

Chocolate Caramel “Scotchmallow” Cake

Poetry & Pies

prep time: 1 hour, 30 minutes (includes all fillings and frostings)

bake time: 25-30 minutes

total time: 2 hours *(plus at least 30 minutes for cake to cool)*

servings: 12-16



Ingredients

for the chocolate cake

- 1 ½ cups (350g) granulated sugar
- 1 ⅔ cups (226g) flour, spooned then leveled and sifted
- ¾ cup (75g) unsweetened cocoa powder, spooned then leveled and sifted
- 2 teaspoons (8g) baking powder
- 1 teaspoon (5g) baking soda
- ½ teaspoon (3g) sea salt
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- 1 cup (236g) buttermilk, room temperature*
- ½ cup (112g) avocado oil (can sub vegetable, grape seed, or canola oil)
- 1 tablespoon (13g) pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup (240g) hot, light roast coffee (or hot water)

for the [marshmallow buttercream](#) filling (the portion unused in the filling will be used to make the outer frosting)

- 2 cups (454g) unsalted European style butter, softened
- 1 batch [marshmallow fluff](#) (or two 7oz jars store bought [marshmallow cream](#))
- 4-6 cups (520-780g) powdered sugar
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- 1 tablespoon (13g) vanilla extract

for the [chocolate marshmallow buttercream](#)

- 4 ounces (113g) baking chocolate, chopped, or chocolate chips (see note)
- 2 ounces (60g) heavy whipping cream
- remainder of marshmallow buttercream from the filling

to assemble

- one batch [easy caramel sauce](#)

- mini marshmallows (optional)

Instructions

1. It's recommended to make the caramel sauce ahead of time to split up your work and give it time to cool. Otherwise, you can make it while the cake layers cool, but be sure to give it time to cool as well so it doesn't melt the frosting. If making caramel more than a few hours ahead, store the caramel in an airtight container in the fridge until ready to reheat and use.

make the chocolate cake layers

2. Preheat the oven to 325F/165C. Grease and flour two or three [8" or 9" cake pans](#) or three to four [6" cake pans](#) (or use [baking spray](#)) and line with [parchment paper](#) (or use [silicone liners](#)).

Note: *I like to use 3 cake pans to make room for more filling without having to cut the cake in half, which I'm terrible at. If you want to make a 6" cake, you need to use at least 3 pans or they will be overfilled and your cakes won't bake evenly.*

3. Whisk together the sugar, flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in the bowl of your stand mixer or a large mixing bowl, sifting everything but the sugar (unless yours is fine enough to sift--go for it!). Set aside.
4. In a separate medium mixing bowl, whisk the eggs, buttermilk, oil, and vanilla together until well-blended and fully emulsified, about 1 minute.
5. Make your hot coffee. Very, very slowly stream the hot coffee into the wet ingredients, whisking vigorously and constantly as you pour to avoid scrambling the eggs. Feel free to do this in segments if it's easier. If you do scramble some of the eggs, you can run the mixture through your [fine mesh sieve](#) to remove the cooked egg bits.
6. Using the paddle attachment, turn your stand mixer to low (or use a hand mixer) and slowly pour the wet ingredients into the dry. This should take about 30 seconds or so. The batter will clump up then thin out. Once you've poured all the wet ingredients, immediately turn off the mixer. Scrape down the bottom and sides. Beat on medium for exactly 2 minutes (set a timer).
7. Evenly divide batter between the prepared cake pans.
8. Bake for 25-30 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out with just a few moist crumbs (ideally not fully clean, as this could mean they're over baked).

Check early and rotate halfway if not using convection. Be sure to check each pan separately, as one might bake faster than the other.

9. Let cool 5-10 minutes in the cake pan then remove to a cooling rack to cool completely.

make the marshmallow buttercream

10. While the cake layers cool, make the marshmallow buttercream. If using [homemade marshmallow fluff](#), make that first. You can immediately start on the buttercream once the fluff is done, but remove it to a separate bowl to cream the butter.
11. In the bowl of your stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment or in a large mixing bowl using your hand mixer, cream butter on high until smooth, about 1 minute.
12. Scrape bowl with a rubber spatula then add in powdered sugar, 1 cup at a time. Blend on low then slowly increase speed to high and mix until smooth before adding more. After 4 cups, scrape the bowl, then add the marshmallow fluff. Mix on high until well-blended, about 30-60 seconds. Add the salt and vanilla and mix on high for about 30 seconds until blended.
13. At this point, taste to see if it needs more sugar. If so, add 1-2 more cups, until the taste is to your liking. If it's sweet enough but not holding its shape, refrigerate 10-20 minutes.

prep the chocolate marshmallow buttercream (see note below if your cake will be traveling in high heat)

14. While the cake chills, make the ganache for the chocolate marshmallow buttercream. Place the chocolate and heavy cream in a heatproof bowl. Place over a medium saucepan with 1-2" water simmering over low heat. Stir constantly until the chocolate is 75% melted. Remove from heat and keep stirring until smooth. Place back over heat for 30 seconds if it doesn't become smooth after a minute.
15. Let the chocolate cool while you assemble the cake and apply the crumb coat.

assemble the cake

16. Take the caramel out of the fridge and reheat. This can be done by heating in the microwave at half power in 10 second increments, stirring in between. You could also bring some water to a simmer in a medium pot, remove from heat, and place your jar of caramel in it (be sure the water is level with the top of the caramel but not high enough to get into the jar itself). Let sit for a few minutes then stir well. Continue heating until the sauce is easily drizzled. It becomes hot to the touch, let cool for a few

minutes—you want it right in that sweet spot where it can be drizzled with a spoon or from a drip bottle without melting the frosting.

17. Place one layer of cake on a cake board or plate. Cut off any domed tops (I like to save these to eat with leftover frosting!). If desired, you can also cut each layer of cake in half to make room for more filling. Spread a layer of marshmallow buttercream on the cake, as thick as desired (no more than ½ inch thick or the cake may slide around). Drizzle some caramel sauce on top of the buttercream, to desired thickness.
18. Continue this process until all layers of cake are stacked. Spread a very thin layer of buttercream around the cake then refrigerate for 10-20 minutes while you make the chocolate marshmallow buttercream.

decorate the cake

19. While the cake chills, stir the cooled ganache. Add half of it to the remaining marshmallow buttercream and mix with the paddle attachment until fully blended. Taste, adding more ganache until you're happy with the flavor. I usually add all of it. :)
20. Frost chilled cake to desired thickness and in desired design. Chill for 10-20 minutes. Drizzle with more caramel sauce (you may need to reheat it a bit). Add mini marshmallows, if using, and drizzle some more caramel.

Enjoy!

If not serving right away, store in an airtight container until ready to eat. Cake will last for 3-5 days. Cut cakes will last longer if you place a piece of plastic wrap right along the cut edges and seal it by pressing it into the buttercream along the edge, then store the whole cake in an airtight container.

**You can make your own buttermilk by adding 1 tablespoon white vinegar with enough room temperature whole milk to equal 1 cup total. Stir and let sit 10 minutes while you prep the rest of the ingredients.*

Note about the buttercream: this makes a rather soft buttercream, which is only a problem in warm climates/homes or if traveling with the cake. In that event, sub 2-4 tablespoons cocoa powder for the ganache (chocolate chips and whipping cream).