

Flourless Chocolate Cake

Crackly on top and fudgy yet tender in the centre, this cake tastes like a complex restaurant dessert, but comes together effortlessly in one bowl.

¾ cup (168 g) unsalted butter, cut up, plus more for greasing the pan

1 cup (173 g) bittersweet or semisweet chocolate drops

½ cup (50 g) unsweetened natural cocoa powder

¾ cup (150 g) granulated sugar

4 large eggs

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Whipped cream or ice cream, for serving (optional)

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Generously butter the bottom and sides of an 8-inch springform pan, or press a large sheet of foil into the bottom and up the sides of an 8-inch round cake pan, smoothing the sides, and generously butter the foil.

Melt the chocolate in a microwave safe bowl on low heat, at 30 second increments. Stir well after each increment, and repeat until melted.

Add the butter to the bowl. Stir gently until melted and smooth. Add the cocoa powder and stir until smooth.

Stir in the granulated sugar until incorporated, then add the eggs, one at a time, and beat well after each addition. Stir in the vanilla, then scrape the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the top either with a spatula or by gently tapping the edges of the cake pan to flatten the batter.

Bake until crackly and dry on top, and a toothpick inserted 2 inches from the edge comes out clean, 40 to 50 minutes. A toothpick inserted in the center should come out with some crumbs attached.

Cool in the pan on a rack, then remove the sides of the springform pan or lift the cake out of the cake pan using the foil overhang.

There are a number of options for serving. You can gently sprinkle the top of the cake with icing sugar before cutting, or you can leave it plain. You can cut into squares or triangles and serve warm or at room temperature. To cut very neat slim slices, freeze the cooled cake until firm. Slice and then warm up briefly in the microwave or oven, if preferred. Serve the cake with whipped cream or ice cream, if you'd like. The cake can be wrapped and kept at room temperature for up to 3 days, in the refrigerator for up to 1 week or in the freezer for up to 1 month.

Adapted from Genevieve Ko, The New York Times.