

BANANA CHOCOLATE WALNUT CAKE

SERVES 8

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MIN START TO FINISH: 2 1/2 HR

A great way to use very ripe bananas, this easy-to-make cake incorporates everything you love about banana bread and adds a few more favorites—chocolate, walnuts, and cinnamon—for good measure. (It's also much more tender, with a light, moist crumb.)

2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking soda

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 stick unsalted butter, softened, plus 2 tablespoons, melted and cooled

1 cup sugar, divided

2 large eggs

1 1/4 cups mashed very ripe bananas (about 3 medium)

2/3 cup plain whole-milk yogurt

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 (3 1/2- to 4-oz) bar 70%-cacao bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped

1 cup walnuts (3 oz), toasted (see Tips, page 130), cooled, and coarsely chopped

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

- Preheat oven to 375°F with rack in middle. Butter a 9-inch square cake pan.
- Stir together flour, baking soda, and salt. ► Beat together softened butter (1 stick) and 3/4 cup sugar in a medium bowl with an electric mixer at medium speed until pale and fluffy, then beat in eggs 1 at a time until blended. Beat in bananas, yogurt, and vanilla (mixture will look curdled).
- With mixer at low speed, add flour mixture and mix until just incorporated.
- Toss together chocolate, nuts, cinnamon, melted butter, and remaining 1/4 cup sugar in a small bowl. Spread half of banana batter in cake pan and sprinkle with half of chocolate mixture. Spread remaining batter evenly over filling and sprinkle remaining chocolate mixture on top.
- Bake until cake is golden and a wooden pick inserted in center of cake comes out clean, 35 to 40 minutes. Cool cake in pan on a rack 30 minutes, then turn out onto rack and cool completely, right side up.

COOKS' NOTE: Cake can be made 2 days ahead and kept in an airtight container at room temperature.