

# Knowledge @ Noon

## Chocolate, Chocolate, and More Chocolate!



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## Wednesday, February 21, 2024

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## Chocolate science, history and fun facts - Part 1

[Dixie Sandborn<dixie@msu.edu>](mailto:dixie@msu.edu), [Michigan State University Extension](#) - December 23, 2015

Chocolate is a fascinating plant and a fascinating food.





Cacao trees grow in rainforests and cacao pods grow directly on the trunks of cacao trees.

To start this brief series of articles about chocolate, [Michigan State University Extension](#) will look at its fascinating history and science of this incredible confection called chocolate.

Chocolate beans are the seeds of the cacao tree. Cacao (pronounced ka-KOW) trees grow in the rainforest and the pods grow directly on the trunks of cacao tree. Nearly all cacao trees grow within 20 degrees of the equator and 75 percent of them grow within 8 degrees on either side of it. Cacao originated in Mesoamerica in the Aztec, Olmec and Mayan territories. The Mayans and Aztecs were the first to plant cacao, and have proper claims to being the first cocoa (pronounced KO-ko) farmers, but today most cacao is grown in West Africa. Ghana currently grows the highest quality cocoa beans.

A cacao tree can live over 200 years, but only produces quality cocoa beans for about 25 years. Each year a tree will produce approximately 40 pods. Inside the cacao pods are seeds called cocoa beans. These seeds are the magical ingredient in chocolate.

Cacao trees have blossoms and pods all year long, the white and pink flowers are pollinated by a gnat, who then carries the pollen from one flower to another. It takes about four months for the pod to grow to the size of a small melon and another month to ripen into a yellow to dark orange pod. Each pod contains approximately 40 cocoa beans and is surrounded by a white pulp.

These beans were so valuable to the Aztecs and Mayans that they used them for money, special gifts and offerings to the gods. Taxes of the times could be paid with cocoa beans.

Some fun facts about the value of cocoa beans:

- 200 beans = a male turkey
- 100 beans = a female turkey or a rabbit
- 30 beans = a small rabbit
- 3 beans = turkey egg or an avocado
- 1 bean = tamale

Money really did grow on trees!



Once the pods are harvested, they are broke open and the beans are scooped out. For the next week, the pods are covered and kept in the dark to ferment. This fermentation process helps to bring out the cocoa's deep rich flavors. It is reported cocoa beans have more than 300 flavors. After fermenting, the beans are dried in the sun which darken the almond-shaped bean and are shipped to be roasted and processed.

In ancient Mayan civilizations, humans were often sacrificed to guarantee a good cacao harvest. Many tombs dating back more than a thousand years have traces of chocolate. Motechzoma Xocoyotzin (Montezuma II), the ninth emperor of the Aztecs, was one of the wealthiest men in the world and known as the Chocolate King. At one time he had a stash of nearly a billion cocoa beans. It is no wonder why Swedish scientist Linnaeus named the cacao tree *Theobroma cacao*, meaning "food of the gods."

Chocolate is one of the oldest natural foods. Up until recent history, chocolate was a bitter drink only enjoyed by the wealthy.

In the next few articles, the history, science and health benefits of chocolate will be examined. Until then, enjoy a few chocolates along with a cup of cocoa. Remember, it's always a great time to enjoy chocolate!

## References

- [A Brief History of Chocolate](#), Smithsonian
- [How to Host a Chocolate Tasting Party](#), Make Time for Chocolate

## Other articles in this series

- [Chocolate science, history and fun facts - Part 2](#)
- [Chocolate science, history and fun facts - Part 3](#)
- [Chocolate science, history and fun facts - Part 4](#)
- [Chocolate science, history and fun facts - Part 5: Cacao farming in Puerto Rico](#)

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## Chocolate science, history and fun facts - Part 2

[Dixie Sandborn<dixie@msu.edu>](mailto:dixie@msu.edu), [Michigan State University Extension](#) - December 23, 2015

Cacao beans are considered a superfood containing a wealth of antioxidants and essential vitamins and minerals.

This second article in a [Michigan State University Extension](#) series about the history and science of chocolate will look at the raw cacao beans and their health benefits. Cacao nibs are the dried part of the cacao bean. They are the only part of the bean used to make chocolate. Once the bean is roasted and removed from the outer shell, it is made into chocolate by separating the cocoa from the cocoa butter. According to the Huffington Post, [cacao nibs are better for you than dark chocolate](#).

Cacao is the raw, unprocessed form of chocolate. These untreated seeds, referred to as cacao beans, are considered a superfood containing a wealth of antioxidants and essential vitamins and minerals. Cacao is very complex and there are many components, including alkaloids, proteins, beta-carotene, leucine, linoleic, lipase, lysine and theobromine, which contribute to improving physical and mental health. Other components may lower blood pressure and help improve circulation by promoting dilation, strength and health of blood vessels.

Some of the minerals and vitamins in raw chocolate include:

- Magnesium and other essential minerals including calcium, sulfur, zinc, iron, copper, potassium.
- Polyphenols called flavonoids with antioxidant properties.
- Vitamins B1, B2, B3, B5, B9 and E.
- Essential heart-healthy fats, including oleic acid, a monounsaturated fat.
- Protein.
- Fiber.





Cacao beans contain a wealth of antioxidants and essential vitamins and minerals.

This is a closer look at what some of these minerals and vitamins can do for your health:

- **Magnesium:** Cacao beans are one of the best dietary sources of magnesium — magnesium is needed for more than 300 biochemical reactions in our bodies. It's essential for muscle and nerve function and keeps the heart rhythm steady.
- **Fiber:** Chocolate bars contain no dietary fiber, but nibs do: one ounce has nine grams!
- **Iron:** An ounce of raw nibs has 6 percent of your recommended daily iron intake. Iron is necessary for red blood cell production.
- **Antioxidants:** Raw nibs are a great antioxidant. Antioxidants are important because they absorb the free radicals that cause damage in the body.
- **Mood improver:** Chocolate and cacao stimulate the brain to release neurotransmitters that can trigger emotions, including good ones like euphoria.



These are the messengers in our brains that tell our bodies how to act, and that includes mood.

- **Phenylethylamine (PEA):** This chemical found in cacao is one that our bodies also make naturally. We produce PEA, an adrenal-related chemical, when we're excited – it causes our pulse to quicken and we feel more focused and alert.
- **Anandamide:** This lipid has been called the "bliss molecule" because its natural molecular shape represents that of THC, the active ingredient in marijuana.
- **Theobromine:** This makes up 1-2 percent of the cacao bean and is a nervous system stimulant that dilates the blood vessels, much like caffeine. This ingredient is what makes cacao and chocolate unsafe for dogs.

Eating raw cacao is healthier than processed chocolate, but many of us do not like the bitter taste of pure chocolate. But eating chocolate with a higher percentage of cocoa is healthier than the traditional milk chocolate Americans have enjoyed for so long. The new trend is to eat chocolate bars with 70-90 percent cocoa. There is a large variety of chocolate bars with very high cocoa percentages available today. So eat up dark, rich chocolate – "it's good for you!"

## Other articles in this series

- [Chocolate science, history and fun facts – Part 1](#)
- [Chocolate science, history and fun facts – Part 3](#)
- [Chocolate science, history and fun facts – Part 4](#)
- [Chocolate science, history and fun facts – Part 5: Cacao farming in Puerto Rico](#)

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## MEASURING COCOA, CONFECTIONERS' SUGAR AND FLOUR

Measure these dry ingredients by lightly spooning the ingredient into the appropriate dry measuring cup and leveling it off with the straight edge of a knife or spatula. Tapping the measuring cup will result in an inaccurate measure.

### CHOCOLATE KEY

When we test the recipes for CHOCOLATIER, we use the nationally available brands of chocolate listed here. Be sure to check the recipe before setting out to buy the chocolate for it — if you use the wrong type of chocolate, all your efforts may be wasted; certainly the results may be different. Within the following categories, you may use the brands we name interchangeably with only subtle differences in taste and/or texture.

*Unsweetened chocolate:* Baker's, Ghirardelli, Hershey's or Nestlé

*Swiss dark chocolate/bittersweet chocolate:* Ghirardelli, Lindt Excellence, Callebaut or Perugina

*Semisweet chocolate:* Ghirardelli, Hershey's, Nestlé or Baker's

*Semisweet chocolate chips:* Ghirardelli, Hershey's, Nestlé or Baker's

*Sweet chocolate:* Baker's German Sweet Chocolate or Ghirardelli Sweet Dark Chocolate

*Swiss milk chocolate:* Lindt Swiss Milk Chocolate

*Milk chocolate chips:* Baker's, Hershey's or Nestlé

*White chocolate:* Lindt Swiss Confectionery Bar, Nestlé Premier White Baking Bar, Baker's Premium White Chocolate Baking Squares, Perugina or Ghirardelli

*White chocolate chips:* Hershey's, Nestlé or Ghirardelli

*Couverture/coating chocolate* (It is not a brand or type of chocolate but rather a term used to describe professional-quality coating chocolate with a high percentage of cocoa butter — at least 32 percent and often as high as 39 percent for good-quality couverture. The extra cocoa butter allows the chocolate to form a thinner coating shell than noncouverture chocolate): Cacao Barry, Carma, Ghirardelli, Lindt or Valrhôna.

*Unsweetened non-alkalized cocoa powder:* Hershey's, Ghirardelli or Nestlé

*Unsweetened alkalinized cocoa powder:* (Dutch processed or European style): Droste, or Hershey's European Style.

### HOW TO MELT CHOCOLATE

Melting chocolate to use as a baking ingredient for candy work or decoration requires gentle heat. Chocolate that is overheated may scorch, lose flavor and turn coarse and grainy. Stir melting chocolate after it has begun to liquefy. Because of the sensitivity of milk solids to heat, milk and white chocolates should be stirred constantly while dark chocolate need only be stirred frequently during melting.

Here are two good methods for melting chocolate so that it is smooth and glossy.

*In a microwave oven* — place coarsely chopped chocolate in a microwave-safe container and microwave at MEDIUM (50 percent power) for 1½ to 4 minutes, until the chocolate turns shiny. Remove the container from the microwave and stir the chocolate until completely melted. Stir milk and white chocolates after about 1½ minutes. Because of their milk proteins, they need to be stirred sooner than dark chocolate. (If overheated, these chocolates may become grainy.)

*In a double boiler* — place coarsely chopped chocolate in the top of a double boiler over hot, not simmering, water. Melt the chocolate, stirring until smooth. Remove the top part of the double boiler from the bottom.

### EGGS

In recognition of the concern over the presence of salmonella bacteria in some raw eggs, CHOCOLATIER is adapting recipes that traditionally have used uncooked or lightly cooked eggs. The full extent of the risk is still being studied, but regulatory agencies such as the USDA and FDA have advised against eating any foods containing uncooked or lightly cooked eggs, egg yolks or egg whites. Because salmonella bacteria is killed in eggs cooked to 160°F, CHOCOLATIER's recipes for such desserts as mousses and buttercreams now include the extra step of cooking a sugar syrup to at least 240°F (soft ball stage) and pouring it over the eggs to raise their temperature sufficiently. CHOCOLATIER believes that an awareness of the potential risk of salmonella poisoning is the best defense against it.



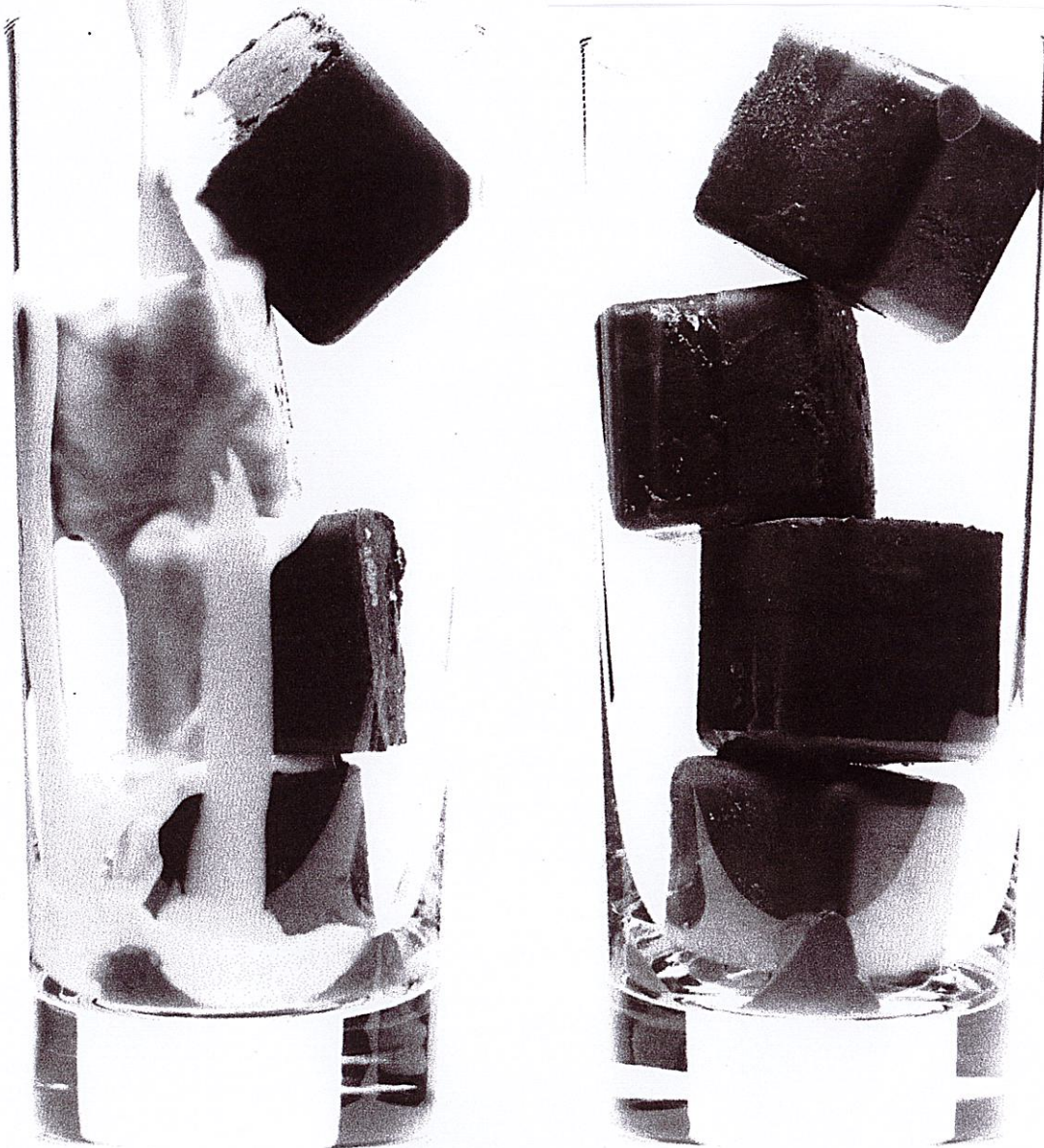


### **Storage and Shelf Life**

Chocolate is best kept in a cool (60° to 70°), dry, odor-free environment away from direct heat or sunlight. It should not be stored in the refrigerator or freezer. Ideally, it should be placed in a resealable plastic bag or other airtight container. If stored properly, dark chocolate and cocoa will last for years. White and milk chocolate should be stored for only about seven to nine months because these contain milk solids. When not stored properly, chocolate will bloom. You'll notice grayish white streaks on the surface, which are actually cocoa butter that has risen to the surface. While blooming does affect flavor and texture, the chocolate can still be used.



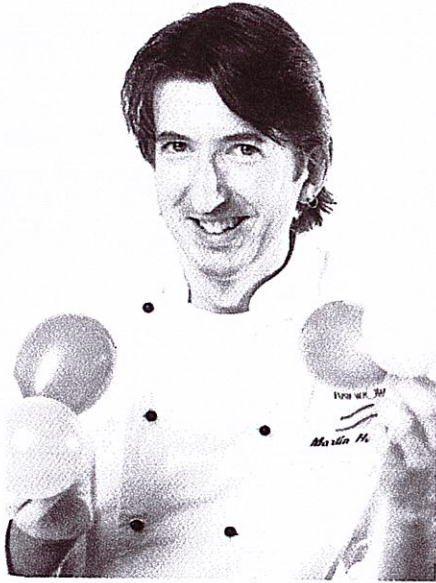
# Party Time



## Cold as Ice

We wouldn't normally recommend serving milk on the rocks, but if the ice cubes are made out of chocolate, well, that's a different story. To make these yourself, bring 1 cup whole milk,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water, 1 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder and 1 teaspoon sugar to a simmer in a saucepan, whisking until the lumps dissolve. Remove from the heat, add  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup semisweet chocolate chips and stir until the chocolate melts. Let cool for 5 minutes, then pour into an ice cube tray and freeze.





*Martin Howard is Executive Pastry Chef at Rainbow! in New York City.*

# CELEBRATION CUP

**B**alloons have always been a sign of festivity. In this case, they are purely functional, but the result is certainly nothing short of spectacular. This month Martin Howard, Executive Pastry Chef at Rainbow! (including the world-renowned Rainbow Room) demonstrates his technique of creating dark chocolate cups with white chocolate striations. Martin uses blown-up balloons as a mold for the cups, eliminating the need for expensive, specialized spherical molds. Once the chocolate cups are formed, they can be filled with your favorite dessert, whether it's mousse, ice cream or assorted fruit. So head off to the five-and-dime, pick up a pack of party balloons and start the dessert celebration!





## CHOCOLATE DOS and DON'TS

\*If you like dry, crunchy cookies rather than moist, chewy ones, let them cool on the cookie sheet in the oven with the door closed for 1 hour after you've turned off the oven.

\*If you would like to have a chocolate coating on the top of your chocolate chip cookies, after the cookies are formed and placed on the cookie sheets, lightly press 5 chocolate chips into the top of each cookie. When the cookies come out of the oven, gently spread those partly melted chocolate chips over the top of each cookie with a knife to make a thin chocolate layer. Cool as recipe directs.

\*To make chocolate flakes to decorate the top of your dessert, either cut the chocolate finely with a sharp knife or use a vegetable peeler to scrape off thin slices of chocolate from the chocolate bar. Make sure the chocolate block is at room temperature.

\*When making pudding, to prevent a skin from forming on the top of the pudding as it cools, press a layer of plastic wrap right onto the surface of the pudding.

\*The heavier and thicker-bottomed the pot is, the less likely you are to burn the candy you are making.

\*Do not heat chocolate chip bagels in the toaster because the chocolate will melt into the toaster. If you want them toasted, use a toaster oven or the broiling rack in your oven. Preheat the broiler, making sure the top oven rack is in the highest position, just under the broiling unit. Cut the bagels in half, place them on a cookie sheet, cut side up, and place the cookie sheet under the broiling unit for about 30 seconds, or until the bagels are lightly toasted.

\*If a freshly baked cake seems too 'crumbly' to ice, spread it with a thin layer of very soft butter and place in the freezer for 30 minutes. The icing will then stick to the butter layer.

\*You can add up to 3 Tablespoons of unsweetened cocoa powder to boxed chocolate cake mixes for extra zip.

\*Frozen chocolate should be thawed completely in its wrapper to prevent moisture forming on its surface.

\*Any chocolate containing cocoa liquor as the main (first) ingredient is the best quality chocolate.

\*Using a cinnamon stick as a stirrer will give any hot chocolate drink a sweet, pungent flavor of cinnamon without overpowering the flavor of the chocolate.



## MELTING CHOCOLATE

The best place to melt chocolate is in the microwave. Semisweet chocolate is much easier to work with than milk chocolate, because it contains more chocolate liquor and no milk solids. Semisweet will melt to a much smoother, thinner consistency and will not scorch as easily. This means that semisweet lends itself much more readily to dipping.

When melting either type of chocolate, use a microwave-safe glass or ceramic bowl that will retain heat. Set your microwave on half power and melt the chips for 1 minute. Stir. Rotate the bowl and microwave for another minute. Stir again. After 2 minutes, if the chocolate needs to melt more, heat it in 30-second intervals.

With milk chocolate, you have to find a delicate balance between microwaving and stirring. If you heat the chips too much, the chocolate will scorch. If you stir too much, the chocolate won't set up properly when you dip. Perfectly melted milk chocolate should set nearly as firm as it was in its original form at room temperature (68 to 70 degrees F.).

If you can't use a microwave to melt your chocolate, use a double boiler. You want to set the heat very low so that the water in the double boiler is only simmering and not boiling. Boiling water will scorch chocolate. Grease the inside of your double boiler lightly before you put the chocolate in and you'll be able to get practically all melted chocolate out of the pan.

\*\*\*\*\*

Enjoy a steaming cup of cocoa. It takes the chill away, even on the coldest of days – and it's not just the warmth that helps you relax; scientists have found that cocoa pumps up your levels of endorphins, mood-lifting brain chemicals that give you a delicious natural high! It is also a great bedtime beverage...although the caffeine in it is a stimulant, the milk acts as a sleep inducer.

### "Our Favorite Hot Cocoa"

Prevention Magazine ~ February 2003

This yummy cocoa is rich in antioxidants.  
It takes a few minutes to prepare, but the reward is worth its weight in, well, chocolate!

**Fill a mug with 1 cup of 1% milk, and microwave on medium for about 1 minute. Carefully remove, and add two (2) Dove Dark Promises. Stir gently until the chocolate melts.**

Enjoy!





## **CHOCOLATE ROAST BEEF**

**1 medium-sized beef roast, any cut**  
**1 teaspoon garlic powder**  
**1 tablespoon onion flakes**  
**1 cup water**  
**1/4 cup Italian salad dressing**  
**1/4 cup powdered hot chocolate mix (Nestle Quik)**  
**1/4 teaspoon salt**  
**1/4 teaspoon pepper**

Set oven to 350F. Place roast in a medium-sized roaster. Add all ingredients by pouring or placing over top of the roast. Cover. Put the roaster on the middle oven rack and leave it in for 2-3 hours, depending on the weight of roast, cook accordingly. Check the meat often, basting and turning occasionally. I also pared and cut up several carrots and potatoes, adding the carrots around the roast about an hour and a half before the roast was done, and the potatoes about 45 minutes before the roast was done. I added an extra 1 - 2 cups of water to accommodate the vegetables.

## **PEANUT BUTTER FUDGE SAUCE**

*(tested & sent to me by Leah Hewitt, Mitchell County)*

**1 cup sugar**  
**1 cup water**  
**1 cup crunchy peanut butter**  
**1/2 cup chocolate syrup**

Combine sugar and water in 2-quart saucepan. Bring to a boil, over medium heat, stirring constantly. Boil 5 minutes. Stir in peanut butter and chocolate syrup. Return to medium heat. Bring to boil, stirring constantly. Cool to lukewarm. Serve over ice cream. Makes 2 1/4 cups.



# Chocolate Chili

## Recipe

### Ingredients

- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 jalapenos seeded and chopped
- 2 Tablespoons chili powder
- 1 Tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 Tablespoon ground coriander
- 1 lb ground turkey
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tablespoon tomato paste
- 2 Tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 oz. unsweetened chocolate, chopped
- 1 large or 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1 in. cubes
- 1 15 oz. can of black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 15 oz. can red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 28 oz. can diced tomatoes with their juices
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ cup fresh cilantro, roughly chopped- optional

### Toppings

- ¼ cup sour cream
- ¼ cup pumpkin seeds
- Lime wedges
- Maple syrup

## Instructions

- 1) Heat oil in a large heavy bottomed pot over medium high heat. Add onion, jalapenos, chili powder, ground cumin and ground coriander. Cook, stirring frequently for 5-6 minutes until onions are softened.
- 2) Add in ground turkey and cook, breaking up meat with a wooden spoon until no pink parts remain. Stir in the garlic and tomato paste and cook for another minute or so.
- 3) Add in the cocoa powder, unsweetened chocolate, sweet potatoes, black beans, kidney beans, tomatoes, chicken stock, salt and black pepper. Give it a big stir. Bring to a boil, turn the heat down to medium-low and let simmer for 20-25 minutes, or until potatoes are fully cooked. If using, stir in chopped cilantro.
- 4) Ladle in to bowls. Top each serving with a dollop of sour cream and drizzle with a teaspoon of maple syrup and a squeeze of fresh lime juice. Garnish with pumpkin seeds and chopped cilantro. Serve.

### Nutrition

Calories: 274 kcal Carbohydrates: 26g  
Protein: 25g Fat: 11g Sat. Fat: 5g  
Cholesterol: 50mg Sodium: 797 mg  
Potassium: 901mg Fiber: 6g Sugar: 7g  
Vitamin A: 649 IU Vitamin C: 21mg  
Calcium: 100mg Iron: 5mg

# **Chocolate Chili**

Paula Deen

## **Ingredients**

- 2 lbs ground beef
- 2 chopped onions
- 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 3 cloves minced garlic
- 2 seeded and minced jalapeño peppers
- 2 (15 oz) cans undrained ranch-style beans
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 2 (15 oz) cans drained and rinsed black beans
- 1 (15 oz) can diced tomatoes
- 4 cups tomato sauce
- 2 cups beef broth

## **Directions**

1) In a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat, add the ground beef and cook for 2 minutes.

2) Add the onions, chili powder and cumin, and stir together. Add the cocoa, garlic and jalapeños, mix together and cook for 2 minutes.

3) Add in the ranch-style beans, cayenne pepper and oregano, and cook for another minute. Add the black beans, diced tomatoes, tomato sauce and broth, cover and simmer for 1 hour, stirring occasionally.

Garnish with sour cream, shredded cheese and chives if desired.

Nutrition information:

Calories: 1028 Total fat: 27.8g Cholesterol: 18mg Sodium: 3548mg Total Carbohydrate: 171g

Fiber: 68.9 Total sugar: 17.7g Protein: 56.9g Vitamin D: 0mg Calcium: 761mg Iron: 37mg

Potassium: 3427mg



## FAVORITE HOT CHOCOLATE CAKE

### CAKE:

2 c. all-purpose flour

1 c. (2 sticks) butter

1 c. water

1 t. baking soda

1 t. vanilla extract

2 c. sugar

4 heaping T. cocoa powder

½ c. buttermilk

2 eggs, slightly beaten

### ICING:

½ c. (1 stick butter)

3 T. buttermilk

½ t. vanilla extract

3 heaping T. cocoa powder

2 c. sifted powdered sugar

Grease a 9 x 13 inch baking pan. Preheat oven to 375°. Sift together flour and sugar; set aside. In a saucepan or microwave, melt margarine, cocoa, and water; bring to a boil. Remove from heat and add flour/sugar mixture. Mix well with a wire whisk. Immediately add buttermilk, baking soda, eggs and vanilla, continuing to stir constantly with whisk. Pour into prepared pan. Bake about 20 minutes until cake springs back when touched in the center.

For icing- in a saucepan or microwave melt butter, cocoa and buttermilk. Bring to a boil; remove from heat. Add powdered sugar and vanilla. Beat with a wire whisk until smooth. Let cake cool about 10 minutes, then pour icing over warm cake using spatula to spread.

Serves 12

Per serving: 511 calories (42% from fat), 24 g. fat (4 g saturated), 31 mg cholesterol, 72 g carbohydrates, 5 g protein, 400 mg sodium

Notes: I cut the pieces smaller-have the cake serve 16 or 20.

Submitted by Beverly Burke, MFV

# Brownie Meltaways

1 package commercial brownie mix—Mix and bake according to directions on package. Cool brownies.

Mix together the following ingredients and spread over the cooled brownies.

- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 1 ½ teaspoons mint extract
- 1/3 cup soft butter
- 2 tablespoons milk
- Several drops of green food coloring

Refrigerate brownies for approximately 30 minutes for frosting to set.

Heat 2 squares unsweetened chocolate and 2 teaspoons of butter until melted. Drizzle over the icing and smooth evenly. Refrigerate another 15 minutes before cutting. Store in the refrigerator.

Submitted by Judy Welter, MFV

Nutrition Facts	
Servings: 12	
Amount per serving	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>158</b>
	% Daily Value*
<b>Total Fat</b> 2.9g	4%
Saturated Fat 1.7g	8%
<b>Cholesterol</b> 7mg	2%
<b>Sodium</b> 53mg	2%
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 32.8g	12%
Dietary Fiber 0.3g	1%
Total Sugars 30g	
<b>Protein</b> 0.9g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	8%
Calcium 21mg	2%
Iron 0mg	1%
Potassium 11mg	0%

*\*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a food serving contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calorie a day is used for general nutrition advice.*

Recipe analyzed by **verywell**



## Caramel-Filled Chocolate Cookies or Rolo Cookies

- 2 ¼ cup flour
- ¾ cup unsweetened cocoa
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar (packed)
- 1 cup butter (room temperature)
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2 eggs (room temperature)
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 48 Rolo Caramel Candies
- 1 Tablespoon sugar (may need more)
- Vanilla-flavored candy coating (if desired)

Heat oven to 375 degrees.

Lightly spoon flour in to measuring cup and level off.

In a small bowl mix pecan and 1 Tablespoon sugar and set aside.

In another small bowl: combine flour, cocoa, and baking soda. Mix well.

In large bowl, beat sugars and butter until light and fluffy. Add vanilla and eggs beating well after each egg. Add flour mixture and blend well.

For each cookie: With floured hands, shape about 1 tablespoon of cookie dough around a Rolo candy piece. Press one side of ball into pecan mixture. Place nut side up, 2 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 375 for 7-10 minutes or until set and slightly cracked on top. Cool 2 minutes and remove from cookie sheet. Cool completely on cooling rack.

Melt vanilla flavored candy coating in microwave or small saucepan over low heat stirring constantly until smooth. Drizzle over cookies and let set. Submitted by Cheryl Sigel, MFV

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Servings: 48	
Amount per serving	<b>283</b>
<b>Calories</b>	
	<b>% Daily Value*</b>
<b>Total Fat</b> 12.6g	<b>16%</b>
<b>Saturated Fat</b> 7.6g	<b>38%</b>
<b>Cholesterol</b> 25mg	<b>8%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 667mg	<b>29%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 38g	<b>14%</b>
<b>Dietary Fiber</b> 1.3g	<b>4%</b>
<b>Total Sugars</b> 31.6g	
<b>Protein</b> 3.7g	
<b>Vitamin D</b> 3mcg	<b>13%</b>
<b>Calcium</b> 70mg	<b>5%</b>
<b>Iron</b> 1mg	<b>4%</b>
<b>Potassium</b> 131mg	<b>3%</b>



## Mississippi Mud Bars

Makes about 4 dozen bars

- 1 cup butter
  - 1 cup milk
  - 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
  - 1/2 cup water
  - 2 large eggs
  - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
  - 2 cups sugar
  - 2 cups all-purpose flour
  - 1 teaspoon baking soda
  - 3 cups miniature marshmallows
  - 1 1/2 cups chopped and toasted pecans
- Mississippi Mud Frosting (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Grease and flour a 15x11-inch jelly-roll pan.

2. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Whisk in milk, cocoa, 1/2 cup water, and eggs. Bring to a boil over medium heat, whisking constantly. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla.

3. In a large bowl, combine sugar, flour, and baking soda. Pour butter mixture over sugar mixture, whisking to combine. Pour into prepared pan. Bake for 20 minutes.

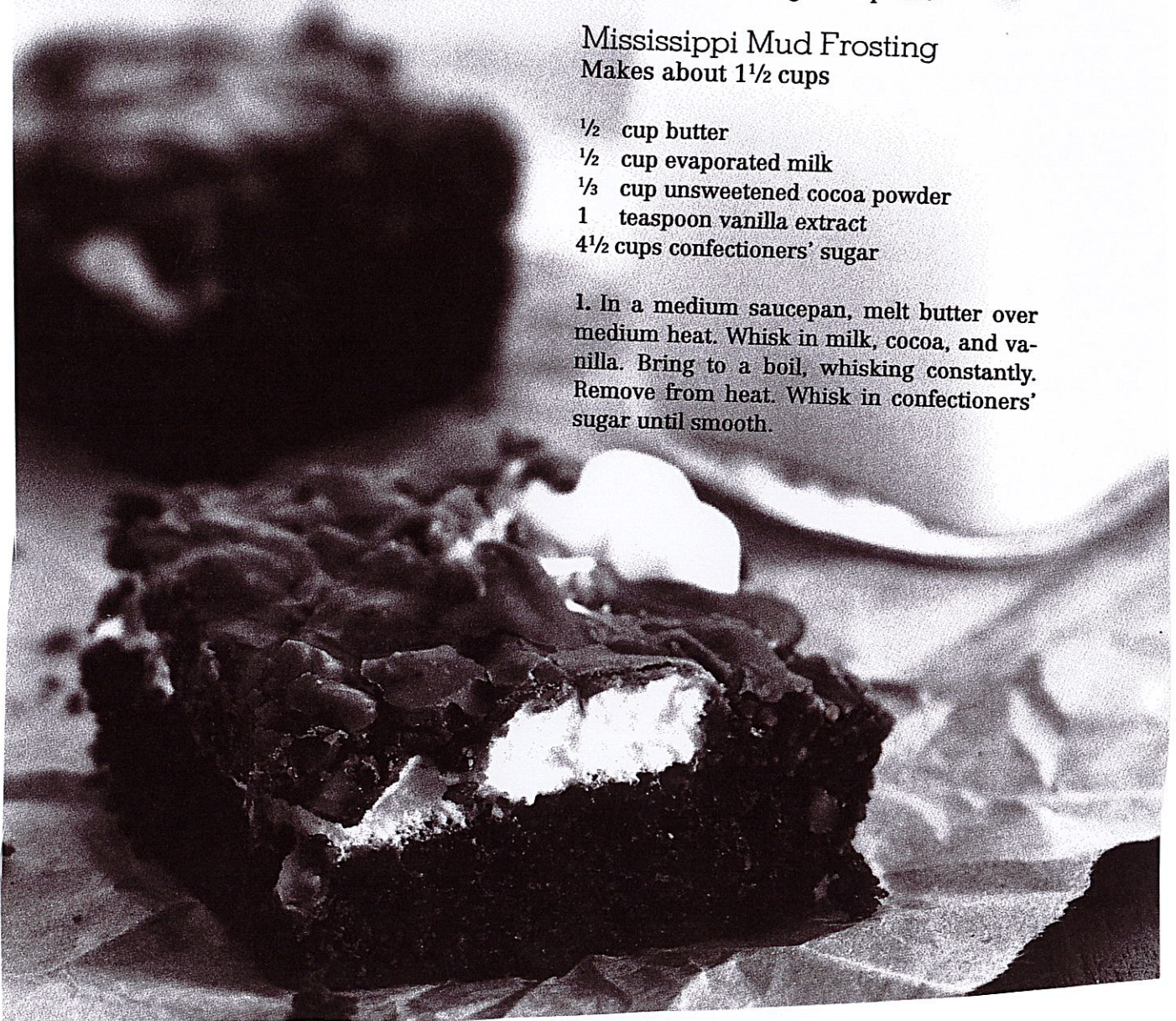
4. Immediately sprinkle marshmallows and pecans evenly over hot cake. Pour warm Mississippi Mud Frosting over cake, spreading with a knife if necessary. Let cool completely in pan before cutting into squares.

## Mississippi Mud Frosting

Makes about 1 1/2 cups

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup evaporated milk
- 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar

1. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Whisk in milk, cocoa, and vanilla. Bring to a boil, whisking constantly. Remove from heat. Whisk in confectioners' sugar until smooth.





Mississippi Mud Frosting:

## Nutrition Facts

Servings: 48

Amount per serving

**Calories** **54**

% Daily Value\*

Total Fat 1g 1%

Saturated Fat 0.6g 3%

Cholesterol 3mg 1%

Sodium 7mg 0%

Total Carbohydrate 10.1g 4%

Dietary Fiber 0.2g 1%

Total Sugars 9.4g

**Protein** 0.2g

Vitamin D 1mcg 3%

Calcium 4mg 0%

Iron 0mg 1%

Potassium 17mg 0%

Mississippi Mud Bars:

## Nutrition Facts

Servings: 48

Amount per serving

**Calories** **103**

% Daily Value\*

Total Fat 4.6g 6%

Saturated Fat 1.5g 8%

Cholesterol 20mg 7%

Sodium 593mg 26%

Total Carbohydrate 13.7g 5%

Dietary Fiber 0.8g 3%

Total Sugars 7.6g

**Protein** 1.6g

Vitamin D 3mcg 13%

Calcium 10mg 1%

Iron 1mg 3%

Potassium 44mg 1%



## Chocolate Chip-Coconut Cupcakes

Makes about 2 dozen

- 1 (18.25-ounce) box classic white cake mix
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup coconut milk
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup mini semisweet chocolate morsels
- Coconut Frosting (recipe follows)
- 1 1/2 cups shredded sweetened coconut

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Line 2 (12-cup) muffin pans with paper liners.
2. In a large bowl, combine cake mix, 1/2 cup water, coconut milk, oil, and eggs. Beat at low speed with a mixer for 1 minute. Increase speed to medium; beat for 2 minutes or until smooth. Stir in chocolate morsels. Spoon batter evenly into prepared muffin cups.

3. Bake for 18 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Let cool in pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and cool completely on wire racks.
4. Spread Coconut Frosting evenly over each cupcake. Sprinkle with coconut.

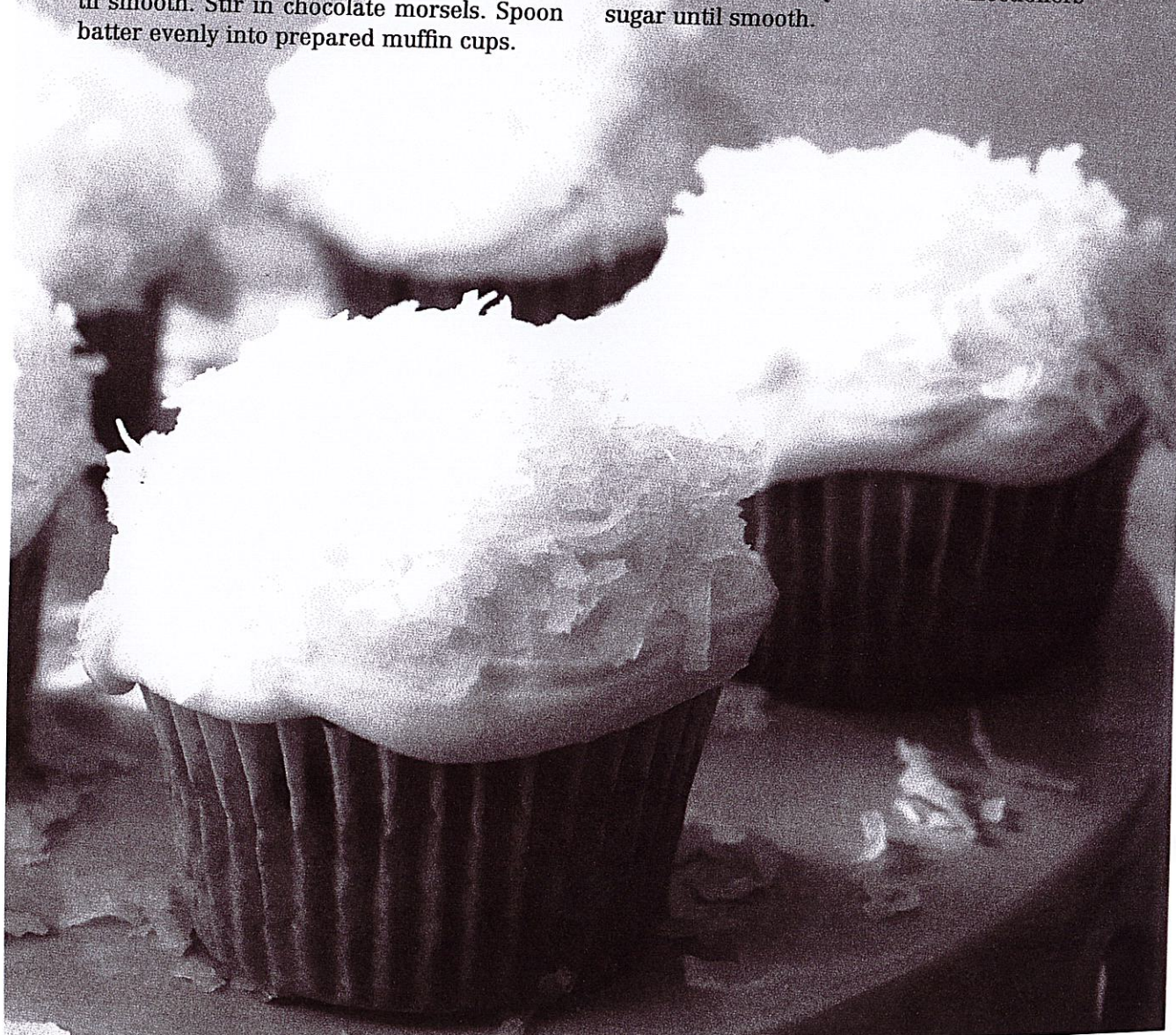
*Note: For tips on icing cupcakes, see page 111.*

## Coconut Frosting

Makes about 2 1/2 cups

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 cup coconut milk
- 5 cups confectioners' sugar

1. In a large bowl, beat butter and coconut milk at medium speed with a mixer until combined. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar until smooth.





Coconut Frosting:

## Nutrition Facts

Servings: 24

Amount per serving

**Calories** **103**

% Daily Value\*

<b>Total Fat</b> 2.2g	3%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
<b>Cholesterol</b> 4mg	1%
<b>Sodium</b> 12mg	1%
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 21g	8%
Dietary Fiber 0.1g	0%
Total Sugars 20.2g	
<b>Protein</b> 0.1g	
Vitamin D 1mcg	6%
Calcium 1mg	0%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 6mg	0%

Chocolate Chip Coconut cupcakes:

## Nutrition Facts

Servings: 24

Amount per serving

**Calories** **95**

% Daily Value\*

<b>Total Fat</b> 6.9g	9%
Saturated Fat 3.8g	19%
<b>Cholesterol</b> 47mg	16%
<b>Sodium</b> 47mg	2%
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 7.1g	3%
Dietary Fiber 0.9g	3%
Total Sugars 4.9g	
<b>Protein</b> 2g	
Vitamin D 4mcg	22%
Calcium 15mg	1%
Iron 1mg	7%
Potassium 49mg	1%

## Triple-Chocolate Coconut Macaroons

### Nutrition Facts

Servings: 36

Amount per serving

**Calories** **414**

% Daily Value\*

Total Fat 19.3g 25%

Saturated Fat 14.3g 72%

Cholesterol 14mg 5%

Sodium 210mg 9%

Total Carbohydrate 55.7g 20%

Dietary Fiber 0.3g 1%

Total Sugars 52.3g

Protein 3.9g

Vitamin D 0mcg 0%

Calcium 117mg 9%

Iron 0mg 1%

Potassium 175mg 4%



### Triple-Chocolate Coconut Macaroons Makes about 3 dozen macaroons

- 2 egg whites (at room temperature)
- $\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon salt
- 1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 (14-ounce) packages shredded sweetened coconut
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate morsels
- 1 cup white chocolate morsels
- 1 (16-ounce) package chocolate-flavored candy coating, melted

1. Preheat oven to 300°. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, whisk egg whites and salt until foamy (about 2 minutes). Whisk in condensed milk and vanilla.
3. Fold in coconut, semisweet morsels, and white chocolate morsels. Drop batter by heaping tablespoonfuls onto prepared baking sheets. Bake for 20 minutes. Let cool on pans for 2 minutes. Remove from pans, and cool completely on wire racks.
4. Dip bottoms of cooled cookies into melted candy coating. Place on parchment paper until candy coating hardens.

*Note: Be prepared to dip cooled macaroons into the chocolate-flavored candy coating as soon as you melt it. The candy coating will cool and harden quickly.*



# Slow Cooker Chocolate Lava Cake Submitted by Gayle Plummer, MFV

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## Ingredients

### For the cake batter:

- 1 cup all purpose flour
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 3 Tablespoons cocoa powder (see note 1)
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoons salt
- ½ cup milk
- 1/3 cup butter melted
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

### For the cake topping:

- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- ¾ cup brown sugar firmly packed
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 2 ¼ cups hot water

### For serving:

- Vanilla ice cream or whipped cream
- Maraschino cherries optional

## Instructions:

### To make the cake batter:

- 1) Coat a slow cooker with nonstick spray. In a large bowl whisk together the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt. In a second bowl whisk together the milk, melted butter and vanilla.
- 2) Make a well in the middle of the dry ingredients. Pour the wet ingredients in to the well and whisk until smooth. Pour into the bottom of a slow cooker.

### To make the topping:

- 1) Whisk together the sugar, brown sugar and cocoa powder until evenly combined. Sprinkle evenly over the batter in the slow cooker.
- 2) Pour the hot water over the top of the batter and topping. DO NOT STIR. Cover and cook on HIGH for 3-4 hours, or LOW on 5 hours, or until a toothpick inserted in to the middle of the cake comes out clean with a few crumbs attached ( see recipe notes).
- 3) Serve with ice cream or whipped cream, spooning chocolate sauce from the bottom of the slow cooker over the top. Garnish with maraschino cherries if desired.

## Notes

- 1)Cocoa powder: Look for unsweetened baking cocoa powder, not the mix for hot chocolate.
- 2)Yield: This recipe makes 1 cake, enough for 8 generous portions.
- 3)Storage: Store leftovers covered at room temperature for 2-3 days.

## Nutrition:

Serving 1 scoop ] Calories: 321 kcal ] Carbohydrates: 60g ] Protein: 3g ] Fat: 9g ] Sat. Fat: 6g ] Cholesterol: 22mg ] Sodium:261 mg ] Potassium: 125mg ] Fiber: 2g ] Sugar: 46g ] Vitamin A: 261 iu ] Calcium: 99mg ] Iron: 2mg

## Paula Deen's Earthquake Cake

### Ingredients:

1 c. sweetened flaked coconut	¼ c. butter, melted
1 c. chopped pecans	16 oz. confectioners' sugar
1 box German Chocolate cake mix	8 oz cream cheese
plus ingredients to make cake	½ t. almond extract

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 ° F. Grease and flour a 13 x 9 x 2 inch pan. Spread coconut and pecans on bottom of pan. Mix cake mix according to directions and pour over coconut and pecans. Mix sugar, butter, extract, and cream cheese; spread over cake. Bake for 45 to 50 minutes.

Serves 16 to 20

## Orange Brownies

### Ingredients:

1 ½ c. all purpose flour	Glaze:
2 c. sugar	1 c. powdered sugar
1 t. salt	2 T. orange juice
1 c. butter (2 sticks), softened	1 t. grated orange zest
4 eggs	
2 t. orange extract	
1 t. grated orange zest	

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350° F. Grease and flour a 13 x 9 x 2 inch pan. Stir together flour, sugar, and salt in a bowl; add butter, eggs, extract, and zest. Using a handheld mixer, beat until well blended. Pour batter into prepared pan and bake for 30 minutes or until light golden brown and set. Remove from oven and pierce entire cake with a fork. For glaze, mix all ingredients together and stir until smooth. Pour glaze over cake. Cool and cut into squares.

Serves 24



Orange Brownies:

## Nutrition Facts

Servings: 24

Amount per serving

**Calories** **160**

% Daily Value\*

Total Fat 5.1g 7%

Saturated Fat 2.7g 13%

Cholesterol 71mg 24%

Sodium 1665mg 72%

Total Carbohydrate 21.4g 8%

Dietary Fiber 1.1g 4%

Total Sugars 14.3g

**Protein** 3g

Vitamin D 8mcg 41%

Calcium 26mg 2%

Iron 1mg 4%

Potassium 77mg 2%

Paula Deen's Earthquake cake:

## Nutrition Facts

Servings: 20

Amount per serving

**Calories** **557**

% Daily Value\*

Total Fat 20.7g 26%

Saturated Fat 11.4g 57%

Cholesterol 47mg 16%

Sodium 182mg 8%

Total Carbohydrate 88.7g 32%

Dietary Fiber 1.4g 5%

Total Sugars 82.2g

**Protein** 3.8g

Vitamin D 1mcg 4%

Calcium 43mg 3%

Iron 1mg 4%

Potassium 106mg 2%





## Swiss Chocolate Brownies

(Pictured above)

When our two grown children were at home, I baked these brownies often. These days, I make them for special occasions—everyone thinks they're quite nice.

—Gloria Stange, Claresholm, Alberta

- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup butter (no substitutes)
- 1-1/2 squares (1-1/2 ounces) unsweetened chocolate
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

### ICING:

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1-1/2 squares (1-1/2 ounces) unsweetened chocolate
- 3 cups confectioners' sugar, *divided*
- 5 tablespoons milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

In a saucepan, bring water, butter and chocolate to a boil. Boil for 1 minute. Remove from the heat; cool. In a mixing bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking soda and salt. Add chocolate mixture and mix. Add eggs, sour cream and vanilla; mix. Fold in walnuts. Pour into a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes.

For icing, melt butter and chocolate. Place in a mixing bowl; mix in 1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar. Add milk, vanilla and remaining sugar; beat until smooth. Spread over warm brownies. **Yield:** about 3 dozen.

## Triple Fudge Brownies

(Pictured on page 30)

When you're in a hurry to make dessert, here's a "mix of mixes" that's so convenient and quick. The result is a big pan of very rich, fudgy brownies.

—Denise Nebel  
Wayland, Iowa

- 1 package (3.9 ounces) instant chocolate pudding mix
- 1 package (18-1/4 ounces) chocolate cake mix
- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
- Confectioners' sugar

Prepare pudding according to package directions. Whisk in cake mix. Stir in chocolate chips. Pour into a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until the top springs back when lightly touched. Dust with confectioners' sugar. **Yield:** 4 dozen.



## Marble Squares

(Pictured below)

With cream cheese, sour cream and lots of chocolate, these bars are simply scrumptious. I'm sure you'll agree.

—Pat Habiger, Spearville, Kansas

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 2-1/3 cups sugar, *divided*
- 3 eggs
- 3/4 cup water
- 1/2 cup butter (no substitutes)
- 1-1/2 squares (1-1/2 ounces) unsweetened chocolate
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and 1/3 cup sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in 1 egg; set aside. In a saucepan, bring water, butter and chocolate to a boil, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat. Mix in flour and remaining sugar. Stir in sour cream, baking soda, salt and remaining eggs until smooth.

Pour into a greased and floured 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Dollop cream cheese mixture over the top; cut through batter to create a marbled effect. Sprinkle with chocolate chips. Bake at 375° for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool. **Yield:** about 5 dozen.





Triple Fudge Brownies:

## Nutrition Facts

Servings: 48

Amount per serving

**Calories** **40**

% Daily Value\*

Total Fat 1.5g	2%
Saturated Fat 0.7g	3%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 54mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate 6.3g	2%
Dietary Fiber 0.3g	1%
Total Sugars 4.9g	
<b>Protein 0.5g</b>	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 6mg	0%
Iron 0mg	3%
Potassium 8mg	0%

Marble Squares:

## Nutrition Facts

Servings: 60

Amount per serving

**Calories** **110**

% Daily Value\*

Total Fat 7.8g	10%
Saturated Fat 4.7g	23%
Cholesterol 35mg	12%
Sodium 832mg	36%
Total Carbohydrate 8.7g	3%
Dietary Fiber 0.6g	2%
Total Sugars 5g	
<b>Protein 2.5g</b>	
Vitamin D 2mcg	11%
Calcium 18mg	1%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 48mg	1%

Swiss Chocolate Brownies:

## Nutrition Facts

Servings: 36

Amount per serving

**Calories** **175**

% Daily Value\*

Total Fat 9.2g	12%
Saturated Fat 4.6g	23%
Cholesterol 27mg	9%
Sodium 1327mg	58%
Total Carbohydrate 21.5g	8%
Dietary Fiber 1.7g	6%
Total Sugars 14.4g	
<b>Protein 3.1g</b>	
Vitamin D 4mcg	18%
Calcium 17mg	1%
Iron 2mg	11%
Potassium 106mg	2%