

FOOD & DINING

A go-to dessert for special occasions

Decadent desserts make the perfect caper to great meals. Providing the bite of dark chocolate with the sweetness of milk, the following recipe for “Milk Chocolate Torte with Assam Tea Ganache” from Robert Wemischner and Diana Rosen’s “Cooking with Tea” (Periplus) is ideal for special occasions.

- Milk Chocolate Torte with Assam Tea Ganache**
Serves 6 to 8
- 8 ounces dark milk chocolate (41% cocoa content)
 - 4 tablespoons Tippy Assam tea leaves (or an Assam of your choice)
 - 1/2 cup water
 - 4 ounces sweet butter
 - 4 large eggs, separated
 - 1/3 cup all-purpose flour, sifted twice
 - 2 teaspoons malted milk powder

Preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly coat the bottom and sides of an 8-inch springform or regular cake pan with nonflavored aerosolized spray. Line the bottom with a circle of parchment paper. In a double boiler or a stainless steel bowl set over a pan of simmering water, melt the chocolate. In a separate small saucepan, bring the tea leaves, water and butter to a boil. Remove from the heat and stir to melt the butter, allowing the tea leaves to infuse in the water-butter mixture for 3 minutes. Pass through a fine sieve into the chocolate. Stir to blend. Allow to cool for about 15 minutes. Separate the eggs, place the whites into a perfectly clean, fat-free bowl of an electric mixer and the yolks into the chocolate mixture. Beat whites until soft peaks form. Sift flour and malted milk powder together and then fold in egg whites. Fold this flour-malted milk powder mix gently but thoroughly into the chocolate base. Pour into the prepared cake pan and bake for about 35 minutes, or until the cake appears firm, but not dry. This cake is very moist inside and will fall as it cools. Make the ganache.

- Assam Ganache**
- 7 ounces heavy cream
 - 2 tablespoons Tippy Assam tea leaves
 - 7 ounces dark milk chocolate, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
 - 1 tablespoon unsalted (sweet) butter

In a heavy 1-quart saucepan, bring the cream and tea leaves to a boil. Remove from heat and allow to infuse further for 3 minutes. Pass through a fine-meshed sieve into a bowl set over a pot of simmering water. Slowly add the chocolate and

gently stir to blend, without aerating. Add the butter and stir until completely melted. Set aside. Assembly: Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper or foil. Place the cake on a cooking rack, then place the rack on the cookie sheet. Pour the ganache over the cake, using a spatula to spread the ganache evenly as needed. Allow to set. Scrape up any ganache that drips off the cake and pour to cover the cake a second time. (Reheat slightly over a pot of simmering water, if necessary, to loosen the mixture.) Cool at room temperature. Note: If your kitchen is hot, place the cake in the refrigerator just until the ganache sets and feels dry to the touch. Remove the cake from the refrigerator about 20 minutes prior to serving and allow it to adjust to room temperature.



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