

# Bake A Cake Your Guests Will Remember

COLUMBUS, Ohio — "A fabulous dessert should leave a lasting memory; after all it's the last thing you've been served," says Flo Braker, noted cooking teacher and author of *The Simple Art of Perfect Baking*. "So many of our memories are based on wonderful food, especially at the holidays, and people just expect luxurious holiday desserts," she advises.

The most memorable holiday desserts have several things in common: great taste, sensational appearance and ease of preparation. And for many, desserts must be chocolate!

Chocolate Truffle Cake belies its simple preparation — it looks and tastes like a pastry chef's creation. The intensely chocolate, moist cake layer can be baked ahead and frozen for up to two months, then thawed prior to frosting. The best bakers know that a butter cake keeps well and that the flavor actually improves over time.

## CHOCOLATE TRUFFLE CAKE

Yield: one 9-inch cake

### Cake:

¾ cup (1½ sticks) butter, cut into pieces

8 ounces semisweet chocolate, coarsely chopped

6 eggs

¾ cup sugar

¾ cup finely ground pecans or almonds

¾ cup all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

### Ganache:

½ cup whipping cream

4 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped

2 tablespoons butter

### Garnish:

2 ounces white chocolate, coarsely chopped

¾ cup finely chopped pecans or almonds

Fresh raspberries, if desired

Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter

and flour 9-inch diameter spring-

form pan. Line bottom of pan with

waxed paper; butter and flour pa-

per. For cake, heat butter and cho-

colate in small saucepan over low

heat until melted. Remove from

heat; set aside. Beat eggs in large

mixer bowl until frothy. Gradually

add sugar; continue beating 4 to 5

minutes or until mixture has tri-

pled in volume. Gradually add

chocolate mixture; mix well. Fold

in ground pecans, flour and vanil-

la. Pour batter into prepared pan.

Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until

cake springs back when lightly

touched in center. Cool cake in

pan on wire rack 15 minutes. Run

knife around edge of pan to loosen

cake. Remove side of pan; invert

cake onto wire rack. Carefully re-

move pan bottom and waxed pa-

per; cool completely.

For ganache, heat cream, cho-

colate and butter in medium

saucepan over low heat, stirring

until chocolate melts and mixture

is smooth. Refrigerate until mix-

ture is thick enough to spread yet

is still pourable. Place cake on

wire rack over waxed paper lined

baking sheet. Pour ganache over

cake; smooth top and sides with

spatula. Carefully transfer to serv-

ing plate. For garnish, place white

chocolate in small heatproof bowl.

Place bowl in small skillet with

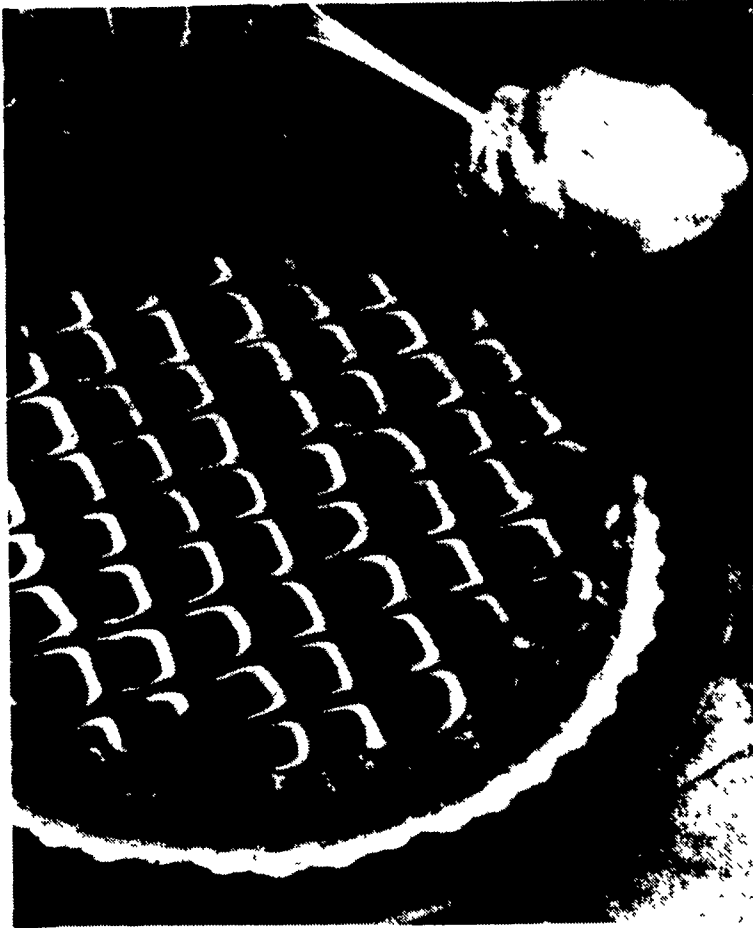
water. Heat over low heat until

chocolate is melted.\* Place melted

chocolate in pastry bag with plain

round tip; pipe evenly spaced

horizontal lines on cake. With a

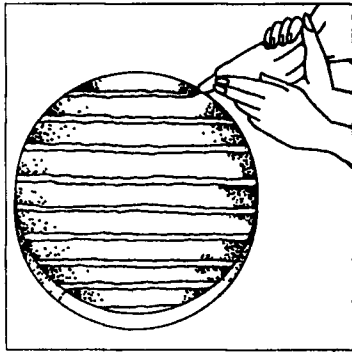


Chocolate Truffle Cake is a dazzling decadent dessert, just right for finishing the holiday feast.

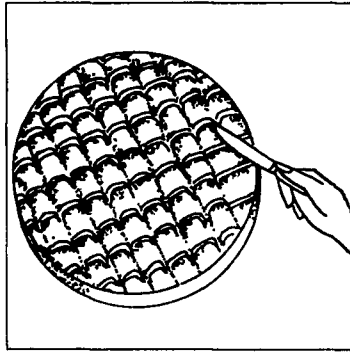
knife, draw through white chocolate vertically across the lines to form design. Press chopped pecans onto side of cake. Arrange raspberries around outside edge of

cake. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. Remove from refrigerator at least 30 minutes prior to serving.

## Cake Decorating Tips



**1** Using pastry bag with small round tip, pipe horizontal lines of melted white chocolate evenly spaced on top of cake



**2** Draw tip of small knife or wooden pick vertically across the lines to form design

### HOW TO DECORATE A MAGNIFICENT CAKE

You don't need to have a lot of time on your hands to decorate a spectacular cake. Use one or a combination of the following easy ideas to transform the Chocolate Truffle Cake or any other favorite cake into a show-stopper dessert!

- After frosting the cake with ganache, fill a pastry bag with melted white chocolate. Using a small round tip, pipe evenly spaced lines of white chocolate horizontally across the top of the cake. While icing is still wet, draw the tip of a small knife or a wooden skewer vertically across the lines. (Pictured)
- Go nuts! Sprinkle entire cake with toasted chopped nuts. Carefully press chopped nuts or sliced almonds onto the side of the cake. Or, garnish with whole pecan halves.
- For a double dose of chocolate, completely cover the frosted cake with chocolate curls. To make the curls, use a vegetable peeler to shave off pieces of chocolate from a chocolate bar. For best results, chocolate bar should be at room temperature. Greater pressure forms thicker, more open curls; lighter pressure makes tighter curls.
- For another pretty chocolate-on-chocolate design, fill a pastry bag with melted chocolate. Using a small round tip, pipe a continuous free-form design on top of cake.
- Using a pastry bag with a large tip, pipe dollops of whipped cream along edges of cake and plate. Top each dollop with a single raspberry and mint leaves.
- Garnish the cake with fancy sweets like truffles or chocolate covered strawberries — purchased or homemade.
- Arrange white chocolate and/or dark chocolate "leaves" in the center of the cake. Use purchased or homemade leaves.
- Dust individual serving plates with confectioners' sugar or cocoa for a special presentation. To create a design on the plate, place a stencil, shaped cookie cutter or a doily on the plate before dusting, then carefully remove.
- For a colorful presentation plate, pour a thin layer of red raspberry sauce on individual plates just before serving. To make sauce, simply place frozen red raspberries and sugar to taste in the work bowl of a food processor or blender; process until smooth. Strain to remove seeds.

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