Turn down whip speed to 3rd and whip until cool to the touch (this takes a while – should be cooler than your hand). Change to a paddle and gradually add soft butter by tablespoon pieces. Mix to emulsify. Once desired consistency has been reached, fold in cooled chocolate until well incorporated.

**Assembly:** Trim off domed tops of the two cakes. Slice each cake horizontally into 2 equal layers. Place the top layer of a cake onto the bottom of a closed springform pan. Evenly spread 1 1/2 cups of buttercream over cake in the pan. Place a layer of cake over the buttercream and gently press into place. Pour 1 1/4 cups of the ganache over

the cake layer, spreading evening to the edges. Refrigerate remaining ganache. Place the top layer of the second cake on the top of the ganache and press into place. Spread 1 1/2 cups buttercream evenly over this layer. Place the remaining bottom cake layer, cut side down, onto the buttercream and gently press into place. Cover the entire cake and pan with plastic wrap and freeze for 1 hour. Fill a pastry bag fitted with star tip with 1 1/2 cups buttercream. Remove the cake from the freezer. Cut around inside edges to release the cake. Using a cake spatula, evenly spread the remaining buttercream over the top and sides of the cake. Refrigerate for 1 hour. Fill a pastry bag fitted with star tip with remaining ganache. Decorate the cake as desired. Refrigerate for 1 hour before cutting and serving (I didn't do this). Bring slices to room temperature for 10 to 15 minutes before serving.