

# Cooking with Milk Chocolate

**SHOPPING** There is a difference in flavor between American and European styles. For best results, use high-quality European brands like Lindt, Perugina, and Valrhona. They're available at supermarkets, at specialty foods stores, and online.

**STORING** The milk solids make milk chocolate more perishable than dark chocolate. Store milk chocolate in an airtight container in a cool, dry place. It should keep for 10 to 12 months.

**COOKING** Because it contains more sugar and milk sugar (lactose), milk chocolate burns more easily than dark chocolate. To prevent scorching, melt chopped milk chocolate in a bowl over barely simmering water or heat it in the microwave on low power in short bursts.

## "TOP TIER" DEVIL'S FOOD CAKE WITH SOUR CREAM-FUDGE FROSTING

**6 TO 8 SERVINGS** We love the idea of sharing the top tier of a wedding cake, but eating a dessert that's been frozen for a year can be less than satisfying. This adorable five-inch layer cake was inspired by the romantic tradition—and can be enjoyed right now.

### cake

- ¼ cup natural unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 ounce high-quality milk chocolate (such as Lindt, Perugina, or Valrhona), chopped
- ¼ cup boiling water
- ¼ cup buttermilk
- ⅔ cup cake flour
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅓ cup (packed) dark brown sugar
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 1 large egg
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

### frosting

- 8 ounces high-quality milk chocolate (such as Lindt, Perugina, or Valrhona), chopped
- ¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
- ⅔ cup sour cream
- 4 teaspoons light corn syrup
- Organic roses (for garnish)

### special equipment

- 2 5-inch-diameter cake pans with 2-inch-high sides

**CAKE** Position rack in center of oven; preheat to 350°F. Butter two 5-inch cake

pans with 2-inch-high sides. Line bottom of pans with parchment paper; butter parchment. Combine cocoa powder and milk chocolate in medium bowl. Pour ¼ cup boiling water over; whisk until mixture is smooth. Whisk in buttermilk.

Whisk flour, baking soda, and salt in another medium bowl. Using electric mixer, beat both sugars, oil, egg, and vanilla in large bowl until well blended. Add flour and cocoa mixtures; beat until blended (batter will be thin). Divide batter between pans.

Bake cakes until tester inserted into center comes out with some crumbs attached, 28 to 30 minutes. Cool in pans on racks 15 minutes. Turn out onto racks; peel off parchment. Turn over; cool on racks.

**FROSTING** Place chocolate in large metal bowl. Set bowl over saucepan of simmering water and stir until melted and smooth. Remove bowl from over water. Add butter and stir until melted, then add sour cream and corn syrup and whisk until smooth. Let frosting stand at room temperature until thick enough to spread, about 20 minutes.

Using serrated knife, trim top of cakes to make level. Cut each cake horizontally in half. Place 1 cake layer, cut side up, on platter. Spread ¼ cup frosting over, leaving ½-inch border. Top with second cake layer, cut side down. Spread ¼ cup frosting over, leaving ½-inch border. Top with third cake layer, cut side up. Spread ¼ cup frosting over, leaving ½-inch border. Top with remaining cake layer, cut side down. Spread ½ cup frosting over top and sides. Chill until frosting is set, about 30 minutes. Keep remaining frosting at room temperature.

Spread remaining frosting evenly over top and sides of cake. **DO AHEAD** Can be made 2 days ahead. Cover with cake dome and store at room temperature.

Arrange roses atop cake and serve.

**TEST-KITCHEN TIP** Five-inch cake pans are available at some kitchenware stores and restaurant supply stores and online from [cheftools.com](http://cheftools.com) and [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).