

Peanut Butter Chocolate Cake from She Makes and Bakes

Prep time 1 hour, 30 minutes Bake time 30 minutes at 350

Serves 12-16

For the cake:

2 cups all purpose flour
2 1/2 cups sugar
3/4 cups unsweetened cocoa powder (Dutch process is best)
2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup canola oil
1 cup sour cream
1 1/2 cups water
2 tablespoons white vinegar
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 eggs

For the peanut butter frosting:

10 ounces cream cheese, room temperature
1/2 cup butter, room temperature
5 cups powdered sugar
2/3 cup smooth peanut butter (better to use a commercial brand because the oil doesn't separate)

For the chocolate peanut butter ganache:

8 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped
3 tablespoons smooth peanut butter
2 tablespoons light corn syrup
1/2 cup half-and-half

To make the cake, preheat the oven to 350 degrees and spray three 8- or 9-inch cake pans with baking spray (cooking spray with flour in it). In a large bowl, sift together the dry ingredients. Add the oil and sour cream and mix together. Next add the water and stir it together. Mix in the vinegar and vanilla and stir until combined. Add the eggs and whisk until everything is well combined. Divide the batter into the three pans and bake for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let cool in the pans for 20 minutes and then finish cooling on a wire rack.

The cakes are very soft, and it's helpful for them to be cold before you work with them. I usually make these the day before I need to frost and assemble them. I wrap them with

plastic wrap and store them in the fridge overnight. You also can place them in the freezer for about 30 minutes before you frost them.

To make the frosting, in the bowl of a stand mixer or with a hand mixer, beat together the cream cheese and butter until smooth and well combined. Add the powdered sugar one cup at a time, mixing in between until the powdered sugar is incorporated. When everything is smooth and the frosting is light and fluffy, add the peanut butter and mix again until combined.

To assemble the cake, spread one tablespoon of the frosting on your cake plate or board. This will keep the cake from sliding off the plate. If your cakes are domed, slide the tops of the cakes off so that they're level. Place the first layer flat side down on the plate. Spread about 2/3 cup of the frosting on top of the first layer. Place the second layer on top and spread with another 2/3 cup of frosting. Place the third layer flat side up on top. Press down lightly on the cakes. Spread a thin layer of frosting on the sides and top of the cake and then place it in the fridge for 15 to 30 minutes until set. This is a crumb layer and will keep your dark crumbs out of your light frosting.

Once your crumb layer is set, spread the rest of the frosting around the sides and top of the cake. The top of the cake will be covered with the ganache, so it doesn't have to look perfect. Once your cake is frosted, put it in the fridge so the frosting sets. This will help with the ganache.

To make the ganache, combine the chocolate, peanut butter, and corn syrup in a bowl over a pot of simmering water or the top of a double boiler. Cook, stirring often, until the chocolate has melted and is smooth. Remove from heat and whisk in the half-and-half until well combined. Let cool slightly. Once it's a touch thicker, pour it over the top of the cake, spreading it to the edges so it drips down the cake. Place the cake back in the fridge for at least 30 minutes before serving so the ganache can set.

Store in the refrigerator but serve at room temperature...because cold cake is no bueno.

Source: [Smitten Kitchen](#)