



**COOKING CLASSES**  
AT SUR LA TABLE

# **TWO-LAYER CHOCOLATE CAKE WORKSHOP**

WITH SUR LA TABLE CHEF

# Ingredient Shopping List

Below is a list of ingredients you'll need to make the recipes in this packet. Please reach out for substitution suggestions.

## Dairy

- 3/4 cup buttermilk
- 5 eggs
- 2 sticks unsalted butter
- 1 1/4 cups heavy whipping cream

## Pantry Items

- Vegetable oil
- All-purpose flour
- Granulated sugar
- Unsweetened cocoa powder
- Baking soda
- Fine kosher salt or fine sea salt
- Vanilla bean paste or 1/2 vanilla bean pod
- 2 tablespoons of brewed espresso
- 10 ounces high-quality semisweet chocolate like Callebaut or Valrhona

# Equipment Needed

Below is a list of tools you'll need to make the recipes in this packet.

## Cutlery

- Serrated knife

## Hand Tools/Gadgets

- Cutting board
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Liquid measuring cup
- Digital scale (optional)
- Flour sifter
- Mixing bowls, various sizes
- Whisk
- Silicone spatulas
- Toothpick or cake tester
- Parchment paper
- Offset spatula
- Bench scraper
- Cake turntable (optional)

## Cookware

- Medium saucepan
- Small saucepan

## Appliances

- Stand mixer with a whisk attachment or hand mixer

## Bakeware

- 2, 9-inch round cake pans
- 9-inch cardboard cake round
- Rimmed baking sheet
- Cooling rack

## **Pre-Class Mise en Place and Notes**

- Please gather all ingredients prior to class if you will be cooking along.
- It is helpful to organize the ingredients by recipe on rimmed baking sheets.
- Feel free to pre-measure ingredients, but it is not necessary.
- We encourage you to prep all your ingredients before class as it will allow you to have more time to listen and watch the instructor.

### **Two-Layer Chocolate Cake**

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.

## TWO-LAYER CHOCOLATE CAKE WITH ESPRESSO BUTTERCREAM AND CHOCOLATE GANACHE

**Yield:** 1 cake, about 14 servings

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*Butter for greasing the pans, at room temperature*

*1 cup of water*

*3/4 cup buttermilk*

*3/4 cup vegetable oil*

*3 large eggs*

*2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour*

*1 3/4 cups granulated sugar*

*3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder*

*2 teaspoons baking soda*

*1/4 teaspoon fine kosher salt*

*Espresso Buttercream (recipe included)*

*Dark Chocolate Ganache (recipe included)*

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Preheat the oven to 350°F and position the rack in the middle of the oven. Lightly butter 2, 9-inch round cake pans and line them with parchment paper; set aside.

1. **To prepare the cake:** To a medium bowl, add the water, buttermilk, oil and eggs. Whisk until the eggs have completely blended into the mixture. In a separate large bowl, sift together the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking soda and salt, pushing any lumps through the sifter with a flexible bowl scraper or silicone spatula. Pour the liquid ingredients into the dry ingredients. Whisk gently at first and then, as the mixture blends, whisk faster until you have a smooth batter and no dry patches remain.

2. Divide the batter evenly between the 2 prepared cake pans and bake for about 25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Transfer the cakes to cooling racks and cool completely. If the cakes are rounded on top, place a clean, dry kitchen towel on top of each hot cake and press down firmly with the palm of your hand to level the surface.

3. **To assemble the cake:** Slide a small offset spatula around the edges of the cake layers to loosen them from the pan. Place a cardboard cake round upside down on top of one of the cake pans and invert the pan to release the cake. Lift the pan off and peel off the parchment paper.

4. Using the offset spatula, place espresso buttercream in a mound on the center of the cake and spread evenly over the surface, leaving a 1/4-inch-wide border uncovered around the edge. When you place the second layer on top, it will push the frosting to the edge.

5. Place a cake cardboard on top of the second cake layer and invert the pan to release the cake. Peel off the parchment paper. Gently push the cake off the board and place it on top of the cake with the buttercream. Gently press the two layers together and refrigerate the cake to set the filling.

6. Remove the cake from the refrigerator and set it on a cooling rack, set over a plastic wrap-lined sheet pan. Pour the prepared ganache over the center of the cake, allowing the excess to run down the sides. Use a small offset spatula to help push the ganache to the edges and down the sides, if needed. (There is enough ganache to fully cover the sides of the cake or you can leave the sides partially uncovered for a more contemporary look). Leave the cake on the rack for 10 to 15 minutes to allow the ganache to set and adhere properly to the cake.

7. **To serve:** The completed cake may remain at room temperature for up to 4 hours. Otherwise, refrigerate the cake, removing it from the refrigerator 30 minutes before slicing.

***Recipe variations:***

- Try filling the cake with jam, vanilla buttercream, or raspberry buttercream.
- The cake can also be baked in two quarter sheet pans and cut into 4, 6-inch rounds.

## ESPRESSO BUTTERCREAM

**Yield:** about 2 1/2 cups

Buttercream will keep in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week or in the freezer for up to 2 months. Let the buttercream come to room temperature and re-whip in the mixer with the paddle attachment before using.

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*2 large (2 to 2 1/2 ounces) egg whites, at room temperature*  
*3 1/2 ounces (1/2 cup) granulated sugar*  
*8 ounces (2 sticks) unsalted butter, chilled, cut into 1-inch pieces*  
*1/8 teaspoon kosher salt*  
*1/2 teaspoon vanilla bean paste or the beans from 1/2 vanilla pod*  
*2 tablespoons brewed espresso, cooled to room temperature*

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1. **To prepare the buttercream:** Place the egg whites and sugar in the bowl of a stand mixer and whisk to blend. Bring 2 inches of water to a simmer in a medium saucepan. Place the bowl over the simmering water and heat, whisking constantly, until the mixture reaches 145°F on an instant-read thermometer. Remove the bowl from the heat and attach it to a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment. Whip the mixture on high speed until it cools to room temperature, is light and billowing, and resembles marshmallow fluff. Before continuing, make sure the meringue is cooled to room temperature, otherwise the butter added in the next step will melt.

2. With the mixer on medium-high speed, add the butter a couple of tablespoons at a time, allowing each addition to blend in fully before adding the next. Halfway through adding the butter, stop the mixer and use a silicone spatula to scrape down the sides of the bowl thoroughly. Continue to whip until all the butter has been added and the mixture is velvety and smooth. Add the vanilla and espresso and whip until smooth.

### **Recipe variations:**

- **To make a mocha buttercream:** Add 3 ounces bittersweet chocolate, melted and cooled to lukewarm. Add the melted chocolate when adding the vanilla and espresso.
- **To make a vanilla buttercream:** Omit the brewed espresso.
- **To make a fruit-flavored buttercream:** Add 3 ounces of puréed and strained berries like raspberries or strawberries.

## CHOCOLATE GANACHE

***Yield:*** about 2 cups

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*10 ounces (1 1/4 cups) heavy whipping cream*

*10 ounces high-quality semisweet chocolate, like Valrhona or Callebaut, finely chopped*

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1. To a small saucepan, heat the cream over medium-high heat and bring to a simmer. Place the chopped chocolate in a medium heatproof bowl and pour the hot cream over the chocolate. Let stand for 5 minutes. Whisk until the mixture is completely blended and smooth. Set the ganache aside until it has cooled to the consistency of pourable honey, 15 to 20 minutes.

### ***Recipe variations:***

- Flavor the ganache by adding 1 teaspoon of cinnamon, natural extract, or liquor. Taste and adjust the flavoring, adding 1 teaspoon at a time until the desired flavor is reached.
- White chocolate and milk chocolate can be substituted for the semisweet chocolate.