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Hazelnut Opera Cake: (makes an 10" square)

Adapted from: <http://honeybeesweets88.blogspot.tw/2012/03/hazelnut-opera-cake-with-chocolate.html>

Cake Batter :

(A)

5 whole eggs + 1 egg yolk

120g icing sugar

160g Hazelnut meal (Mine are ground from whole, blanched, baked hazelnuts)\

40g cocoa powder (I used Hershey's unsweetened cocoa powder)

60g cake flour

1/2 tsp baking powder

1/4 tsp salt

40ml vegetable oil

(B)

3 egg whites

30g icing's sugar

1 tsp cornflour

- Mix all the dry ingredients except sugar together. Sift and set aside for use later.

- In a large mixing bowl, add the eggs, egg yolk and sugar. Beat the mixture till it triples in volume and leaves a trail. This takes about 7 to 8 minutes. Be sure to reduce the beater's speed to low and let it run for an additional minute to reduce the large bubbles present in the batter.
- Sift in the dry ingredients to the egg mixture in 3 separate portions and gently fold in till you see no visible lumps.
- Add the vegetable oil and again fold in gently till all is well combined.
- Preheat the oven to 175C. Grease and line a 10" removable base square cake pan with parchment.
- In a separate mixer bowl, add in the egg whites and beat till foamy. Gradually add in the sugar and beat till soft peaks. Now add in the cornflour and continue to beat till it is well combined and still peaks.
- Fold the whites into the main batter in 2 separate portions till nicely incorporated.
- Pour the batter into a greased and parchment lined cake pan and bake in the preheated oven for 35 to 40 minutes till the tester comes out clean.
- Cool completely on rack before slicing. When cooled, slice the cake in 4 slices of equal thickness.

Chocolate ganache:

600g dark chocolate, chopped into small pieces (I used Hershey's semi-sweet chocolate chips)

300ml whipped cream

20g unsalted butter

1 pack of instant coffee mixed in 6 tbsp of boiling water

In a saucepan, heat the cream till almost bubbly. Pour the liquid over the chopped chocolate and butter. Leave the mixture without stirring for 5 minutes. After 5mins, stir the mixture till all the chocolate chunks are melted and its smooth and thick. Add in the coffee mixture, mix well. Let cool at room temperature (no chilling) for use later.

Coffee French Buttercream

adapted from: [http://kitty01may.blog.163.com/blog/static/](http://kitty01may.blog.163.com/blog/static/2591141020101205654520/)

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100g white caster sugar,

100g brown sugar,

50g water,

75g egg yolks,

250g butter, softened

1/2 tsp vanilla essence

75g dark chocolate

1/2 packet of instant coffee

Melt the chocolate in a metal cup over a pot of hot water. Let cool and set aside.

Dissolve the instant coffee in 3 tbs boiling water. Let cool and set aside.

Cut the butter into small blocks.

Beat the egg yolks till in doubles in volume.

Cook the sugars together with the water till the mixture reaches about 115°C. I don't have a candy thermometer so I just removed the mixture from the fire when it started bubbling vigorously. Slowly pour this mixture into the beaten egg yolks while beating continuously.

Continue mixing until the mixture cools down to room temperature.

Add the butter a few blocks at a time, making sure that the butter is homogeneously mixed into the mixture from above each time, until all the butter is used up.

Add the vanilla essence and mix till even.

Add the melted chocolate, mix evenly.

Add the coffee and mix evenly.

Assembly:

- Start with one layer one cake at the base. Spread 1/2 of the buttercream over it evenly.
- Next place another layer of cake over the cream.
- Then spread 1/4 of the chocolate ganache evenly over the cake.
- Then lay the next cake layer over. And again spread evenly the other half of the

buttercream over the cake.

- Lay the last layer of cake over and then spread $\frac{2}{3}$ of the remaining the ganache all over cake. Chill for 30 minutes, remove from fridge and spread more neatly with the last of the ganache.