

## Opera Cake

<http://userealbutter.com/2008/05/28/opera-cake-recipe/>

*based on recipes in Dorie Greenspan's Paris Sweets and Tish Boyle and Timothy Moriarty's Chocolate Passion  
full recipe*

### **jaconde**

6 large egg whites, at room temperature  
2 tbsps (30 g) granulated sugar  
2 cups (225 g) ground blanched almonds  
2 cups icing sugar, sifted  
6 large eggs  
1/2 cup (70 g) all-purpose flour  
3 tbsps (1 1/2 oz.; 45 g) unsalted butter, melted and cooled

Divide the oven into thirds by positioning a rack in the upper third of the oven and the lower third of the oven. Preheat the oven to 425°F. (220°C). Line two 12 1/2x15 1/2-inch (31 x 39-cm) jelly-roll pans with parchment paper and brush with melted butter. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment (or using a handheld mixer), beat the egg whites until they form soft peaks. Add the granulated sugar and beat until the peaks are stiff and glossy. If you do not have another mixer bowl, gently scrape the meringue into another bowl and set aside. If you only have one bowl, wash it after removing the egg whites or if you have a second bowl, use that one. Attach the paddle attachment to the stand mixer (or using a handheld mixer again) and beat the almonds, icing sugar and eggs on medium speed until light and voluminous, about 3 minutes. Add the flour and beat on low speed until the flour is just combined (be very careful not to overmix here!!!). Using a rubber spatula, gently fold the meringue into the almond mixture and then fold in the melted butter. Divide the batter between the pans and spread it evenly to cover the entire surface of each pan. Bake the cake layers until they are lightly browned and just springy to the touch. This could take anywhere from 5 to 9 minutes depending on your oven. Place one jelly-roll pan in the middle of the oven and the second jelly-roll pan in the bottom third of the oven. Put the pans on a heatproof counter and run a sharp knife along the edges of the cake to loosen it from the pan. Cover each with a sheet of parchment or wax paper, turn the pans over, and unmold. Carefully peel away the parchment, then turn the parchment over and use it to cover the cakes. Let the cakes cool to room temperature.

### **syrup**

1/2 cup (125 g) water  
1/3 cup (65 g) granulated sugar  
1-2 tbsps flavoring of your choice (i.e., vanilla extract, almond extract, cognac, limoncello, coconut cream, honey etc.)

Stir all the syrup ingredients together in the saucepan and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature.

### **hazelnut buttercream**

8 oz. egg whites  
16 oz. sugar  
1 lb. butter, room temperature  
2 tbsps Frangelico  
2 tbsps hazelnut butter

Combine egg whites and sugar in a Kitchenaid mixing bowl. Whisk constantly over a bain marie until 140°F is reached. Place on mixer with whisk and whip 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, add flavorings and beat until incorporated.

### **glaze**

14 oz. white chocolate, coarsely chopped  
1/2 cup heavy cream (35% cream)

Melt the white chocolate with the heavy cream. Whisk the mixture gently until smooth. Let cool for 10 minutes and then pour over the chilled cake. Using a long metal cake spatula, smooth out into an even layer. Place the cake into the refrigerator for 30 minutes to set.

### **Assembling the Opera Cake:**

Note: The finished cake should be served slightly chilled. It can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 1 day.

Line a baking sheet with parchment or wax paper. Working with one sheet of cake at a time, cut and trim each sheet so that you have two pieces (from each cake so you'll have four pieces in total): one 10-inch (25-cm) square and one 10 x 5-inch (25x12 1/2-cm) rectangle. Place one square of cake on the baking sheet and moisten it gently with the flavoured syrup. Spread about one-third of the buttercream over this layer. Top with the two rectangular pieces of cake, placing them side by side to form a square. Moisten these pieces with the flavoured syrup. Spread another third of the buttercream on the cake and then top with the third square of joconde. Use the remaining syrup to wet the joconde. Spread the remaining buttercream on top of the final layer of joconde and then refrigerate until very firm (at least half an hour). Make the glaze and after it has cooled, pour/spread it over the top of the chilled cake. Refrigerate the cake again to set the glaze. Serve the cake slightly chilled. This recipe will yield approximately 20 servings.