



Bittersweet Chocolate Cake



3 Tbs. cake flour
1 Tbs. Dutch process cocoa powder
2 tsp. instant espresso powder
5 oz. bittersweet chocolate, chopped into chunks
6 Tbs. (3/4 stick) unsalted butter, cut into small cubes, at room temperature
4 eggs, separated
1/2 cup superfine sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract

For the whipped cream topping:

1 cup heavy cream
2 Tbs. sour cream
2 Tbs. confectioners' sugar
1 Tbs. finely grated orange zest
1 tsp. vanilla extract

Confectioners' sugar for dusting

Position a rack in the center of an oven and preheat to 350°F. Butter and flour an 8-inch springform pan with 2-inch sides.

In a bowl, sift together the flour, cocoa and espresso powder. Set aside.

Place the chocolate in a heatproof bowl and set over but not touching barely simmering water in a saucepan. Melt the chocolate, stirring occasionally. Remove the bowl from the heat and stir in the butter, a little at a time, until blended. Let cool slightly.

In a large bowl, combine the egg yolks and superfine sugar. Using an electric mixer set on medium speed, beat until creamy, 3 to 4 minutes. Beat in the chocolate mixture until blended. Fold in the flour mixture and then the vanilla.

In another large bowl, beat the egg whites until soft peaks form. Stir one-fourth of the whites into the batter, then fold in the remaining whites just until incorporated.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan and level the top. Bake until the top is risen and crusty and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out almost clean, 30 to 35 minutes. The center should be soft and moist. Transfer the pan to a wire rack and cool for 10 to 15 minutes. The top will fall a bit. Remove the pan sides, loosen the cake's edges with a knife, and slide the warm cake onto a serving plate.

To make the whipped cream topping, in a bowl, whisk together the cream and sour cream until slightly thickened. Whisk in the confectioners' sugar, orange zest and vanilla until soft peaks form.

Dust the warm cake with confectioners' sugar. Cut into slices and top with whipped cream. Serves 6 to 8.