



## Hot Chocolate Layer Cake

### Cake:

- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of unsalted butter (plus a little more for the pans)
- 3 cups unbleached all-purpose flour (plus a little more for the pans)
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup Canola oil
- 4  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounces of bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- 3 cups granulated sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 3 large eggs at room temperature
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup buttermilk at room temperature
- 2 tablespoons pure vanilla extract
- 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon kosher salt
- Marshmallows—regular sized, cut in half and then cut each half into quarters (don't use mini marshmallows)

### Frosting:

- 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups heavy cream
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise and the seeds scraped out
- 6 ounces finely chopped bittersweet chocolate
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 cups of unsweetened cocoa powder (plus little more for top of cake)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup Lyle's Golden Syrup (If you can't find this, you can use caramel flavored syrup. You can find this in the organic food section of the grocery store)
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon kosher salt

### To make the cake:

Position racks in the bottom and top thirds of the oven and heat oven to 350°F. Butter three 9x2 inch round cake pans and line them with parchment paper cut to fit. Butter the parchment and dust with flour—tap out excess.

Combine the butter, oil, chopped chocolate and 1 cup water in a 3-quart saucepan. Heat over medium heat until melted.

Whisk the flour, sugar and cocoa powder in a large bowl. Pour the hot chocolate mixture into the sugar mixture and whisk until combined. Whisk in the eggs, one at a time and then whisk in the buttermilk, vanilla, baking soda and salt. Divide the batter evenly among the three prepared pans.

Set two pans on the top rack and the third on the lower rack. Stagger the pans on the oven racks so that no pan is directly over another; bake, swapping and rotating the pans positions after 20 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the center of each cake, comes out clean, 35-40 minutes. Cool on racks for 10 minutes. Invert the cakes onto the racks, remove the parchment, and cool completely.

To make frosting:

In a four quart saucepan over low heat, combine the cream, butter, and vanilla bean and seeds and stir until the butter is melted. Remove the vanilla bean and whisk in the chopped chocolate until melted. Whisk in the sugar, cocoa powder, syrup, and salt until smooth—be sure the cocoa powder dissolves completely. Pour into a 9x13 pan and freeze until firm, about two hours, or refrigerate overnight.

Assembling the cake:

Remove the frosting from the freezer or refrigerator. Transfer to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment and beat on medium speed for two minutes to soften. Change to a whisk attachment and beat at medium-high speed until light and fluffy, about three minutes.

Put a cake layer on a flat serving platter or a cake stand lined with strips of wax paper to keep it clean while icing. Top the layer with one and a half cups of the frosting, spreading it evenly with an off set spatula to the cake's edge. Repeat with another cake layer and one and a half cups frosting. Top with the last cake layer.

Put one and a half cups of the frosting in a small bowl. With an offset spatula, spread this frosting in a thin layer over the top and sides of the cake. Refrigerate the cake until the frosting firms enough to seal in the crumbs, 20-30 minutes.

Spread the remaining frosting in a smooth layer over the top and sides of the cake. If necessary, you can rewhip the remaining frosting to loosen it. Remove the wax paper strips.

Put the cut marshmallows on the top of the cake (gently create a small pile of marshmallows in the center 2/3 of the cake) and dust lightly with cocoa powder (use a sieve).

Serves about 16

Adapted from *Fine Cooking* magazine, December 2009 issue.