



Chocolate Lava Cake

Our Young Chefs, 2015

Makes 6 to 8 servings

This classic French dessert literally melts in your mouth!!! This dessert is usually made in individual ceramic ramekins, but if ramekins are not available, see the directions below for making this elegant dessert in a muffin tin.

INGREDIENTS

Unsalted butter, room temperature,
for ramekins
Granulated sugar OR cocoa powder

6 to 8 ounces semi-sweet baking
chocolate (or use your favorite 70%
dark chocolate bar)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (1 stick/4 ounces) unsalted
butter (diced, room temperature)

2 large eggs
2 large egg yolks
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (2.3 ounces) granulated sugar
2 tablespoons (0.6 ounces) flour

DIRECTIONS

Prepare the ramekins: Preheat the oven to 425°F. Using a pastry brush, generously **butter** six 5- or 6-ounce ramekins. Lightly dust the inside bottom of each ramekin with either **granulated sugar** or **cocoa powder**. Set the ramekins on a baking sheet.

Don't have ramekins? Alternate suggestion: If ramekins are not available, the **lava cakes** can be prepared in a standard-sized muffin tin. Generously **butter** 8 cups of the muffin tin; dust the inside bottom of each cup with either **granulated sugar** or **cocoa powder**. Set aside.

Melt the chocolate: In a double boiler, over lightly simmering water, (or in a heatproof bowl over a pan of lightly simmering water) melt the **chocolate** with the **butter**, stirring frequently. Remove from the heat to cool slightly.

Alternate method to melt the chocolate: Combine the **chocolate** and **butter** in a microwave-proof bowl; microwave at 30% power for 3 minutes. Remove from the microwave; stir to melt the **chocolate**. If the **chocolate** is not melted, microwave for 30 seconds to 1 minute longer at 30% power. Remove from the microwave; stir. Set aside.

Prepare the cake batter: In the bowl of a stand mixer OR in a mixing bowl using a hand mixer, beat the **eggs**, **egg yolks**, **vanilla**, **salt** and **sugar** at highest speed until the **mixture** is thickened and pale in color.

Stir the melted **chocolate mixture**. By hand, using a whisk, gently stir the **cooled melted chocolate** into the **egg/sugar mixture**, followed by the **flour**.

Portion and bake: Evenly divide the **chocolate batter** between the **prepared ramekins** OR **prepared cups** of a **muffin tin**. Bake at 425°F for 9 to 11 minutes for the **ramekins** or 6 to 7 minutes for the **muffin tins**. This →

GARNISHES

Powdered sugar

Lightly sweetened vanilla whipped cream

Fresh strawberries or raspberries

Mint leaves

dessert is most popular with a super-liquid-oozing center!

For this, the top should be cooked through, but the center be liquid. Check with a toothpick after the earliest time listed for baking. If a **chocolate dessert** with a liquid-center is *not* preferred, cook for a little longer. The result will be an incredibly moist chocolate cake. So, either way, you can't go wrong!

Garnish and serve: When the **lava cakes** are finished baking, remove from the oven. Let the **cakes cool in the ramekins** for 1 minute, then cover each with an inverted dessert plate. Carefully turn each one over, let stand for 10 seconds, then unmold/remove the ramekin. Serve immediately with one or more of the **garnishes** listed above.

Method for unmolding for cakes baked in a muffin tin: If the **lava cakes** are prepared in a muffin tin, cover with an inverted baking sheet pan. Carefully turn over the muffin tin and sheet pan together, let stand for 10 seconds, give the muffin tin a gentle jiggle, then lift off the muffin tin. Using a pancake spatula or other serving utensil, gently place each **lava cake** on an individual serving dish. Serve immediately with one or more of the **garnishes** listed above.

Make-Ahead Chef Tip The chocolate lava cake recipe can be prepared up to 24 hours ahead of time, portioned into the prepared ramekins *OR* muffin tins ready to bake; cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate until ready to bake. Baking time may need to be extended by 1 or 2 minutes.
