

# BROWNIES

MAKES ONE 9 X 13-INCH PAN

Brownies are so simple to make at home, I have never understood why anyone would ever use the boxed kind. For the richest brownies, the ratio of chocolate to butter (by weight) is always 1:1. These are pure decadence.

**Cooking spray**

**1 pound semisweet chocolate chips (about 2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> cups)**

**1 pound (4 sticks) unsalted butter**

**7 large eggs**

**1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

**3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cups sugar**

**3/4 cup + 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour**

**1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted**

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Coat a 9 x 13-inch baking pan with cooking spray.

In a large heatproof bowl set over a pot of simmering water, melt the chocolate and butter. Take the bowl off the pot and quickly whisk in the eggs until the batter is homogeneous. Whisk in the vanilla, then the sugar, flour, and cocoa.

Scrape the batter into the prepared pan and bake until a cake tester comes out clean, 25 to 30 minutes; rotate the pan from front to back halfway through.

Let the brownies cool in the pan before cutting into squares or bars. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

*chef it up!* BROWNIE FLUFF-A-NUTTER

Bake the brownie and cool it in the pan. Place in the freezer for 2 to 3 hours (this keeps it intact when you take it out of the pan). Invert the brownie out of the pan and turn right-side up. With a serrated knife, trim the top “crust” off the brownie, making it flat and even. Spread with  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch [Peanut Butter Filling](#) ( $\frac{1}{2}$  recipe); top that with  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups [Chocolate Glaze](#) ( $\frac{1}{2}$  recipe). Let cool and set for about 1 hour. To serve, make a generous smear of [Marshmallow Creme](#) across a plate; toast with a blow-torch (aka a crème brûlée torch). Cut the brownie into thin bars and place on the fluff. Top with crushed candied peanuts (see “[Candied Nuts](#)”).

# ORANGE BUTTERMILK BUNDT CAKE

SERVES 16

A Bundt cake is essentially a pound cake, which has a very fine texture, making it especially well suited to keeping a shape, like that of a Bundt pan. (Of course it can also be baked in a loaf or plain tube pan, like a traditional pound cake.) Pound cakes are often used as the layers in ice cream cakes, or in the British dessert called trifle, or in my [Cake Pudding](#). This pound cake is a great basic citrus cake recipe. The buttermilk not only adds moistness but also gives the cake a slight extra tang. The orange can be interchanged with other types of citrus, such as lemon or grapefruit. With its light and yummy fruit flavor, this cake is perfect after a heavy meal. **SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:** 12-cup Bundt pan

## Cooking spray and flour, for prepping the pan

1/2 pound + 1/3 cup (2<sup>2</sup>/3 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature

2<sup>3</sup>/4 cups sugar

6 large eggs

4 large egg yolks

3/4 cup buttermilk

2 tablespoons grapeseed or canola oil

1<sup>1</sup>/2 teaspoons grated orange zest

1<sup>1</sup>/2 tablespoons orange juice

1<sup>1</sup>/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

3<sup>3</sup>/4 cups all-purpose flour

1 tablespoon baking powder

Pinch of kosher salt

[White Glaze](#)

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Coat a 12-cup Bundt pan with cooking spray, then lightly coat with flour, shaking out the excess.

In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the butter and sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy. Reduce to low speed and add the whole eggs and egg yolks one at a time, beating well after each addition.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the buttermilk, oil, orange zest and juice, and vanilla. In a second bowl, stir together the flour, baking powder, and salt.

On medium speed, alternate adding the flour mixture and the buttermilk mixture to the butter-egg mixture in several additions, ending with the flour mixture. Scrape down the bowl with a rubber spatula and beat until the batter is blended well.

Scrape the batter into the prepared pan. Bake the cake until a cake tester inserted halfway between the center tube and outside of the pan comes out clean, 50 minutes to 1 hour; rotate the pan front to back halfway through. Let the cake cool in the pan.

While the cake is cooling, make the glaze.

Set a wire cooling rack over a piece of parchment paper (for easy cleanup). Invert the cooled cake out of the pan onto the rack. Pour the glaze over the cake, letting it drip down the sides.

### *chef it up!*

I sometimes bake this cake in 4-ounce brown paper baking cups (they're like freestanding muffin cups, waxed on the inside and sturdy). For a touch of added sweetness and visual appeal, I sprinkle a little pearlized sugar on top before baking. Each "cup" cake then gets a little ribbon wrapped around it for a cute takeaway gift.

### **INSIDER TIP** • STORING BUNDT CAKES

These dense buttery cakes store really well. Keep them in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 weeks. It's important to keep them well covered to prevent drying out.



# ANGEL FOOD CAKE

SERVES 16

Angel food cake is an egg white–based cake that is so simple to mix, it makes for a great quick and easy dessert. With its light-as-air texture and spongy crumb, this cake is a good one to sauce or soak up fruit juices released from macerated berries. It's the cake you make for a non-gut-busting meal on a warm summer's night. **SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:** 9-inch tube pan with removable bottom (aka angel food cake pan)

**1½ cups confectioners' sugar**

**1 cup cake flour**

**12 large egg whites, at room temperature**

**½ teaspoon kosher salt**

**1 teaspoon cream of tartar**

**1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

**Lemon Glaze**

**Fresh berries, for garnish**

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Sift 1 cup of the confectioners' sugar with the cake flour two times and set aside. Sift the remaining ½ cup confectioners' sugar separately and set aside.

In a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat the egg whites with the salt and cream of tartar on high speed. When the whites have reached the soft peak stage, add the sifted ½ cup sugar and the vanilla. Continue to whip the whites to stiff peaks. With a rubber spatula, gently fold in the flour mixture until combined and fully incorporated.

Pour the batter into the tube pan. Bake until light golden brown and a cake tester comes out clean, 35 to 45 minutes; rotate the pan

front to back halfway through.

An angel food cake needs to be cooled upside down to keep it light and airy (otherwise gravity causes it to sink into itself). Some tube pans come with little feet that will support the tube pan when it's upside down. If the pan you're using doesn't have little feet, invert the pan and hang it by the center tube on a narrow-necked bottle. Let cool completely.

While the cake is cooling, make the glaze.

Release the cake from the pan by running a knife around the edges, then popping off the side walls. Set a wire cooling rack over a piece of parchment paper (for easy cleanup). Invert the cooled cake out of the pan onto the rack. Pour the glaze over the cake, letting it drip down the sides.

To serve, cut the cake with a serrated knife. Serve with fresh berries alongside, or for a fancier presentation, see "Chef It Up!" below.

### *chef it up!*

Instead of plain fresh berries, macerate them first, meaning let them sit with sugar to develop juices. Then when you serve the cake, you top slices with berries and also spoon some of the juices over the top. To make the berries, combine 1 pint berries (your choice) with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar, stir and let sit for at least 1 hour at room temperature, until the sugar pulls some of the juices out of the fruit.

### **INSIDER TIP** • ANGEL FOOD CAKE PANS

Because angel food cake batter is some sticky, temperamental stuff, it's important to use a cake pan with a removable bottom for an easy release of the cake. Don't spray or grease the pan, because you want the meringue-style batter to climb the walls of the pan. If the pan were greased, the batter would have nothing to cling to and it would collapse and be dense.



