

THE GREAT AMERICAN CAKE

Smith Island Cake



Smith Island, Maryland, may be a small place, but it boasts a cake with a reputation so grand, it recently became the official state dessert. With its multiple cake layers and rich, fudgy frosting, Smith Island Cake looks impressive, yet it doesn't require the precise cutting of layers that you might think.

To make this cake you will need:

- 10 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 recipe yellow layer cake batter (enough to make two 8-inch layers; about 5 1/3 cups of batter)*

For the frosting: Place chocolate in large bowl. Heat cream, sugar, and salt in saucepan over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally,

until sugar dissolves and mixture begins to simmer. Pour hot cream mixture over chocolate and whisk until smooth. Whisk in vanilla and butter until glossy. Cover and refrigerate until icing is firm but still spreadable, about 1 hour.

For the cake: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour two 8-inch cake pans and line with parchment paper. Spread one-eighth of batter (about 1/8 cup) evenly in each pan and bake until edges are golden brown and cake springs back when touched, 10 to 14 minutes. Cool on rack 5 minutes. Run a knife around pan perimeter to loosen cake, then invert onto rack to finish

cooling. Cool pans to room temperature, then wipe clean and repeat process 3 more times for a total of 8 layers.

To assemble: Place 1 cooled cake layer on serving platter. Spread 1/4 cup frosting over cake. (If frosting is too firm, let warm at room temperature 5 minutes, then stir to soften.) Top with second cake layer and additional 1/4 cup frosting. Repeat, alternating layers of cake and frosting and finishing with cake layer. Frost top and sides with remaining frosting. Serve.

*Go to CooksCountry.com for our Yellow Layer Cake recipe or use your own.