

#10 Chocolate Beetroot Cake



This chocolate cake is moist, light, not too sweet but still delicious and indulgent. The moisture in the batter comes from beetroot which will also add a bit of natural sweetness and earthiness but, funny enough, you won't be able to taste the actual beetroot. Chocolate ganache and strawberry combo is hard to beat!

METHOD

1. Grease the baking tin and line it with baking paper. Blend or mash the beetroots into a smooth pulp. Don't worry if it looks quite runny.

2. Preheat the oven to 180°C fan/gas mark 4. Into a medium bowl sieve the flour, cocoa powder and bicarbonate of soda. Add the salt and mix all ingredients well.

3. Place the eggs, sugar, oil, vanilla extract and beetroots in a separate, larger bowl and mix with a whisk for about one minute. (There is no need to mix it for longer.) With a spatula or a spoon gently fold in all of the dry ingredients. Stir until just combined.

4. Pour the batter into the baking tin and bake for 30 minutes or until a skewer or toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean.

5. Once taken out of the oven the cake is quite delicate so let it rest in the baking tin for about 10-15 minutes, then remove it and leave to cool. When it has cooled down, prepare your ganache – start off by chopping the chocolate. Make sure it's chopped finely as it'll aid quick melting which results in a smooth consistency. Place the chocolate in a bowl. Pour the cream into a pan and on a medium heat bring it almost up to the boiling point. This is called scalding the cream and what you're looking for is little bubbles forming all around the edges as well as a bit of steam.

INGREDIENTS

Baking tin: either rectangular 20cm x 30cm or round about 27cm in diameter

- 250g plain flour
- 350g caster sugar
- 40g cocoa powder
- 1 ½ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 eggs
- 300g beetroot, cooked and peeled (3-4 beetroots)
- 250ml vegetable oil (or any flavourless oil such as sunflower or canola)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- About 200g strawberries or raspberries to decorate (or any berries you like)

For the chocolate ganache:

- 200g good quality dark chocolate (min 60%-70% cocoa mass)
- 200ml double cream

Don't let the cream boil, take it off the heat immediately and pour it over the chocolate. Submerge all chocolate bits with a spatula but don't stir and leave for two minutes. (Not less!) When the two minutes are up, gently stir the mixture and watch the magic happen – what at first looks like a lumpy mess will in seconds become a smooth and glossy ganache. At this stage it has a perfect consistency to be spread on the cooled cake, it'll thicken slightly later on. Decorate with the raspberries or strawberries. Et voila!



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