

# *Le Gâteau au Chocolat l'Éminence Brune*

(Bittersweet Chocolate Cake)

## INGREDIENTS

### THE CHOCOLATE

2 tsp. instant espresso coffee  
¼ cup boiling water  
7 ounces semisweet baking chocolate  
2 ounces unsweetened (bitter) chocolate

### THE BATTER

4 large eggs (if chilled, set in tepid water for 5 min)  
⅔ cup sugar (extra fine granulated)  
4 ounces (1 stick) soft unsalted butter  
¼ tsp. cream of tartar and a pinch of salt  
2 Tbsp. additional sugar  
¾ cup cornstarch (to measure, sift directly into dry measure cups and sweep off excess)

### THE CAKE PANS

Two 8 x 1½ inch round one-piece cake pans (4 cup capacity)  
2 tsp. soft butter  
2 rounds of wax paper cut to fit pans  
¼ cup flour

### FOR THE CHOCOLATE AND BUTTER GLAZE

1 tsp. instant espresso coffee  
2 Tbsp. boiling water  
4 ounces semisweet chocolate  
1 ounce unsweetened chocolate  
2 ounces (½ stick) unsalted butter

Preheat oven to 350 degrees, and set rack in lower-middle level.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### THE CHOCOLATE

Blend the coffee and water in a 6-cup saucepan and set it in a larger pan of simmering water. Remove from heat. Break up the chocolate, stir it into the coffee, cover, and set aside to melt slowly until you are ready to use.

### THE CAKE PANS

Smear butter inside both cake pans, covering them completely. Place wax paper in bottom of each, butter it, then roll flour around in first pan to coat inside completely. Knock

flour out into the second pan, coat it, and knock out excess flour.

### THE BATTER

Separate the eggs, dropping the whites into a clean, dry beating bowl, and the yolks into a 3 – 4-quart mixing bowl. With a portable electric beater, start beating the egg yolks, gradually adding the sugar, and continue beating until yolks are thick, pale yellow, and when a bit is lifted in blades of beater, it drops off in a thick ribbon that slowly dissolves on the surface of the mixture—about 3 minutes of beating.

### FINISHING THE CHOCOLATE

It should now be soft. If not, remove pan and reheat water; remove from heat, set chocolate pan in again, and beat the chocolate with the portable mixer until perfectly smooth. Beat in the butter, 2 tablespoons at a time, then gradually beat the chocolate and butter into the egg-yolk mixture.

### THE EGG WHITES

Immediately change beater blades and proceed to the egg whites. Start beating at moderately low

*(continued on reverse)*



(continued from reverse)

speed for a minute or so, until foaming, and beat in cream of tartar and salt. Gradually increase speed to fast, and continue beating until egg whites hold their shape in soft peaks; gradually beat in the 2 tablespoons extra sugar, and continue beating until egg whites form stiff shining peaks; they are now ready to be folded into cake batter.

### FOLDING

Being sure chocolate and egg-yolk mixture is smooth and soft—stir over hot water if it has stiffened—sift on one quarter of the cornstarch, and scoop in one quarter of the egg whites; stir in with rubber spatula. Then scoop rest of egg whites on top, sift on one third of the remaining cornstarch, and begin to fold as follows: Plunge rubber spatula down from top center of egg whites to bottom of bowl, bring to edge of bowl, then turn it as

you lift it back up to the surface, thus bringing a bit of the chocolate up over the egg whites. Rapidly repeat the movement several times, rotating the bowl as you do so. Sift on half the rest of the cornstarch, continue with several rapid scoops of the spatula, then sift on the last of the cornstarch, and continue folding until blended.

### INTO THE CAKE PAN

At once turn the batter into the pans, running it up the edge all around with your spatula to prevent cakes from humping in the middle as they bake. Pans will be about half full. Bang once on work surface to settle the batter, and place in oven, one near rear corner of rack, and the other diagonally across near front corner.

### BAKING

Set timer for 15 minutes. Cake will rise to about top of pans, and are done when only the center shakes a little when moved gently. A cake tester should come out almost clean when inserted around the edges, but have a number of wet brown specks attached to it when plunged into the center 2 inches.

### COOLING AND UNMOLDING

Set pans on racks for air circulation, and let cool. Cakes will sink slightly and will shrink from sides of pan. Because cake texture is very soft and delicate, you will find them

easiest to unmold when chilled and firm; thus, when cool, wrap and refrigerate for an hour or so.

### FILLING, ICING, AND SERVING

Melt the chocolate with the coffee as before, then beat in the butter. If too liquid for easy spreading, beat over cold water until lightly thickened. Unmold one of the cakes directly onto serving plate, and stick pieces of wax paper underneath all around to catch icing dribbles. Spread top with a 1/8-inch layer of icing. With the help of a flexible-blade spatula, unmold second cake on top of the first. Cover top and sides with icing. Peel out the wax paper strips from under cake. If you are serving soon, leave at room temperature. Otherwise, cover with an upside-down bowl and refrigerate (or freeze), and let come to room temperature for an hour or so before serving, to let the chocolate icing regain its bloom and the cake its texture.

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This recipe can be found in *From Julia's Kitchen*, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York.

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