

BLACK AND WHITE BIRTHDAY CAKE

This is easy to prepare but the buttercream is a little tricky. Just make sure that the butter is very soft (microwave briefly if necessary), and that the meringue is fully cooled before adding it.

One 9-inch (22-cm) cake, about 12 to 16 servings

DEVIL'S FOOD LAYERS

1 ½ cups	300 grams	granulated sugar
1 ½ cups	200 grams	all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon	3 grams	salt
1 teaspoon	4 grams	baking soda
6 ounces	170 grams	Cacao Ivory® 74% Dark Chocolate, melted and cooled, finely cut
½ cup	115 grams	unsalted butter, cut into 12 pieces
1 cup	240 grams	boiling water
2 large	100 grams	whole eggs, at room temperature
1 ½ teaspoons	7.5 ml	vanilla extract
½ cup	125 grams	sour cream

VANILLA BEAN WHITE CHOCOLATE BUTTERCREAM

4 large	120 grams	egg whites
Pinch		salt
1 cup	200 grams	granulated sugar
12 ounces	340 grams	unsalted butter, very soft
1		vanilla bean, split and seeds scraped out
4 ounces	115 grams	Cacao Ivory® 31% White Chocolate melted with 2 ounces (60 ml) milk and cooled

MARBLED CHOCOLATE BARK

12 ounces	340 grams	Cacao Ivory® Dark Chocolate Compound, melted
12 ounces	340 grams	Cacao Ivory® White Chocolate Compound, melted

Two 9-inch round pans, 2 inches deep, buttered and the bottoms lined with a disk of parchment

One half-sheet pan covered with parchment for the bark

1. For the cake layers, set a rack in the middle level of the oven and preheat to 350°F (177°C).

2. Whisk the sugar, flour, salt, and baking soda together in a bowl and set aside. Place the **Cacao Ivory®** 74% Dark Chocolate and butter in a large mixing bowl and pour the boiling water over them. Shake the bowl to make sure all the solids are submerged, but don't whisk. Let melt for a few minutes, then whisk smooth. Whisk in the eggs, vanilla, and sour cream.
3. Whisk in the dry ingredients in thirds.
4. Pour the batter into the prepared pans. Bake until well risen and firm (test the center with the point of a small knife), about 30 minutes.
5. Cool in the pans for 5 minutes, then loosen sides with a paring knife and unmold to a cardboard. Invert again to a rack and cool with paper still stuck to layers. Wrap and freeze if not using immediately.
6. For the buttercream, mix the egg whites, salt, and sugar in the bowl of a stand mixer. Place over a pan of boiling water and whisk by hand until the egg whites are hot and the sugar is dissolved, about 2 to 3 minutes. Place on mixer with whisk attachment, and beat until cool, about 5 minutes. Make sure that the meringue has fully cooled to room temperature before adding the butter.
7. Switch to the paddle and add the butter all at once. Beat buttercream on medium speed until it is smooth and shiny, about 5 to 8 minutes. Beat in the vanilla bean seeds and the cooled **Cacao Ivory®** white chocolate and milk mixture.
8. For the bark, spread the dark compound on the paper in a large square. Put the white compound in a paper cone and streak the dark compound irregularly. Use the point of a knife to marble the 2 colors together. Let set to a slightly soft state and cut into squares that are the height of the cake.
9. To assemble the cake, invert one of the layers to a cardboard and remove the paper; invert to another cardboard. Spread with a little less than half the buttercream. Invert the second layer, top side down, on the buttercream and remove the paper. Spread the outside of the cake with the remaining buttercream. Cover the top of the cake with "rose piping" using an open star tube (Ateco #22).
10. Press the marbled squares against the side of the cake overlapping them slightly.
11. Serve within a few hours or wrap and refrigerate and bring to room temperature before serving.