

# White Chocolate Cranberry Cake

Poetry & Pies

**prep time:** 40-45 minutes

**bake time:** 25-35 minutes

**total time:** 1 hour, 15 minutes, plus cooling time  
(includes time to make filling and frosting)



**servings:** 12-16

## Ingredients

### for the cake

- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup whole milk
- 4 ounces white chocolate, chopped
- 2 cups plus 2 tablespoons flour, sifted
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon sea salt
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (12 tablespoons) unsalted European style butter, room temperature
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups sugar
- 3 eggs, room temperature
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup buttermilk, room temperature

### filling and frosting

- one batch [white chocolate buttercream](#)
- half a batch of [cranberry orange compote](#)

### to decorate

- optional: candied cranberries (recipe below), gel food coloring, and festive sprinkles

## Instructions

### make your cake layers

1. About 20 minutes before you make the cake (or up to an hour before, when you take out your cold ingredients), melt the milk and white chocolate in a heatproof bowl. Either set over a simmering pot of 1-2" water, turned down to low, or in the microwave at half power in 30 second intervals. Set aside to cool for at least 20 minutes. Stir occasionally to avoid a film forming.

2. When ready to make the cake and the white chocolate is cooled, preheat oven to 325 and lightly grease and flour two 8" or 9" cake pans (or three 6" pans to make room for more filling). Line with parchment paper.
3. Sift together flour, salt, and baking powder. See note about measuring the flour. Whisk together for about 30 seconds to distribute the baking powder.
4. In the bowl of your stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment (or in a large mixing bowl with a hand mixer), beat the butter on high until smooth, about 30 seconds. Add the sugar and beat on high until light and fluffy, about 2-3 minutes, scraping bowl with a rubber spatula halfway through.
5. Add eggs, one at a time, beating on high until fluffy, about 30 seconds. Then add the vanilla and beat on high until blended, just a few seconds. Scrape down the bowl again.
6. Add the flour and milks in 5 alternating additions, starting and ending with flour. So, you add  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the flour mixture and beat on lowest setting just until combined. Add the buttermilk and mix again on low, just until combined. Add another  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the flour and blend on low just until combined. Next add the white chocolate mixture and blend on low just until combined. Finally, add the rest of the flour and blend on low just until combined. Scrape the bowl and, if you see large clumps of flour, blend another 2-3 seconds on low. Don't worry if you see some small streaks of flour.
7. Divide evenly between your prepared pans. Bake for 25-30 minutes if using larger pans and 20-25 minutes if using 6" pans, until a toothpick or knife inserted in the middle comes out with just a few moist crumbs. Check early and often because you do want some crumbs coming out when you check it, and it goes from raw batter to overbaked pretty quickly! Let cool in pans 5-10 minutes then remove to a cooling rack to cool completely.

### **make your fillings and frosting**

8. If you didn't make it ahead, while the cake bakes is an ideal time to make the cranberry orange compote so it can refrigerate for at least an hour to help it set. Make sure to let it thicken to more of a cake filling/jam consistency as you cook.
9. While the cakes cool is a perfect time to make the frosting, if not made ahead. Be sure not to let the white chocolate solidify after melting it, or it will become chunky when you add it to the butter. See notes in the buttercream recipe for making it true white.

### **to decorate (optional)**

10. To make the candied cranberries you see in my photos, it's super easy! Freeze about a cup of clean, fresh cranberries overnight. Bring  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sugar and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water to a light simmer over medium low heat (or thereabouts). Once it starts to simmer, turn off the heat and add the frozen cranberries for only 5 minutes. Stir occasionally and watch to

ensure none of them pop. If they do, remove from the (turned off) burner immediately. After 5 minutes, remove the cranberries (you can reserve the juice for a holiday drink or cocktail!) to a mesh drying rack. Let cool until they've dried slightly but are still sticky (about 10 minute). Roll in a bowl of sugar, separating any that have stuck together. Store leftovers in a sealed container in the fridge.

11. To make the Mickey wreath (or a plain old wreath), create a stencil in the top of the cake first in case it's not centered or looks wonky--you can frost over the stencil and try again. I used round biscuit cutters. Dye about ½ cup or so of reserved frosting with green gel food coloring. I used Americolor Leaf Green and Wilton Juniper Green. I also used the Wilton 106 tip to pipe mini rosettes on this 6" cake, but a full sized cake would be ideal for 1M rosettes. Or, you can use a variety of tips, but you'll need extra frosting for separate bags.
12. Decorate with festive sprinkles and/or the candied cranberries.

*Enjoy! Leftovers can be kept at room temperature in a sealed container (or in the fridge--your choice). Seal any cut edges with leftover frosting or by placing plastic wrap right against the cut edges.*