

APRIL

Gluten-Free Chocolate Cake



This epic layer cake packs a triple threat: rich chocolate flavor; a stir-together, no-fuss method; and a gluten-free flour blend that'll blow your mind. Our magic gluten-free flour blend is comprised of four Bob's Red Mill products—Gluten Free 1-to-1 Baking Flour, Super Fine Almond Flour, Gluten Free Oat Flour, and Coconut Flour—each one bringing a signature texture boost to our cake base. Finished with a satin Swiss Buttercream, this is a cake worthy of any occasion, big or small. Plus, we'll walk you from mixing the batter to frosting flawlessly, leading you to creating the ideal chocolate cake that just happens to be gluten-free.

INGREDIENT BREAKDOWN

Great recipes require great ingredients. Here's how each one helps create our flawless, stir-together Gluten-Free Chocolate Cake.

MELTED UNSALTED BUTTER: For our stir-together cake formula, we melt the butter so it incorporates smoothly. We use melted butter instead of oil because it gives our cake a richer flavor.

GRANULATED SUGAR: Sugar adds sweetness, but it also tenderizes the cake, making the crumb moist.

APPLESAUCE: We use unsweetened applesauce to add a boost of moisture, keeping the cake fresh longer. Make sure you use an unsweetened variety of applesauce to avoid adding extra sugar to the cake.

MAPLE SYRUP: Maple syrup is graded by color, with A varieties being the most common form to purchase, with a nice medium-amber color and medium flavor. If you have access to grade B maple syrup, try it—its dark amber color denotes its intense maple taste. Grade A is the most common, though, and works just as well. Maple syrup adds mild caramel flavor and reduces the amount of granulated sugar used.

EGGS: We use five large eggs for leavening, flavor, richness, and structure in our gluten-free cake. This cake calls for more eggs than usual to compensate for the coconut flour in our gluten-free flour blend. (See The Ultimate Gluten-Free Flour Blend.)

VANILLA EXTRACT: A cake without vanilla—even a chocolate cake—lacks depth of flavor. So, a dash of high-quality vanilla extract enhances the decadent cocoa notes in this cake.

DUTCH PROCESS COCOA POWDER: Dutch process cocoa is treated with an alkaline solution of potassium carbonate to make it milder, less acidic, and darker. It is less likely to clump than natural cocoa, but with this stir-together cake, we still sift it with the

other dry ingredients to ensure it will incorporate into the batter evenly.

KOSHER SALT: We bake with kosher salt because, unlike most commercial salt, it doesn't contain iodine, making it taste purer and more palatable. Also, the salt crystals are larger. Table salt is much finer, so you would use half of what a recipe with kosher salt calls for.

BAKING POWDER: Comprised of baking soda, powdered acid or acids, and a starch, most baking powders are double-acting, meaning the reaction occurs twice, using two different acids. The first is a very quick reaction that occurs when baking powder is combined with a liquid, aerating the batter. The second reaction is slower-acting, occurring when heated and baked.

BAKING SODA: Baking soda requires an acid be present in the batter (in this case, cocoa powder and buttermilk) to

help tenderize baked goods. Baking soda releases most of its gas immediately once combined with an acid and moisture, so doughs and batters leavened only or primarily with baking soda should be baked soon after it's added. If too much is used, the final baked product may have a slightly soapy taste and a brownish-yellow cast. If too little is used, making the batter or dough too acidic, the final product may not brown adequately.

WHOLE BUTTERMILK: This acidic dairy product adds a tart taste to baked goods. Make sure you use whole buttermilk, not fat-free or low-fat, because the tenderizing fat in the buttermilk helps make a richer cake. If you have difficulty locating whole buttermilk, you can make a quick substitution. Simply add 1 tablespoon (15 grams) distilled white vinegar or lemon juice to 1 cup (240 grams) whole milk. Let sit for five minutes to allow mixture to thicken.



THE ULTIMATE GLUTEN-FREE FLOUR BLEND

Four specialty flours from Bob's Red Mill combine to create the supreme gluten-free base for our chocolate cake.

BOB'S RED MILL GLUTEN FREE 1-TO-1

BAKING FLOUR: This easy-to-use flour blend can be used in many of your favorite baking recipes, replacing traditional wheat-based flour cup for cup. Bob's Red Mill blends high-quality ingredients like sweet rice and brown rice flour, potato starch, sorghum flour, tapioca flour, and xanthan gum to create a blend that works wonderfully in recipes that call for baking powder and/or baking soda. The rice flours have a smooth, neutral flavor. Sorghum flour has a mildly sweet flavor. The potato starch, tapioca flour, and xanthan gum mimic the elasticity of gluten, giving chewiness, and also help the other flours bind together.

BOB'S RED MILL SUPER FINE

ALMOND FLOUR: Bob's Red Mill almond flour is made from whole blanched almonds ground into a fine meal. Almond flour lends a nutty flavor and moist texture to baked goods, and it pairs especially well with other alternative baking flours like coconut and tapioca flour. Because almonds are high in fat, almond flour adds tenderness to your gluten-free baked goods.

BOB'S RED MILL GLUTEN FREE OAT

FLOUR: At the onset of gluten-free baking, because of cross-contamination in factories, oat flour was not considered a strictly gluten-free product. But at Bob's Red Mill, their oat flour is processed, packaged, and tested in their dedicated gluten-free facility. The benefit of oat flour in gluten-free baking is how light and fine it is, creating fluffy cakes.

Plus, the mild oat flour taste takes a natural back seat to the stronger flavors of spice, chocolate, or vanilla.

BOB'S RED MILL COCONUT FLOUR:

Comprised of dried coconut meat that has been blended to a fine powder, coconut flour is high in nutrients like magnesium, iron, and potassium. Due to its high dietary fiber content, coconut flour is particularly absorbent, latching onto the moisture provided by eggs and dairy. To compensate, we add an extra egg to the base cake recipe. Because coconut flour is prone to clumping, it's best to sift it before using.

Each of these specialty flours has a shorter shelf life than your typical all-purpose flour. To extend their longevity, you can store all four in the freezer for up to 4 months.





GLUTEN-FREE CHOCOLATE CAKE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

Behold the perfect chocolate cake that just happens to be gluten-free! Sporting a groundbreaking gluten-free flour blend of Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free 1-to-1 Baking Flour, almond flour, oat flour, and coconut flour, this cake has all the tenderness of a traditional one and still packs rich chocolate flavor. Finished with a smooth-as-silk Swiss Buttercream frosting, the cake offers decadence and dynamic texture for the ultimate gluten-free experience.

- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, melted
- 1 cup (240 grams) unsweetened applesauce
- ½ cup (170 grams) maple syrup
- 5 large eggs (250 grams), room temperature and lightly beaten
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
- 1¼ cups (185 grams) Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free 1-to-1 Baking Flour
- ¾ cup (72 grams) Bob's Red Mill Super Fine Almond Flour
- ¾ cup (64 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder
- ½ cup (30 grams) Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free Oat Flour
- ¼ cup (28 grams) Bob's Red Mill Organic Coconut Flour
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- 1 cup (240 grams) whole buttermilk

Swiss Buttercream (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line bottoms of 2 (8-inch) round cake pans with parchment paper; spray parchment and sides of pan with cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together

sugar, melted butter, applesauce, and maple syrup. Whisk in eggs and vanilla.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together baking flour, almond flour, cocoa, oat flour, coconut flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Sift flour mixture once. Gradually add flour mixture to sugar mixture alternately with buttermilk, whisking just until combined after each addition. Divide batter between prepared pans.

4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 40 to 45 minutes. Let cool in pans for 15 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

5. Level cake layers, reserving tops. Place 1 cake layer on a cake stand. Spread 1¼ cups (315 grams) Swiss Buttercream on top, smoothing with an offset spatula. Top with remaining cake layer. Spread remaining buttercream on top and sides of cake. Crumble reserved cake tops; sprinkle onto buttercream as desired. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving.

SWISS BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 5 cups

- 1¼ cups (350 grams) granulated sugar
- ¾ cup (180 grams) egg whites (about 6 large egg whites)
- 2 cups (454 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

1. In a heatproof bowl, whisk together sugar and egg whites by hand. Place bowl over a saucepan of simmering water. Cook, whisking occasionally, until an instant-read thermometer registers 120°F (49°C) to 130°F (54°C).

2. Carefully transfer sugar mixture to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Beat at high speed until stiff peaks form and bowl is cool to the touch, 7 to 8 minutes. Add butter, 2 tablespoons (28 grams) at a time, beating until combined after each addition. (If buttercream breaks, beat for 2 to 3 minutes, and the emulsion will come back together.) Beat in vanilla and salt. Use immediately, or refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days. If refrigerating, let come to room temperature and rewhip before using.



MIXING AND BAKING

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line bottoms of 2 (8-inch) round cake pans with parchment paper; spray parchment and sides of pan with cooking spray. Lining pans with parchment and coating them with cooking spray ensures our cakes release cleanly from the pans after baking.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together sugar, melted butter, applesauce, and maple syrup. Whisk in eggs and vanilla. This magical cake is a stir-together thanks to melted butter, applesauce, and maple syrup. All ingredients should be room temperature, not cold, before mixing, or you risk resolidifying the butter.



3. In a medium bowl, whisk together baking flour, almond flour, cocoa, oat flour, coconut flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Sift flour mixture once. Sifting dry ingredients together removes any lumps (mostly from the cocoa powder). This also makes sure the flour mixture is well blended and helps the final batter to be smooth.



MIXING AND BAKING

4. Gradually add flour mixture to sugar mixture alternately with buttermilk, whisking just until combined after each addition. As a rule of thumb, always mix lighter ingredients into a heavier one. Mix dry and wet ingredients only until just combined. This keeps the batter from getting overmixed, which can present as a very dense cake.



5. Divide batter between prepared pans. For equal cake layers, weigh your cake batter. Place one of your prepared cake pans on the scale, tare the scale, and then divide the batter between your prepared pans until the scale registers the same weight in grams for both.

6. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 40 to 45 minutes. Let cool in pans for 15 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Letting your cake layers cool before frosting is essential; otherwise, your buttercream will melt when applied.



SWISS BUTTERCREAM DREAMS

We opt for Swiss meringue buttercream, a combination of butter and Swiss meringue, because it's easy to spread, firms up nicely, and has an incomparable buttery texture. Swiss meringue is more stable than French meringue (unheated egg whites whipped with sugar) and lighter than Italian meringue (sugar syrup poured into egg whites and beaten). Its stability allows it to accept butter without collapsing, creating dreamy Swiss meringue buttercream!

An added bonus? This buttercream takes on food dye very well, meaning it shines in both bright and light shades of color.



1. In a heatproof bowl, whisk together sugar and egg whites by hand. Why an initial quick whisk? You want to make sure to evenly distribute the sugar within the egg whites so it can dissolve easily.

2. Place bowl over a saucepan of simmering water. Cook, whisking occasionally, until an instant-read thermometer registers 120°F (49°C) to 130°F (54°C). The sugar needs to dissolve into the egg whites, ideally at 120°F (49°C) to 130°F (54°C). If you do not have a thermometer to check the temperature, rub the mixture between two fingers. If it is completely smooth, it is ready.



SWISS BUTTERCREAM DREAMS



3. Carefully transfer sugar mixture to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Beat at high speed until stiff peaks form and bowl is cool to the touch, 7 to 8 minutes. Once whipped, the mixture should be shiny and glossy. Keep in mind: it's important for the bowl and the whisk attachment to be very clean—a little bit of residual fat can affect how the egg whites whip.

4. Add butter, 2 tablespoons (28 grams) at a time, beating until combined after each addition. (If buttercream breaks, beat for 2 to 3 minutes, and the emulsion will come back together.) Beat in vanilla and salt. The butter needs to be softened, which means it should hold an impression when pressed with a finger but still show some resistance to pressure. If too cold or too warm, it won't incorporate well into the Swiss meringue. (This can, however, be easily fixed. See Swiss Buttercream Quick Fix.)

5. Use immediately, or refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days. If refrigerating, let come to room temperature and rewhip before using. This is an excellent buttercream to make ahead of time. Just know that Swiss meringue buttercream is always best when used at room temperature and will require a quick rewhip to make it silky smooth again.



SWISS BUTTERCREAM QUICK FIX

There are many ways to save the buttercream if something goes wrong while making it.



PROBLEM: Your butter is too cold when you add it to the meringue.

FIX: Warm the bowl with a hot towel to help soften the butter.

PROBLEM: The meringue is too warm when the butter is added.

FIX: Place the bowl in the refrigerator to help the meringue firm back up.

PROBLEM: The buttercream breaks or looks curdled while beating in the butter.

FIX: Just keep beating it and it will eventually come back together. Don't worry—it's nearly impossible to overwhip this buttercream.



FROST LIKE A PRO



1. Level cake layers, reserving tops. Using a long, serrated knife, make a notch at the base of the slight dome of one cooled cake layer. With knife parallel to the countertop, slice and level top. Repeat with remaining cake layer. This will keep your cakes perfectly even and will lend you the extra cake to create a crumble.



2. Place 1 cake layer on a cake stand. Spread $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups (315 grams) Swiss Buttercream on top, smoothing with an offset spatula. Measuring out the amount of buttercream is important because you want to ensure you have enough left over to cover the rest of the cake.

FROST LIKE A PRO



3. Top with remaining cake layer. Spread remaining buttercream on top and sides of cake. Place bench scraper or offset spatula on the cake stand so the edge of the scraper or spatula is vertical. Slowly turn the stand without moving the scraper until the surface is smooth, removing excess frosting from the edge of the scraper as necessary. Use a spatula to smooth the top of the cake, working from the outer edges of the top into the center, holding your spatula at a 45-degree angle, to create a level coat and clean edges.

4. Crumble reserved cake tops; sprinkle onto buttercream as desired. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving. If your cake has been refrigerated for a long period of time, let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes so the buttercream can soften a bit for a better texture.

