

# Triple Chocolate Red Wine Cake

Poetry & Pies

**prep time:** 10-15 minutes

**bake time:** 25-30 minutes

**total time:** 45 minutes (plus about 20 minutes to make the frosting and drip)

**servings:** 12-16



## Ingredients

### for the red wine chocolate cake

- 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups sugar (can reduce to 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  for a less-sweet cake)
- 1  $\frac{2}{3}$  cups flour, sifted
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup unsweetened cocoa or cacao powder, sifted
- 2 teaspoons baking powder, sifted
- 1 teaspoon baking soda, sifted
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon fine ground Himalayan sea salt (or 1 teaspoon table salt, but sea salt gives a better flavor)
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 cup buttermilk, room temperature
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup avocado oil (can sub grapeseed, vegetable, or canola)
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup sweet red wine

### for the red wine chocolate buttercream

- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups (3 sticks or 12 ounces) unsalted European style butter, room temperature
- 3-4 cups powdered sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon finely ground sea salt (or to taste)
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sweet red wine

### for the red wine chocolate ganache drip

- 4 ounces semisweet or dark chocolate chips or chopped baking chocolate
- 2.5-3 ounces (5-6 tablespoons) red wine (sweeter blends are best)

## Instructions

### make the red wine chocolate cake layers

1. Preheat oven to 325\*. Grease and flour two 8" or 9" round cake pans (or use baking spray). Line bottoms with parchment paper.

*Note: I like to do 3 pans to make room for more filling without having to cut the cake layers in half. Likewise, if making a 6" cake, you need at least 3 pans or it won't bake properly.*

2. In the bowl of stand mixer (or large bowl), whisk together first 6 ingredients, being sure to sift as instructed. I prefer using a hand whisk for this step as the whisk attachment doesn't always get the very bottom mixed in.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together eggs, buttermilk, oil, and vanilla. In a small saucepan, heat the red wine over medium heat until very steamy and some bubbles begin to appear. VERY slowly, pour the hot wine into the egg mixture, whisking quickly and constantly to avoid scrambled eggs. Feel free to do it in increments if this is your first time.
4. Using the paddle attachment of your stand mixer (or using a hand mixer), turn mixer to low. Slowly pour wet ingredients into dry. It will clump up then settle into a liquidy consistency. After all ingredients are combined, scrape down sides, making sure to get to the very bottom. Turn mixer up to medium and mix for exactly 2 minutes. Set a timer so you do not overmix!
5. Pour batter evenly into prepared pans. I highly recommend using Wilton Bake Even Strips to avoid a domed cake (or you can cut this off with a large, serrated knife and have a little pre-cake snack). Gently tap pans on the counter a couple times to get some of the bubbles out.
6. Bake for 25-30 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out with just moist crumbs. Check bake halfway through. If not using a convection oven, rotate cakes at this point as well. Check again every 5 minutes to avoid overbaking--you want to remove the cakes as soon as no raw batter comes off on the toothpick and this is a narrow window.
7. Cool in pans 5-10 minutes then remove to a cooling rack until completely cooled.

### **make the red wine chocolate buttercream**

8. In the bowl of your stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment (or a large mixing bowl and using a hand mixer), cream the butter on high until smooth, about 30 seconds.
9. Add the powdered sugar 1 cup at a time (ish...I often eyeball it). Beat on low then slowly increase to high (to avoid a sugar bomb). Be sure to beat until smooth (about 30-60 seconds) and scrape the bowl between additions. I have noticed a difference in the final product when I don't do those two steps.
10. Add the cocoa powder, vanilla, and salt. Beat until smooth for about 1 minute (again, I know). It will be a little thick because you need a very sturdy base to keep it from becoming runny with the red wine.
11. Now, for the best part—add the red wine! Beat, starting on low then increasing to high, until very smooth. It might look separated at first, but keep beating until it emulsifies with the butter and becomes smooth.
12. Taste, adjusting as needed (I added more cocoa powder to thicken it slightly without making it too sweet). Beat on high for a minute or two to fluff it up, then stir until the air bubbles release (this was a bit more airy than most frostings, so I *really, really recommend the stirring step at the end*).

### **make the red wine chocolate ganache drip**

13. Combine red wine and chocolate in a heatproof bowl. Start with 2.5 ounces (5 tablespoons) and add 1 more tablespoon if needed as the ganache is nearly done.
14. Bring 1-2 inches water to a simmer in a small or medium saucepan (one that will fit the bowl over it well to create a double boiler). Turn down to low.
15. Place the bowl of chocolate over the pan and stir frequently, until chocolate is almost melted. Keep an eye on the water--you want it simmering without boiling so it properly tempers the chocolate.
16. When chocolate is almost completely melted, remove bowl from pan and stir until smooth and all chocolate is melted.
17. Place in a drip bottle and let cool for a few minutes, until still squeeze-able but not so hot it will melt the cake or create a drippy mess all over the cake stand.

## **assemble the cake**

18. Fill and frost cake with desired amount of red wine chocolate buttercream.  
Optionally, you can drizzle some ganache on the filling before adding more cake.
19. Chill until frosting is very set (or freeze for 10 minutes). Create drip lines by carefully pouring ganache along the edge of the cake, letting some run off in lines down the side of the cake. I'm no expert, so you don't want a video of me doing it, but there are many out there! Chelsweets has my favorite drip tutorials.
20. Chill cake for 10 minutes to set the ganache.

*Enjoy! To keep cut cake moist, place a piece of plastic wrap right up against the cut edges then cover entire cake or place in an airtight container.*