

Chocolate Cake with Peanut Butter Frosting and Salty Peanuts

Serves 16

Ingredients

Chocolate cake

1 cup unsalted butter, cut into cubes, plus more for greasing the pan
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 cups granulated sugar
1 1/4 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon kosher salt
3/4 cup Dutch-processed cocoa powder
1/2 cup buttermilk
2 large eggs

Peanut butter frosting

1 1/2 cups creamy peanut butter
1 cup unsalted butter, softened
3 cups confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon kosher salt
2 tablespoons heavy cream
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 handful chopped salted peanuts, for garnish (optional)

Instructions:

Heat the oven to 350°F. Grease a half sheet pan (12x17-inch or 13x18-inch, depending on the pan) with butter. Line the bottom of the pan with parchment paper leaving an inch or two of overhang on each side for easy removal. Lightly grease the parchment.

To make the cake, sift together flour, sugar, baking soda, and salt in a large mixing bowl.

Heat 1 cup of water in a small saucepan over medium heat. Once simmering, remove from the heat and whisk in the butter and cocoa powder. Whisk until the butter melts and the mixture is smooth. Let cool slightly.

Make a well in the middle of the dry ingredients. Add the cooled cocoa mixture, buttermilk, and eggs and mix using a hand mixer or whisk until well combined. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until the cake has doubled in size and the edges start to pull away from the sides of the pan. Remove and let cool completely.

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Once the cake is cool, invert it onto a large cutting board and trim 1/2 inch off of each side. Cut the cake in half so you have two rectangles that are approximately 8x12-inch. Crumble the trimmed edges into a bowl and reserve for topping the cake.

To make the frosting, add the peanut butter and butter to a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Beat until well combined. On the lowest speed, slowly add the confectioners' sugar. Once combined, add the salt, heavy cream, and vanilla extract. Once incorporated, increase the speed to high and beat for about 30 seconds, until light and fluffy.

To build the cake, place one of the cake halves, bottom side up, on a platter. Evenly slather half of the frosting onto the cake and spread covering the top of the cake, leaving the sides bare. Top with the second half and then slather the remaining frosting over top. Smooth the frosting, then sprinkle with some of the reserved cake crumbs and salted peanuts if using.

Credit: food52.com