

L'Orange ("Fran's" Chocolate Orange Torte)

Servings: 14

Source: "Pure Chocolate" by Fran Bigelow (at Barb's house) May '05

Ingredients

- 6 ounces Semisweet Chocolate, Finely Chopped
- 2 Oranges, Large Navels - Rough Skin
- 1½ Butter, Room Temperature
- 1 cup Sugar
- 4 large Eggs, Room Temperature
- 1⅔ cups Almond Flour (see Notes)

Chocolate Glaze

- 4 oz Semisweet Chocolate, Finely Chopped
- 1 stick (8 tbs) Unsalted Butter, Room Temperature

Method

Position a rack in the middle of the oven and preheat the oven to 300°F.

Butter 9" round cake pan (preferably flared) and line with a parchment circle.

In a double boiler melt the chocolate over low heat. Remove when nearly melted and continue stirring until smooth. Briefly return to the double boiler if it begins to thicken.

Wash the oranges. Using a fine grater or microplaner, finely grate the zest directly into the mixing bowl, so that all the fragrant orange oils are captured.

Add the butter and sugar to the orange zest in the bowl. Beat with the paddle attachment on medium-high speed until light in color, 3 to 5 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula halfway through.

With the mixer on medium-high speed, begin adding the eggs slowly, one at a time. Continue beating until well mixed, about 3 minutes total. The beaten mixture will be lighter in color and will have increased in volume.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a rubber spatula, fold in the almond flour. Then fold in the melted chocolate. Evenly spread the batter into the prepared pan.

Bake for 40 to 45 minutes (longer, I found), until puffed and domed in the center with a slight fracture 1 inch from the rim. The top will appear lighter in color. A cake tester inserted in the center will have a few moist crumbs. Allow cake to cool at room temperature in the pan for approx. 15 minutes.

To remove from pan, run a thin-bladed knife around the edges of the cake and invert onto a cardboard cake circle or metal tart-pan bottom. Chill completely. (The torte can be wrapped in plastic once cooled and placed in the freezer for up to a week prior to assembly.)

Chocolate Glaze

In double boiler or bowl over simmering water, melt the chocolate. Remove the top of the boiler when the chocolate is nearly melted and continue stirring until smooth. Add the softened butter, slowly stirring with a rubber spatula until no visible traces of butter remain. (If the butter starts to liquefy, stop and let the chocolate cool slightly.) The glaze should be glossy and smooth with a temp of 80-85°F. When stirred, it will hold a line on the surface for about 10 seconds before disappearing. If the glaze begins to set up, return briefly to the double boiler.

To Finish Torte

Bring torte to room temp, unwrap it, and remove parchment paper. Trim uneven edges.

Have ready the Chocolate Butter Glaze.

Place the torte (on cardboard cake circle) on a cooling rack positioned over a rimmed baking sheet. Beginning 1½ inches from the edge of the torte, slowly and evenly pour the glaze around the torte layer, making sure that the sides are sufficiently covered. Then pour the remaining glaze onto the center.

Working quickly, using a metal offset spatula, spread the glaze evenly over the top, letting the excess run down the sides.

Let set at room temperature until the glaze is slightly firm, about 5 minutes. Once set, slide an offset spatula under the cardboard circle, rotating the spatula to release any spots where the glaze has stuck to the rack. Carefully lift the torte and, supporting the cake's bottom with your free hand, slide it onto its serving plate. Can be stored at room temp up to 3 days, with cut edges protected.

Notes

The Chocolate Glaze makes enough for a 9" torte; store it at room temp, since chilling dulls the shine.

Almond Flour

Buy it or...purchase slivered or whole blanched almonds. Working in small batches, with the food processor never more than half full, start by pulsing until large chunks are formed. Then process 15 to 20 seconds, until a fine meal is formed, being careful not to overprocess. As with all nuts, overprocessing will turn almonds into an oily paste or butter. As a general rule, the following equivalents apply:

4 oz almonds = 1 cup almond flour; 1 oz almonds = ¼ cup flour; 1.3 oz = ⅓ cup almond flour