

A NOTE FROM ANTHONY:

The is one of the most decadent things you will *ever* eat - and I suppose one of the most unhealthy, but, well... whatever.

A fairly old French recipe (I believe from the North near the Belgian border where I first tasted it, but versions exist all over France) this is a flourless cake that essentially has nothing but butter, eggs and chocolate. You **MUST** use a spring form pan but I often divide the recipe into 3 or 4 smaller spring form pans and it works just as well (the smaller versions make GREAT Christmas gifts to neighbors!).

Enjoy,
Anthony

La Bête Noir (The Black Beast)

CAKE

½ cup water and ½ cup whiskey

(this is the preferred portion of my Northern French neighbor, Jean [a BRILLIANT “Nordiste” cook, who at 14, used to carry messages in the handlebars of her bicycle for the French Résistance during WW II - MANY stories there!], although ANY percentage works - even simply “water” [blech!] - as long as there is 1 cup TOTAL fluid to make the simple syrup [below]).

¾ cup sugar

9 Tbsp. butter (1 stick plus 1 Tbsp.)

18 oz. bittersweet or semi-sweet chocolate (I usually mix the 2, but do NOT use unsweetened or milk chocolate)

6 large eggs

GANACHE

1 cup heavy whipping cream

8 oz. bittersweet or semi-sweet chocolate (*I often use flavored chocolate, like raspberry, orange, etc. for the ganache and it works well - the trick is to make sure the chocolate is high quality. In the US, that would mean Giradelli or some other “designer” chocolate - in Germany, Italy or France, Côte d’Or, Godiva, Milka, Leonidas, etc. - in England... perhaps visit France to get the chocolate...*)

PROCESS

Preheat oven to 350.

Line bottom of a spring form pan with parchment paper and butter the pan AND the paper.

Wrap 3 layers of foil around the outside of the pan - *make sure the foil comes up to the edge of the pan (and a little beyond or water can leak into the pan).*

Mix water, whiskey [in whatever combination to equal 1 cup total fluid] and sugar and heat until dissolved to make a simple syrup.

Let cool slightly.

Slowly melt butter and chocolate together.

Add simple syrup to chocolate batter and let cool slightly (*or the eggs will harden when added... been there - done that...*).

Whisk eggs and add to chocolate batter.

Pour batter into the buttered spring form pan.

Place pan in a large roasting pan and fill the roasting pan with enough water to come about halfway up the sides of the spring form pan.

Bake about 50 minutes, until center of cake doesn't jiggle.

Let cool in the spring form pan.

GANACHE – PROCESS

Simmer whipping cream in a pan.

Remove from heat, add chocolate, and whisk until smooth.

Let cool, then pour the ganache over the *cooled* chocolate cake (still in spring form pan).

Refrigerate a couple hours, then unmold.

You can decorate the top with white chocolate (melted with a little cream and piped in whatever design you want) or simply place a doily over the top as a template and sprinkle powdered sugar over it to make a sugar pattern when you remove the doily... because the cake doesn't already have enough sugar!