

Heart-shaped chocolate cakes with strawberry mascarpone filling

Chocolate cake:

- 1¾ c all-purpose flour
- 1½ c granulated sugar
- ½ c brown sugar
- ¾ c good quality unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 c buttermilk, room temperature
- ½ c vegetable oil
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 c freshly brewed coffee

Strawberry Mascarpone Frosting:

- 2 c strawberries, sliced
- 1 c mascarpone cheese
- 1 c confectioners sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- 1 tbsp heavy whipping cream



Strawberry Mascarpone:

1. In a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, add the strawberries and granulated sugar. Give it a gentle stir. When the mixture starts to bubble around the edges, turn the heat to low, stirring often. The mixture will start to bubble more and foam up. When it starts to foam, add in the lemon juice and stir.
2. Cook for about 10-15 minutes or until the mixture is thickened—and when you run a spatula through it the line mixture stays separated and just barely starts to melt back together. You should end up with about a 1/3 cup of strawberry reduction.
3. Transfer the mixture to a bowl and allow to cool completely.
4. In a bowl, add the mascarpone and the confectioners sugar. With a hand mixer on low, blend in the confectioners sugar a little at a time. Scrape down the sides if necessary.
5. Stop the mixer and add in the vanilla extract, and mix on low speed. Then add the cooled strawberry reduction. Mix in until well combined, stopping to scrape down the sides as necessary.
6. Add in 1 tablespoon of cream, mixing in until desired consistency. Adversely, If you find the mixture is not solid enough to be a frosting add in more confectioner's sugar a little bit a time.



Chocolate Cake:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F and spray the heart-shaped pans or heart-shaped muffin pans with nonstick cooking spray.
2. Sift the flour, sugar, cocoa, baking soda, baking powder, and salt into the bowl and mix until combined.
3. In another bowl, combine the buttermilk, oil, eggs, and vanilla.
4. With the mixer on low speed, slowly add the wet ingredients to the dry. With the mixer still on low, add the coffee and stir just to combine, scraping the bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula. Pour the batter evenly into the prepared pans and bake for 30-40 minutes, or until a cake tester or toothpick comes out mostly clean (not wet).
5. Cool in the pans for 30 minutes, then turn them out onto a cooling rack and cool completely.

Assembly:

1. Once cooled, carefully slice each heart half horizontally.
2. Take the top half of the heart and using the cookie cutter, cut out about 3 hearts if using a larger heart shaped cake pan, or one heart in the middle if you have a smaller heart.
3. On the other half, add the strawberry frosting, covering the surface.
4. Carefully place the heart with the cutouts back over top. If you have red or pink sprinkles on hand consider sprinkling some in the heart cut out as well.