

CHOCOLATE WHISKY CAKE

RECIPE FROM

A High Whisk Situation

(OXFORD TEAROOM MYSTERIES ~ BOOK 12)

This cake can be made with any type whisky, although it would be best to avoid those with strong peaty, smoky flavours and instead choose something which has “sweeter” notes and flavours of caramel and vanilla in the profile. Examples of single malts include the Dalwhinnie 15, Tamdhu 10 and Glenmorangie 12.

However, there is no need to waste an expensive single malt for baking. A cheaper blended Scotch, such as Johnnie Walker Black Label, would work just as well. In addition, American bourbon whiskey would also be a good choice as it has inherent vanilla notes that complement the chocolate.

INGREDIENTS:

For the Cake:

- Two large eggs (*make sure they are brought to room temperature before use*)
- 1 cup (200g) granulated or caster sugar
- 1 cup (200g) brown sugar
- 3/4 cup (180ml) sour cream (*make sure to bring to room temperature before use*)
- 1/2 cup (125ml) vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup (180ml) water
- 1/4 cup (60ml) whisky
- 1 Tablespoon (20ml) pure vanilla extract
- 2 cups (300g) all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup (115g) cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 220g dark chocolate, chopped into small



pieces

For the whisky ganache:

- 220g dark chocolate, chopped into small pieces
- 1 cup (250ml) double cream (*known as “heavy cream” in the US and “thickened cream” in Australia*)
- 3 tablespoons whisky
- A pinch of salt

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) Preheat the oven to 180 degrees Celsius / 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
- 2) In a large bowl (No. 1), combine the eggs, white sugar, and brown sugar and mix until it forms a smooth paste. If you are using an electric mixer, this should be done on low speed.
- 3) In a second bowl (No. 2), combine the sour cream, vegetable oil, water, vanilla extract and whisky, and mix until smooth. Set this aside.
- 4) In a third large bowl (No. 3), sift the flour and cocoa powder, then add the baking soda, baking powder and salt. Mix well and set aside.
- 5) Now, alternate adding the contents of Bowl 2 (wet ingredients) and Bowl 3 (dry ingredients) to the sugar mixture in the first bowl, using a folding motion. Be very careful not to overmix the batter as this could result in a dense and tough cake. If using an electric mixer, use it on low speed and mix until the ingredients are *just* combined.
- 6) Finally, add the chopped chocolate pieces, again using a gentle folding motion.
- 7) Pour the batter—equally divided—into two round 8” cake tins, which have been greased with butter or lined with baking parchment.
- 8) Place the tins in the oven and bake until the cake is set and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. This will take from 30 to 40 minutes, depending on your oven.
- 9) Remove the tins from the oven and let the cakes cool in them for 30 minutes, before attempting to remove them from the tins. Then place the extracted cakes on a cooling rack for a further period of time until they are completely cool.

- 10) While the cakes are cooling, you can start making the ganache: roughly chop up the dark chocolate and place in a bowl.
- 11) Heat the cream until it just boils. This can be done on the stove or in the microwave. As soon as you see it start to bubble, remove it from the heat and pour it over the chopped up chocolate.
- 12) Allow the mixture to sit for a minute, then stir vigorously with a whisk until it forms a smooth and glossy ganache. Now, add the whisky and a pinch of salt. Keep mixing until it is combined and smooth again.
- 13) Wait until the cakes are fully cooled to room temperature, then spread a thin layer of the ganache on top of one cake and lay the other one on top. Use the remainder of the whisky ganache to frost the top and sides of the double layered cake. You can also decorate with additional things such as strawberries or chocolate shavings.

NOTES:

- Depending on how much of a sweet tooth you have, you can choose to use a dark chocolate with a lower percentage of cocoa (eg. 45%) for a sweeter taste or a higher percentage (eg. 70%) for a more bittersweet flavour.
- This recipe specifically uses oil in place of butter. This makes the cake more moist and tender. Do not replace with butter as the recipe ratios are adapted for oil and doing so may result in a dry cake.
- Ideally use full fat sour cream, as it helps to add moisture without thinning the batter and make the cake more tender. However, if you cannot find full fat, then “light” will work as well.
- When measuring the flour and cocoa powder, it is best to use a kitchen scale for most accurate measurements. If you are using measuring cups and utensils, make sure to gently fill and then level the ingredients; do not forcefully pack them into the measuring cup.
- Be very mindful about not overmixing the batter, otherwise you will not get a light, fluffy cake.
- Make sure not to open the oven door while the cake is baking as this will drop the oven temperature and can affect the rise of the cake.
- Always allow cakes to cool completely before frosting with ganache, otherwise it will melt and run, pooling around the cake instead of covering it in an even layer.

Enjoy!

