

Black Forest Cake

Ingredients:

1 dark chocolate cake mix (or your own from scratch)
1/4 C. kirschwasser (cherry brandy)
1/8 C. amaretto
1 can extra fruit cherry pie filling
16 oz. heavy whipping cream
1/2 C. confectioners' sugar
Maraschino cherries, drained, optional, for garnish
Milk chocolate curls or shavings, for garnish

Preparation:

The day before serving —

Drain 1 can extra fruit cherry pie filling in a colander to remove most of the thickened juices. Leave filling in colander on plate in refrigerator overnight for best drainage.

Make cake, following package directions. Bake cake, as directed, in two 9-inch layer cake pans. I buy the dark chocolate fudge cake mix.

When cool, run knife around outside of cake to break any clinging pieces from the sides. Holding cake with one hand, turn cake pan on its side and tap on the counter while gently turning pan. This should loosen the cake. Remove cakes from pans. Place on separate plates. Sprinkle mixture of kirschwasser and amaretto over both cake layers. Insert toothpicks on top and in sides of cake and wrap in cling wrap. Let stand overnight.

Chill electric beaters and large mixing bowl; beat heavy whipping cream until it thickens slightly. Gradually add confectioners' sugar and beat until thick enough to hold its shape. Refrigerate overnight.

Using a cheese plane (preferred) or vegetable peeler, shave chocolate; refrigerate until ready to serve. I found that the side of the chocolate my hand had warmed was the best to shave. Once the chocolate became difficult to shave, I switched sides to rewarm the

chocolate. Store in covered container at room temperature or below overnight.

The day of serving —

Assemble cake.

Place one layer on serving plate. Dilute 1/2 C. of whipped cream mixture with water until it becomes a glaze. Spread glaze over top of bottom layer. Wait half hour, then spread its top with layer of whipped cream to total 1/2 inch. Strew the cherries over the cream, leaving about 1/2 inch margin around border of cake with no cherries.

Set other layer on top of cherries. Spread remainder of glaze on top and sides of cake. Wait half hour, then spread top and sides of cake with remaining cream, shaping cream into decorative swirls on top.

With fingers, gently press chocolate curls into cream on sides of cake. I completely cover sides of cake with the chocolate curls or shavings, whichever I've managed to produce. This both looks good and covers up any frosting boo-boos.

Garnish top with any remaining cherry filling and maraschino cherries or with a few chocolate curls. I like the look of the cherry juice on the white frosting.

I inserted bamboo skewers through top of cake to hold it together during transport to party, then removed them when I arrived. I added the topper just before serving.