

Chocolate sponge cake

Ingredients

- 175g unsalted butter, softened, (plus extra for greasing)
- 175g golden caster
- 3 large eggs
- 50g cocoa powder
- 100g self-raising flour (or same quantity plain flour with 1 tsp baking powder)
- 1-2 tsp milk



sugar

For the butter cream filing

- 50g dark chocolate(or milk chocolate if you prefer)
- 85g unsalted butter, softened
- 175g icing sugar, sieved

Method

Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Grease and line 2 x 20cm sandwich tins with baking parchment. Use a handheld electric whisk or a freestanding mixer to beat the butter and sugar together in a bowl until creamy and light in colour. Then add 1 egg, still mixing.

Sieve the cocoa, flour and a pinch of salt into another bowl and add a third of that to your wet ingredients. Once combined, add the second egg and another third of the flour mixture and work that in. Then add the last egg and remaining flour and beat until you have a smooth thick batter. If the batter is stiff, stir in a splash of milk to loosen it.

Divide the mixture between the tins and smooth the top with the back of a spoon. Bake for 20-25 mins until springy to the touch. Take out of the oven and leave in the tins for 10 mins before turning out onto a wire rack to cool completely.

Filling: Meanwhile, make the butter cream by melting the chocolate in the microwave, or in a bowl over just simmering water, making sure the base doesn't touch the water. Leave to cool. Beat the butter and half the icing sugar together until light and fluffy. Add the remaining sugar and melted chocolate and mix together. If the icing is runny, chill in the fridge until it is firm but still spreadable.

To assemble the cake, put a small dollop of icing onto a plate and put one of the cakes on top. Spread the top of the cake with half the icing, leaving a 1cm border around the edge. Put the second cake on top and push down very gently. Spread the remaining icing over the top if you wish or decorate to your own style.

Judging Tips: will include the following criteria: overall appearance, texture, originality & creativity, effective use of decoration and consistency of butter cream.