

GANACHE FILLING

MAKES ENOUGH TO FILL AND FROST A 9-INCH LAYER CAKE

Ganache is the term for a filling or glaze made by heating cream and chocolate together and emulsifying it by stirring. This is my basic recipe; however, don't be fooled into thinking it's easy—ganache can be a bit temperamental. You can make a ganache well ahead, refrigerate it, and melt it down when you need it.

2¹/₃ cups semisweet chocolate chips

2¹/₂ cups heavy cream

Place the chocolate chips in a heatproof bowl. In a small saucepan, bring the cream to a boil. Pour the hot cream over the chocolate. Let the mixture stand for 30 seconds, then stir the mixture until it comes together. Let the mixture stand at room temperature until it sets to a spreadable consistency, about 1 hour. Slightly whisk it to thicken.

Store in the refrigerator if not using right away, but you'll have to remelt it (see Insider Tip, below) when you're ready to use it.

VARIATION

Mocha Ganache: Add 2 tablespoons instant espresso powder to the cream in the saucepan before you bring it to a boil.

INSIDER TIP • HOW TO REMELT A GANACHE

You will not be able to spread a cold ganache, so it needs to be gently, partially remelted. To do this, put the ganache in a metal bowl and place it directly over a low flame. When a little of the ganache melts at the bottom of the bowl, whisk it up into the rest of the

ganache to loosen it up. Repeat the process (if necessary) until the ganache reaches spreading consistency.