

MOKKATORTE

(CHOCOLATE AND VANILLA CAKE, WITH COFFEE LIQUEUR, ESPRESSO BUTTERCREAM + CHOCOLATE SHAVINGS)

INGREDIENTS

for the Vanilla Cake

1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
3/4 teaspoons table salt
1 cup granulated sugar
1 1/2 sticks unsalted butter, softened but slightly cool, cut into 12 pieces
3 large eggs
3/4 cups milk
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

for the Chocolate Cake

1 cups boiling water
1/2 cup semisweet chocolate, chopped fine (I use a food processor to make almost a powder)
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoons baking soda
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup butter, softened
1 cup granulated sugar
3 eggs
2 teaspoon vanilla extract

for the Vanilla Buttercream

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
1/2 teaspoon table salt
1 teaspoon vanilla paste, or the paste scraped from the inside of two vanilla beans
2 1/2 cups confectioners sugar

for the Espresso Buttercream

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
2 1/2 cups powdered sugar
1 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 teaspoon coffee or espresso extract
2 teaspoons espresso powder

You will also need: a bar of chocolate to create shaving, pre-made shavings or chocolate sprinkles

Optional: 3-8 tablespoons Kalhua or other Coffee Liqueur

DIRECTIONS

First, make your cakes. These should be made at least a day ahead (to let them settle and firm up a bit), and can be made up to 3 days in advance. In either case, wrap in aluminum foil only after they have completely cooled.

For the vanilla cakes: Preheat oven to 350F. Spray 2 8-inch cake rounds with baking spray; set aside. In the bowl of a stand mixer, combine the flour, baking powder, salt, and sugar on low speed. Add the butter, 1 piece at a time, and combine until the mixture resembles coarse sand. Add the eggs, 1 at time, and mix until fully combined. Add the milk and vanilla, increase the speed to medium, and mix until the batter is light, fluffy and free of lumps.

Fill the prepare cake pans three-quarters full, being careful not to overfill. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center of the cupcake comes out clean, about 22-25 minutes. Cool the cupcakes in the pan for 5

minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Once cooled, slice each cake round in half horizontally. Wrap in aluminum foil until ready to assemble.

For the chocolate cakes: Preheat oven to 350F. Spray 2 8-inch cake rounds with baking spray; set aside. In medium bowl, pour boiling water over cocoa, and whisk until smooth. Let mixture cool. Sift together flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt; set aside. In the bowl of a stand mixer, cream butter and sugar together until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs one at a time, then stir in vanilla. Add the flour mixture alternately with the cocoa mixture, ending with the flour.

Fill the prepared cake pans three-quarters full, being careful not to overfill. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center of the cupcake comes out clean, about 30-35 minutes. Cool the cupcakes in the pan for 10 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Once cooled, slice each cake round in half horizontally. Wrap in aluminum foil until ready to assemble.

The vanilla buttercream is used inside the cake to assemble, and as the crumb layer underneath the espresso layer. In the work bowl of your stand mixer, cream together the butter, salt, vanilla and vanilla bean paste until light and fluffy. Mix in the confectioners sugar a little bit at a time. The frosting may be a little loose, so add a bit more powdered sugar as necessary. If it is not loose enough, add a few tablespoons of cream.

To assemble: The cake can have 4 to 8 layers, depending on how tall you want to make it. I went with 5, starting and ending with a chocolate cake round. Lay one chocolate piece of the cut-in-half-horizontally cake rounds on your cake plate. Using a pastry brush, squirt bottle or spoon, brush, squirt or spoon a tablespoon of kahlua onto the top of the round. Spread with vanilla buttercream and then repeat with another layer. I only put kahlua on the chocolate layers, but use as much as you like. Repeat until your cake is your desired height, or you run out of cake rounds (up to 8 layers, four of each chocolate and vanilla). Use remaining buttercream to put a fine layer of frosting around the entire outside of the cake. This will even out the cake and make sure that your outside layer of frosting has no crumbs in it (particularly noticeable with chocolate cake. Place cake in fridge for a minimum of 1 hour (I left it in for 3 hours).

For the espresso buttercream, combine the espresso powder into the vanilla and coffee extract until dissolved; set aside. Using the whisk attachment of a stand mixer, whip the butter on medium-high speed for 5 minutes, stopping to scrape the sides of the bowl. Reduce the mixer speed to low and add the powdered sugar a little at a time, waiting until it is mostly incorporated before adding more. Once all of the powdered sugar has been added, scrape the sides of the bowl and increase the speed to medium-high and whip until fluffy, about a minute or two. Add the espresso and vanilla mixture and continue to mix at medium-high until it is completely incorporated, scraping the sides as necessary.

Using a small off-set spatula, cover entire cake with a fine layer of the espresso buttercream. Using a piping tip, decorate your cake with swirls and stars, as you like. Add chocolate shavings (as much as you like!). Refrigerate until about 30 minutes before ready to serve.