

## The Ultimate Flourless Chocolate Cake

*Inspired by CooksIllustrated, 3/1998*

Even though the cake may not look done, pull it from the oven when an instant-read thermometer registers 140 degrees. (Make sure not to let tip of thermometer hit the bottom of the pan.) It will continue to firm up as it cools. If you use a 9-inch springform pan instead of the preferred 8-inch, reduce the baking time to 18 to 20 minutes.

Serves 12 to 16

1. Prepare oven

Adjust oven rack to lower middle position.

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Heat oven to 325 degrees.
2. Prepare pans

Line bottom of 8-inch springform pan with parchment.

Grease pan sides.

Cover pan underneath and along sides with sheet of heavy-duty foil.

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Set in large roasting pan.
3. Prepare hot water

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Bring kettle of water to boil.
4. Beat eggs

8 large eggs, cold

Beat eggs with hand-held mixer at high speed until volume doubles to approximately 1 quart, about 5 minutes.

Alternately, beat in bowl of electric mixer fitted with wire whip attachment at medium speed (speed 6 on a KitchenAid) to achieve same result, about 5 minutes.

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5. Melt chocolate and butter

1 pound bittersweet chocolate or semisweet chocolate, coarsely chopped

1/2 pound unsalted butter (2 sticks), cut into 1/2-inch chunks

1/4 cup strong coffee or liqueur (optional)

Meanwhile, melt chocolate and butter (adding coffee or liqueur, if using) in large heat-proof bowl set over pan of almost simmering water, until smooth and very warm (about 115 degrees on an instant-read thermometer), stirring once or twice.

(For the microwave, melt chocolate and butter together at 50 percent power until smooth and warm, 4 to 6 minutes, stirring once or twice.)

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6. Add eggs to chocolate mixture

Fold 1/3 of egg foam into chocolate mixture using large rubber spatula until only a few streaks of egg are visible.

Fold in half of remaining foam.

Finally, fold in last of remaining foam, until mixture is totally homogenous.

7. Prepare for baking Scrape batter into prepared springform pan.  
Smooth surface with rubber spatula.

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- boiling water Set roasting pan on oven rack.  
Pour enough boiling water to come about halfway up side of  
springform pan.

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8. Bake Bake until cake has risen slightly, edges are just beginning to set, a  
thin glazed crust (like a brownie) has formed on surface, and an  
instant read thermometer inserted halfway through center of cake  
registers 140 degrees, 22 to 25 minutes.

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9. Cool Remove cake pan from water bath and set on wire rack; cool to room  
temperature.

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10. Refrigerate Cover and refrigerate overnight to mellow (can be covered and  
refrigerated for up to 4 days).

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11. Prepare for serving About 30 minutes before serving, remove springform pan sides.  
Invert cake on sheet of waxed paper.  
Peel off parchment pan liner.  
Turn cake right side up on serving platter.

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12. Garnish  
confectioners' sugar or cocoa Sieve light sprinkling of confectioners' sugar or unsweetened cocoa  
powder powder over cake to decorate, if desired.