

Chocolate Cake

(Vegan, Vegetarian, Gluten & Dairy free)

INGREDIENTS

- 450ml rice milk
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar
- 300g caster sugar
- 300g gluten-free self-raising flour
- 100g cocoa powder
- 1 tablespoon gluten-free baking powder
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- ¼ teaspoon xanthan gum
- 1 pinch of salt
- 160ml sunflower oil
- 2 tablespoons vanilla extract

ICING

- 225g dairy-free sunflower spread
- 225g icing sugar
- 50g cocoa powder
- 100g dairy-free dark chocolate (70% cocoa)

TO DECORATE

- dairy-free chocolate buttons or fresh berries

1. Preheat the oven to 220°C/200°C fan/425°F/gas 7. Line the base of two 20cm cake tins with baking paper and lightly grease the paper and tins with oil.
2. Mix the rice milk and cider vinegar together and set aside. Don't worry if it separates – you are effectively making a buttermilk that will give the cake a light texture and help to activate the raising agents.
3. Put the sugar in a large mixing bowl. Sift in the flour and cocoa powder, then add baking powder, bicarb of soda, xanthan gum and salt. Mix together really well.
4. Pour the oil, vanilla and the rice milk and vinegar mixture into the dry ingredients. Mix them together really well either by hand or gently using a handheld blender.
5. Divide the mixture between the two prepared tins. Tap the tins on your work surface to remove any large air bubbles and place on the middle shelf in the oven. Bake for about 30 to 35 minutes (test with a skewer or sharp knife – if it comes out clean, it's cooked).
6. Leave the cakes to cool in their tins for 5 minutes before turning out onto wire racks to cool completely.
7. To make the icing, put the sunflower spread in a bowl. Sift in the icing sugar and cocoa powder, then whisk to combine.
8. Break the chocolate up into pieces in a microwave-safe bowl and cook on high in 10-second bursts until it has just melted. Mix into the icing.
9. Spread an even layer of icing on one of the cooled cakes and then place the other cake on top. Top the cake with the rest of the icing. Decorate with dairy-free chocolate buttons (or fresh berries if preferred).

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