

# Chocolate Churro Cake

Poetry & Pies

**prep time:** 35-40 minutes

**bake time:** 25-30 minutes

**total time:** 1 hour, 10 minutes *(plus time for cake layers to cool)*

**servings:** 12-16



## Ingredients

### for the churro cake layers

- 1 cup (227g) butter
- 2 cups plus 2 tablespoons (289g) flour, spooned then leveled and sifted
- 2 teaspoons (8g) baking powder, sifted
- 1 tablespoon (8g) cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon (3g) sea salt
- 1 cup (213g) packed light brown sugar
- ½ cup (100g) granulated sugar
- 3 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 tablespoon (13g) pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup (240g) whole milk, room temperature

### for the [Mexican chocolate buttercream](#)

- 1 ½ cups (12oz) unsalted European style butter, softened\*
- 4-5 cups (520-650g) powdered sugar
- 4-6 tablespoons (28-42g) unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted
- 1 tablespoon (13g) pure vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon (3g) sea salt
- 1 to 2 teaspoons (3-6g) ground cinnamon
- pinch or two cayenne pepper *(optional)*
- 2-4 tablespoons (28-56g) heavy whipping cream *(optional--omit if your cake will be outside)*

## Instructions

**make the churro cake layers**

1. Brown the butter. Heat over medium heat in a small saucepan, stirring occasionally and adjusting the temperature so it doesn't spill over. It will foam up then calm down. If needed, you can remove it from the heat for a few seconds if it foams up too high. After about 8-10 minutes, it should be deep golden brown (you may need to remove it from the heat so you can see to the bottom for the color) and will smell nutty.
2. Remove from heat and place in a bowl to cool. Stir occasionally, until soft but still stir-able. (You can do this in the fridge, but stir every few minutes until in this soft solid state.) Be sure to have the milk sitting out by this point, so it's ready when the butter is ready.

*You should have  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup remaining at this point. If you have less, you can compensate with either a tiny bit of softened butter or a splash of oil (avocado or grapeseed are healthiest, but vegetable will do fine, too).*

3. When ready to bake, grease and flour two or three 8" or 9" cake pans and line with parchment paper (or use [silicone liners](#)). Preheat the oven to 350 (or 325 for convection).
4. Once the browned butter is ready, sift and whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon. Set aside.
5. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment (or a large mixing bowl or with a hand mixer), beat the browned butter and sugars until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes.
6. Add in the eggs one at a time, beating on medium until well-blended, about 1 minute, after each egg. Scrape the bowl and add the vanilla, beating until combined.
7. Add half of the flour to the bowl and mix on low, just until combined. Add the milk and mix again on low, just until combined. Add the rest of the flour and mix on low, just until combined. Scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl and mix again on low for just a few seconds to combine.
8. Divide batter between prepared pans and bake for 25-30 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out with a few moist crumbs.
9. Let cakes cool in pans for 5-10 minutes, then remove to a wire rack until completely cooled.

**make the Mexican chocolate buttercream**

*optional: you can also make the buttercream ahead of time, chill it, then let it come to room temperature on the counter for 1-2 hours while you make the cake layers. Just be sure to give it a good stir if it was refrigerated longer than overnight.*

10. In the bowl of your stand mixer, beat butter on high until smooth, about 30 seconds.
11. Add in powdered sugar, one cup at a time, beating on low then increasing speed to high for 1 minute, until smooth. Scrape the bowl as needed. Taste as you go and only add as much powdered sugar as needed. You can add more after the cocoa powder if it's necessary.
12. Add sifted cocoa powder, cinnamon, and cayenne, starting with just 4 tablespoons (or ¼ cup) cocoa, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, and a small pinch of cayenne. Beat until smooth then taste, adjusting amounts to taste. Do this slowly so you don't overdo it.
13. Add in the vanilla extract and salt and beat until smooth.
14. Scrape down the bowl and taste again. Add more powdered sugar, cocoa powder, cinnamon, or cayenne, to taste. But do this slowly and trust your gut if it tastes good as-is.
15. If it's too thick or grainy, add in heavy whipping cream, one tablespoon at a time, until spreadable. Don't worry if it's a little grainy--the next step will help with that. Don't add too much cream, as it's impossible to recover from making it too loose.
16. Once the flavor is well-balanced and to your liking, scrape the bowl then beat on high for 3-5 minutes, stopping once to scrape down the bowl. This will smooth it out quite a bit. Stir vigorously by hand for a minute to release the large air bubbles.

*Note: if, after beating for 5 minutes and adding some heavy whipping cream, it's still too grainy, you can refrigerate it for a few hours or overnight. This helps smooth out almost all frostings. Just remember to let it come to room temperature on the counter then stir well before using.*

17. Frost cake and decorate as desired (I used dyed buttercream and really did just wing it with this decorating).

Enjoy!

*\*If your butter has become shiny or oily, put it back in the fridge for 5-10 minutes until it firms up a bit (not hard) and is matte in appearance.*