

Recipe from I Will Not Eat Oysters

CHOCOLATE CHIP TAHINI CAKE WITH BANANAS & HALVA

MAKES A 6" 4 LAYER CAKE

THE THINGS

CAKE LAYERS

220 g AP flour
9 g baking powder
4 g baking soda
5 g salt
205 g brown sugar
100 g eggs (2 large eggs)
5g vanilla extract
88 g tahini (sesame paste)
254 g buttermilk
48 g canola oil
300 g mini chocolate chips

TAHINI CRISPIES LAYER

75 g tahini (sesame paste)
30 g feuilletine
25 g tiny rice crisps
20 g powdered sugar
1 g salt

SWISS MERINGUE BUTTERCREAM

198 g egg whites
330 g sugar
450 g unsalted butter, cut into cubes, at room temperature
10 g vanilla bean paste or extract
1 g salt

TO FINISH AND DECORATE

2 bananas, sliced
250-300 g plain or vanilla halva
semi-sweet chocolate, to melt and pour over top, optional
banana chips, optional
chocolate wafers, optional
chocolate jimmies (sprinkles), optional
black sesame seeds
Maldon salt, optional
feuilletine, optional
tiny rice crisps, optional

THE WAY

FOR THE CAKE LAYERS: Pre-heat the oven to 325°F (162°C). Lightly coat your 6" cake pans with cooking spray along the bottom and the sides. Line each pan with parchment rounds.

Sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt into a large bowl. Add in the brown sugar and mix until combined well. In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs, vanilla extract, tahini, buttermilk, and canola oil. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry and whisk to combine until the cake batter is homogenous. Fold in the mini chocolate chips.

Weigh out 305 g of batter into each prepared cake pan. You will have 4 layers total. If you don't have 4 6" cake pans, you can bake them in batches. Bake for 20-22 minutes until a skewer is inserted and comes out cleanly. Prepare a sheet pan with parchment paper. Allow the cake layers to cool for 5 minutes and then turn them out onto the sheet pan. Because they will cool upside down, the rounded tops will flatten. This is a good thing. Wrap the sheet pan tightly with plastic wrap. It's ok if the cakes are still warm. Place them in the fridge for at least 8 hours, over night is best. They will be easier to work with when cool.

FOR THE TAHINI CRISPIES LAYER: Place all the ingredients in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with paddle attachment. Mix on low until homogenous. Set aside. This can be made up to 2 days ahead.

FOR THE SWISS MERINGUE BUTTERCREAM: Place the egg whites and sugar in the bowl of a stand mixer and place it over a pot of simmering water, making sure the bowl doesn't touch the water (double boiler style). Whisk constantly until the sugar has dissolved and the mixture reads 140°F (60°C). Place the bowl onto the stand mixer and using the whisk attachment, whip the mixture on high until it's thick, shiny and more than doubled in size. The temperature on the outside of the bowl should feel about room temperature. If it is still warm, allow the meringue to sit until it cools down to room temp. This is important to do otherwise your butter will just melt when added.

With the mixer on medium-low, start adding in the butter a little bit at a time. Once all the butter is incorporated, add the vanilla bean paste and salt. If the mixture looks soft and melted, it's because you didn't cool the meringue long enough and the butter just melted into it. You can try to save it by putting in the fridge for 10 minutes and whipping it again.

You can color the buttercream with powdered or gel food colors if you like! You can refrigerate this buttercream but make sure it is at room temperature and that you re-whip it before you start working with it.

TO BUILD AND DECORATE THE CAKE: Remove all parchment rounds from the bottom of the cake layers. Place a little swipe of buttercream onto your cake plate or cake board and place the first layer of cake onto it, bottom side down. Spread some buttercream onto the layer and top with slices of bananas and halva. Top with another layer of cake, bottom side up this time. Pipe a layer of buttercream along the perimeter of the cake and fill the middle with tahini crispies mixture. Press down and compact the crispies mixture. Place another layer of cake on top, bottom side down. Repeat with buttercream, banana slices, and halva. Top with the last layer of cake, bottom side up. Refrigerate for at least 15 minutes.

Remove the cake and crumb coat it with buttercream. Return it to the fridge for at least 15 minutes. Coat the cake with the final layer of buttercream. I made a marble sort of look with black and grey colored buttercream. Place it back in the fridge for at least 30 minutes.

I painted my cake with a bit of edible gold paint at this point and poured some melted chocolate around the top and let it drip off the side. I decorated my cake with more chocolate pieces, banana chips, gold painted chocolate wafers, chocolate jimmies, black sesame seeds, Maldon salt, feuilletine, tiny rice crisps, and halva. That is all optional. The cake tastes great regardless of all the fancy things you put on top of it!

Eat the cake at room temperature! It will keep for 2-3 days refrigerated (plastic wrapped well while cold).

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