

Peanut Butter and Chocolate Cake

Serves 10-12

Hands-on Time 40 minutes (plus cooling)

Baking Time 25 minutes

Ingredients

- 350g unsalted butter (softened, plus extra for greasing)
- 40g + 2 tsp cocoa powder
- 50ml + 3 tbsp full-fat milk
- 120g dark chocolate (minimum 70%)
- 300g caster sugar
- 4 medium eggs (separated)
- 240g self-raising flour
- ½ tsp salt (divided)
- 150g soured cream
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 150g smooth peanut butter
- 300g icing sugar
- 100ml single cream (optional, for ganache)
- 100g white chocolate (optional, for ganache)
- Handful of unsalted peanuts (chopped, for decoration)

Equipment

- Scissors
- Baking parchment
- 2 x 20cm fixed or push-bottom cake tins
- Saucepan
- Spatula
- 2 large bowls
- Electric or hand whisk
- Sieve
- Wide bowl
- Wire rack
- Microwaveable bowl
- Palette knife
- Disposable piping bag and nozzle (optional)

Method

1. Prepare the tins

- Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C (fan)/350°F/Gas Mark 4.
- Line the cake tins with parchment circles. Grease the tins and dust with 1 tsp cocoa powder each, tapping out any excess.

2. Make the cake batter

- Melt 200g butter and 50ml milk in a saucepan over low heat. Remove from heat, add the dark chocolate, and stir until melted. Let cool.
- Whisk 150g sugar and the egg yolks in a large bowl until pale and thick.
- In another bowl, whisk the egg whites until foamy, then gradually add the remaining 150g sugar. Whisk to stiff peaks.
- Sieve the flour, 40g cocoa, and 1/8 tsp salt into a wide bowl.
- Mix the soured cream and vanilla into the cooled chocolate mixture. Add this to the egg yolk mixture and stir gently.
- Fold in the flour mixture in thirds, alternating with the egg whites, until just combined.

3. Bake the cakes

- Divide the batter between the tins and bake on the middle shelf for 25 minutes.
- Cool in the tins for 30 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack to cool completely.

4. Make the peanut butter buttercream

- Whisk 150g butter and the icing sugar until smooth. Add the peanut butter and ¼ tsp salt, and whisk again.
- Add 3 tbsp milk and whisk until light and smooth enough to pipe. Adjust consistency with extra milk if needed.

5. Assemble and decorate

- Place one cake layer bottom-side down. Spread 1/3 of the buttercream on top.
- Sandwich with the second cake layer, top-side down.
- Use 1/3 of the buttercream to fill gaps and coat the sides and top of the cake. Smooth with a palette knife or create decorative swirls.

6. Optional ganache drip

- Heat the single cream until steaming. Pour over the white chocolate and stir until smooth. Let cool to a ribbon consistency.
- Spoon the ganache over the cake, allowing it to drip down the sides. Chill to set.
- Pipe using the remaining buttercream and decorate with chopped peanuts.

Enjoy!