

Chocolate-Berry Layer Cake



PREPARATION TIME
20 minutes



COOKING TIME
30 minutes



PERFECT PARTNER
ice-cream soda



Leftover cake slices can be wrapped and frozen for the next time you need a sweet finale.

Thaw slices on dessert plates during dinner. Dessert will be ready when you are!

SHOPPING LIST

- whipping cream • cocoa
- strawberries • buttermilk
- strawberry preserves
- confectioners' sugar

ON HAND

- vanilla extract • baking soda
- salt • oil • sugar • flour • eggs

INGREDIENTS

- 2 eggs
- 1 1/3 cups sugar
- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup strawberry preserves or jam
- 1 pint strawberries, hulled, halved

FROSTING:

- 1 cup whipping cream
- 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

SERVES 12

COOKIN'
Express

• Make a quicker frosting by blending whipped topping with a few drops of chocolate syrup. Omit cocoa powder, confectioners' sugar and vanilla. Frost cake as recipe directs.

Make Ahead

Tight on time? Bake the cake 1 day ahead. Wrap loosely with plastic wrap and refrigerate. Add preserves, frost and decorate just before serving.

♦ VARIATION

Make the most of this versatile cake recipe and try other preserves—blackberry, peach or raspberry.

1 Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour two 9-inch cake pans. Beat eggs and sugar in a mixing bowl until thick and light colored. Sift flour, cocoa, baking soda and salt into a large bowl.



2 Add oil, buttermilk and vanilla to flour mixture; mix until blended. Fold in egg mixture. Pour batter into prepared pans. Bake for 30 minutes. Cool in pans on wire racks for 10 minutes.

3 Remove cakes; cool on wire racks. Spread preserves onto bottom layer; cover with top layer. For frosting, beat whipping cream with cocoa, confectioners' sugar and vanilla.



4 Spread frosting over top of cake; cover loosely and chill until serving time. Decorate with strawberries just before serving.