

# The Matilda Chocolate Cake

**Serves 16**

**Hands-on Time 40 minutes (plus cooling)**

**Baking Time 32 minutes**

## Ingredients

- 240g unsalted butter (softened, plus extra for greasing)
- 290g cocoa powder (plus extra for dusting)
- 160ml olive oil
- 370g caster sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 290g plain flour
- 2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1 1/4 tsp salt (plus a pinch)
- 5 tsp vanilla extract (divided)
- 250ml double cream
- 1 1/2 tbsp instant coffee powder (fine)
- 250ml boiling water
- 150g cream cheese
- 480g icing sugar
- 35ml full-fat milk

## Equipment

- Scissors
- Baking parchment
- 2 x 20cm fixed or push-bottom cake tins
- Mixing bowl
- Electric whisk or hand whisk
- Spatula
- Wire rack
- Bread knife
- Palette knife

## Method

### 1. Prepare the cake tins

- Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C (fan)/350°F/Gas Mark 4.
- Cut two circles of parchment to fit the bottoms of the tins.
- Grease the tins with butter, line with parchment, and grease the parchment.
- Dust the tins with cocoa powder, tapping out any excess.

### 2. Make the cake batter

- In a mixing bowl, whisk together the olive oil and caster sugar.
- Add the eggs and whisk until combined.
- Add the flour, 170g cocoa powder, bicarbonate of soda, baking powder, and 1 1/4 tsp salt. Stir with a spatula until combined (the mixture may be stiff).
- Loosen the mixture with the double cream and 2 tsp vanilla extract. Stir until smooth.
- Dissolve the coffee in the boiling water and slowly pour into the batter, stirring gently. Scrape the bottom of the bowl to ensure everything is combined.



### **3. Bake the cakes**

- Divide the batter evenly between the prepared tins and smooth the tops.
- Bake on the middle shelf for 32 minutes.
- Let the cakes cool in the tins for 15 minutes, then turn them out onto a wire rack. Remove the parchment and let them cool completely.

### **4. Make the frosting**

- In a clean bowl, combine the cream cheese and 240g butter.
- Add 120g cocoa powder, icing sugar, and a pinch of salt. Stir gently to avoid an icing sugar explosion, then whisk until thick and smooth.
- Add the milk and 2 tsp vanilla extract. Whisk briefly to loosen the frosting.

### **5. Assemble the cake**

- Use a bread knife to level the tops of the cakes.
- Place one cake on a serving plate and spread one-third of the frosting on top.
- Invert the second cake and place it on top of the frosting.
- Cover the top and sides of the cake with the remaining frosting, smoothing it with a palette knife.

### **Tips**

- For a neater finish, chill the cake for 20 minutes before applying the final layer of frosting.
- If the frosting is too thick, add a splash more milk; if too thin, add a little more icing sugar.

Enjoy!