

Chocolate Layer Cake

- 1¾ cups (8¾ oz) unbleached all-purpose flour, plus extra for the pans
- 4 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped coarse
- ¼ cup Dutch-processed cocoa powder
- ½ cup hot water
- 1¾ cups (12¼ ounces) sugar
- 1½ teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon table salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 4 large whole eggs plus 2 large egg yolks, at room temperature
- 12 tablespoons (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, very soft

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour two 9" round by 2" high cake pans and line bottom with parchment paper
2. Combine chocolate, cocoa powder, and hot water in a medium heatproof bowl set over a saucepan filled with 1 inch of barely simmering water, stirring occasionally until smooth. Add ½ cup of sugar to the chocolate mixture and stir until thick and glossy, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside to cool
3. Whisk flour, baking soda, and salt in a medium bowl. Combine buttermilk and vanilla in a small bowl
4. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, whisk the whole eggs and egg yolks on medium-low speed until combined, about 10 seconds. Add remaining 1¼ cups sugar, increase speed to high, and whisk until fluffy and lightened in color, 2 to 3 minutes. Replace whisk attachment with paddle attachment. Add cooled chocolate mixture and mix on medium speed until thoroughly incorporated, 30 to 45 seconds, pausing to scrape down the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula as needed. Add the softened butter 1 tablespoon at a time, mixing for about 10 seconds after each addition. Add 1/3 of the flour mixture followed by half of the buttercream mixture, mixing until incorporated after each addition (about 15 seconds). Repeat, using half of the remaining flour mixture and all of the remaining buttermilk mixture (batter may appear separated)
5. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and add remaining flour mixture; mix at medium-low speed until batter is thoroughly combined, about 15 seconds. Remove bowl from the mixer and fold batter once or twice with a rubber spatula to incorporate any remaining flour
6. Divide batter evenly between the prepared pans, smoothing the tops with a rubber spatula. Lightly tap pans against the countertop two or three times to settle the batter
7. Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out with a few crumbs attached, 25 to 30 minutes, rotating pans halfway through the baking time
8. Cool the cakes in the pans on a wire rack for 15 minutes, then run a small knife around the edge of the cakes and flip them out onto a wire rack. Peel off the parchment paper, flip the cakes right side up, and cool completely before frosting, about 2 hours