
Dean Brettschneider's

Chocolate very berry layer cake



Creating a light airy chocolate sponge is an art and science but once that is done, the magic of combining a lightly whipped chocolate cream and fresh berries is simply divine. Make at least 4 – 6 hours in advance to ensure all the flavours, chocolate cream and sponge merge together.

INGREDIENTS

Chocolate sponge cake

5 eggs, warmed
150g castor sugar
150g standard plain flour
5g baking powder
50g cocoa powder
50g melted butter

Filling

400g fresh whipping cream
100g good quality dark chocolate, chopped up into small pieces

Decoration

1 punnet each of fresh strawberries, raspberries, blueberries
100g of chocolate shavings
Edible flowers for decorating
Icing sugar to decorating

METHOD

1. Grease and lightly flour a 20cm round cake tin then preheat your oven to 190°C.
2. In an electric mixer using the whisk attachment, whisk together the warmed eggs and sugar to the ribbon stage (this is when the mixture is thick and when trailed on itself it will hold its own weight for about 10 seconds before sinking into the mixture).
3. Sieve the flour, baking powder & cocoa and then carefully fold through the egg and sugar foam mixture. Once the dry ingredients are three quarter incorporated into the egg and sugar foam, add the melted butter and continue to fold through gently. Avoid over mixing at this stage otherwise you will lose all the precious air bubbles you have created.
4. Immediately place the mixture into the cake tin. Place into the preheated oven on the middle shelf and bake until the sponge is set, approximately 25 – 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and allow to sit for 10 – 15 minutes before taking out of the tin. Cool completely (it's also okay to make this the day before and keep overnight in an air tight container).
5. The day before, place the chopped chocolate into a medium sized mixing bowl. Place the whipping cream into a small saucepan and heat until just below boiling. Pour over the chopped chocolate. Stir until the chocolate has completely melted, strain and place into a container, cover and place back into the refrigerator to chill.
6. The next day, place into the bowl of the electric mixer and using a whisk whip until soft / medium peaks and use when needed.

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7. Using a serrated bread knife, carefully cut the sponge into three equal layers.
8. Using a palette knife, spread a layer (approx. 150g) of chocolate whipped cream on one layer of sponge, then place the middle layer of sponge on top, press down lightly.
9. Spread another layer (150g) of chocolate whipped cream on top of the sponge layer, then top with the final layer of the sponge, press lightly again.
10. Finally spread the remaining chocolate whipped cream on top. Sprinkle with grated dark chocolate shavings and arrange fresh raspberries, blueberries and strawberries on top.
11. Lightly dust with icing sugar and finish with edible flowers.

Dean Brettschneider, The Great Kiwi Bake Off Judge and Baking Entrepreneur.