

French Yule Log

<http://userealbutter.com/2008/12/28/french-yule-log-cake-recipe/>

by Flore of Florilège Gourmand

element #1: dacquoise biscuit (almond cake)

preparation time: 10 min + 15 min for baking

equipment: 2 mixing bowls, hand or stand mixer with whisk attachment, spatula, baking pan such as a 10"x15" jelly-roll pan, parchment paper

Note: You can use the dacquoise for the bottom of your yule log only, or as bottom and top layers, or if using a yule log mold (half-pipe) to line your entire mold with the biscuit. Take care to spread the dacquoise accordingly. Try to bake the dacquoise the same day you assemble the log to keep it as moist as possible.

2.8 oz. (3/4 cup + 1 tbsp/80g) almond meal
1.75 oz. (1/2 cup/50g) confectioner's sugar
2 tbsps (15g) all-purpose flour
3.5 oz. (100g/100ml) about 3 medium egg whites
1.75 oz. (4 tbsp/50g) granulated sugar

Finely mix the almond meal and the confectioner's sugar. (If you have a mixer, you can use it by pulsing the ingredients together for no longer than 30 seconds). Sift the flour into the mix. Beat the eggs whites, gradually adding the granulated sugar until stiff. Pour the almond meal mixture into the egg whites and blend delicately with a spatula. Grease a piece of parchment paper and line your baking pan with it. Spread the batter on a piece of parchment paper to an area slightly larger than your desired shape (circle, long strip etc...) and to a height of 1/3 inches (8mm). Bake at 350°F (180°C) for approximately 15 minutes (depends on your oven), until golden. Let cool and cut to the desired shape.

element #2 dark chocolate mousse

preparation time: 15 min

Note: I used a different mousse recipe that doesn't call for gelatin.

10.5 oz. bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
2 large eggs, room temperature
5 large egg yolks, room temperature
2/3 cup sugar
3 tbsps water
2 cups heavy cream

Melt the chocolate in a microwave at half power for 30 seconds at a time, stir after every 30 second interval until just melted. Pour the chocolate in a bowl large enough to hold all ingredients and set aside until cooled to room temperature. Place eggs and yolks in a mixer with balloon whisk and whip for 1 minute. Put the sugar and water in a small saucepan and stir to moisten the sugar. Bring to a boil until temperature reaches

244°F (227°F for 8500 ft. elevation). Remove from heat. Start beating the eggs again on medium speed and slowly and steadily pour the sugar syrup, pouring down the center, not on the side of the bowl or on the whisk attachment. When all of the syrup is added, increase speed to high and beat until eggs pale, triple in volume, and cool to room temperature. In a large bowl, whip the heavy cream to medium peaks. Fold a quarter of the cream into the cooled chocolate. Fold in remaining cream, followed by egg mixture. Try not to deflate the batter too much.

element #3 dark chocolate ganache

preparation time: 10min

Note: I used my own ganache recipe for this

6 oz. dark chocolate, chopped
3 oz. heavy cream

Place chocolate in a bowl. Heat the cream in a saucepan until just boiling. Remove from heat and pour over dark chocolate and let sit for a minute. Stir until smooth and silky. Pour onto parchment and let cool or set in a refrigerator.

element #4 praline feuilleté

preparation time: 10 min

3.5 oz. (100g) milk chocolate
1 2/3 tbsps (25g) butter
2 tbsps (1 oz./30g) praline (I used hazelnut butter with 1 tsp sugar added)
1 oz. rice krispies or corn flakes or Special K

Melt the chocolate and butter in a double boiler. Add the praline and the coarsely crushed lace crepes. Mix quickly to thoroughly coat with the chocolate. Spread between two sheets of wax paper to a size slightly larger than your desired shape. Refrigerate until hard.

element #5 vanilla crème brûlée

preparation time: 15min + 1h infusing + 1h baking

Note: The vanilla crème brûlée can be flavored differently by simply replacing the vanilla with something else e.g. cardamom, lavender, etc...

1/2 cup (115g) heavy cream (35% fat content)
1/2 cup (115g) whole milk
4 medium (72g) egg yolks
0.75 oz. (2 tbsps/25g) granulated sugar
1 vanilla bean

Heat the milk, cream, and scraped vanilla bean to just boiling. Remove from the stove and let the vanilla infuse for about 1 hour. Whisk together the sugar and egg yolks (but do not beat until white). Pour the vanilla-infused milk over the sugar/yolk mixture. Mix

well. Wipe with a very wet cloth and then cover your baking mold (whatever shape is going to fit on the inside of your Yule log/cake) with parchment paper. [Jen's note: this doesn't work.] Pour the cream into the mold and bake at 300°F for about 1-1.5 hours in a water bath or until firm on the edges and slightly wobbly in the center. Let cool and put in the freezer for at least 1 hour to firm up and facilitate the final assembly.

element #6 dark chocolate icing

preparation time: 25 min (10 min if you don't count softening the gelatin)

Note: Because the icing gels quickly, you should make it at the last minute.

Jen's Note: I made twice as much as the amount listed below.

4g or 1/2 tbsp powdered gelatin or 2 sheets gelatin

1/4 cup (60g) heavy cream (35% fat content)

2.1 oz. (5 tbsps/60g) granulated sugar

1/4 cup (50g) water

1/3 cup (30g) unsweetened cocoa powder

Soften the gelatin in cold water (about 1/4 cup of water for 1 tbsp of powdered gelatin) for 15 minutes. Boil the rest of the ingredients and cook an additional 3 minutes after boiling. Add gelatin to the chocolate mixture. Mix well. Pour through a fine sieve. Let cool while checking the texture regularly. As soon as the mixture is smooth and coats a spoon well (it is starting to gel), use immediately.

assembly

Note: You will want to tap your mold gently on the countertop after each time you pipe mousse in to get rid of any air bubbles.

Line your mold or pan with rhodoid (clear hard plastic, I usually use transparencies cut to the desired shape, it's easier to find than cellulose acetate which is what rhodoid translates to in English) OR plastic film. Rhodoid will give you a smoother shape but you may have a hard time using it depending on the kind of mold you're using. Pipe one third of the mousse component into the mold. Take the crème brûlée insert out of the freezer at the last minute and set on top of the mousse. Press down gently to slightly ensconce it in the mousse. Pipe second third of the mousse component around and on top of the crème brûlée. Cut the feuilleté to a size slightly smaller than your mold so that it can be surrounded by mousse. Lay it on top of the mousse you just piped into the mold. Pipe the last third of the mousse component on top of the feuilleté. Freeze for a few hours to set. Take out of the freezer. Pipe the ganache onto the frozen mousse leaving a slight edge so that ganache doesn't seep out when you set the dacquoise on top. [Note: Here is where Jen added a layer of mousse by accident, but it was fine.] Close with the dacquoise. Freeze until the next day.

Unmold the cake/log/whatever and set on a wire rack over a shallow pan. Cover the cake with the icing. Let set. Return to the freezer. Decorate. Transfer to the refrigerator no longer than 1/2 hour before serving as it may start to melt quickly.