

MOCHA ALMOND FUDGE CAKE

INGREDIENTS:

FOR CAKE:

1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon salt
1 ½ teaspoons baking soda
¾ teaspoon baking powder
1 ⅓ cup sugar
¼ cup cocoa powder (ideally half black cocoa, half regular - but all regular can work)
1 tablespoon espresso powder
¾ cup hot water
1 teaspoon LorAnn Almond Bakery Emulsion
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
⅓ cup canola oil
2 eggs
¼ cup Greek yogurt (or sour cream)
¼ cup buttermilk

FOR GANACHE:

400g dark or semi-sweet chocolate chips
200g heavy cream (35%)
1 tablespoon espresso powder
1 teaspoon LorAnn Almond Bakery Emulsion

FOR CHOCOLATE ALMOND BUTTER COOKIES:

¾ cup butter, softened
½ cup sugar
1 egg yolk
1 teaspoon LorAnn Almond Bakery Emulsion
1 ½ cup all-purpose flour
¼ cup cocoa powder
½ teaspoon salt
Whole almonds - optional

For Topping:

¼ cup sliced almonds, toasted



DIRECTIONS:

FOR CAKE:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. If using cake strips, start them soaking in a bowl of warm water. Prepare three, 6-inch cake pans by lining with parchment paper and spraying with cooking spray.
2. Sift flour, salt, baking soda, baking powder, and sugar together in a large bowl.
3. In a separate bowl, combine cocoa powder(s) and espresso powder. Add in the hot water and whisk until a thin paste forms.
4. Add the Greek yogurt, buttermilk, eggs, canola oil, almond emulsion, and vanilla to the cocoa mixture. Whisk until completely combined.
5. Pour the wet mixture into the dry mixture. Fold together using a spatula until no lumps remain. Try not to over mix, as this will produce a chewy cake!
6. Divide the batter evenly between the 3 pans. Wrap with the cake strips and bake for 38 minutes (or until a toothpick inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean). Bake time will be shorter without cake

strips; closer to 32 minutes.

7. To make assembly easier, wrap cake layers in plastic wrap and place in the freezer for at least 1 hour (and/or up to a week).

FOR GANACHE:

1. Microwave heavy cream for 1-2 minutes, until steaming.
2. Add chocolate chips, espresso powder, and almond emulsion to the cream. Let stand a few minutes, allowing the chocolate to start to melt.
3. Whisk until all the chocolate is melted and no lumps remain. If required, you can pop it back in the microwave for 30 second increments.
4. Cover the ganache with plastic wrap and let stand at room temperature overnight to set. If you are short on time, you can place it in the refrigerator to set faster, but you must stir every 10 minutes, to ensure it does not get lumpy. Once the ganache has the consistency of peanut butter, it has set up enough.

FOR CHOCOLATE ALMOND BUTTER COOKIES:

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Prepare two cookie sheets by lining them with silicone mats or parchment paper.
2. Beat butter and sugar together until light and fluffy.
3. Add egg yolk and almond emulsion and beat until smooth.
4. Add flour, cocoa powder, and salt. Mix until combined. The dough will start out looking quite dry, but it will begin to clump up as it mixes.
5. Form 1" balls, lightly pressing each one onto the cookie sheets. The cookies will not spread, so don't worry about spacing them apart too much.
6. Place one whole almond at the center of half of the cookies (optional).
7. Bake for 8 minutes.

ASSEMBLY:

1. Prepare the filling by chopping up 8-10 cookies and toasting the sliced almonds.
2. Spread a small dollop of ganache onto a cake plate or board. Place the first layer on the board, and cover in a layer of ganache.
3. Sprinkle with the chopped cookies and toasted almonds.
4. Place the next cake layer down on top, pressing down to ensure there is no air trapped between the layers. Repeat with layers 2 and 3.
5. Once all 3 layers are stacked, crumb coat the entire cake in a thin layer of ganache and place the cake into the refrigerator to firm up.
6. Microwave the remaining ganache for about 8 seconds and stir. This will bring it to a consistency that is easier to spread and smooth.
7. Coat the cake in a final layer of ganache. Pipe dollops of ganache along the top and side of the cake, adding chocolate almond butter cookies and sliced almonds as decor.