

Black Forest Poke Cake

Ingredients:

For the cake:

Cooking spray
½ c. vegetable oil
2 c. sugar
1 c. milk
½ tsp. kosher salt
2 large eggs
1¾ c. all-purpose flour
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
¾ c. cocoa powder
1 c. boiling water
3 tsp. powdered espresso
1 (3.8-oz) box chocolate pudding mix
1½ tsp. baking powder
2 c. milk
2 tsp. baking soda
9 maraschino cherries, for garnish

For the frosting:

1 (4-oz.) bar semi-sweet baking chocolate
1½ (8-oz.) containers thawed whipped topping (such as Cool Whip brand)

Directions:

1. Make the cake: Preheat oven to 350°F and spray 9 x 13" baking pan with cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together dry ingredients and set aside.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together eggs, oil, milk, and vanilla extract. Pour wet ingredients into dry and whisk to combine. Quickly whisk in the boiling water, the mixture will be very thin.
4. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 35-40 minutes.
5. Poke warm cake all over with the handle of a wooden spoon. In a small bowl, whisk together the pudding mix and milk for 2 minutes until it's smooth. Pour pudding into holes of the cake.
6. Make frosting: In a microwave-safe bowl, break up ¾ of chocolate bar into pieces and microwave on high for 20 seconds. Stir chocolate and continue to microwave in 20-second increments until melted.

7. Fold melted chocolate into 1 container of whipped topping. Spread the chocolate frosting evenly over cake and refrigerate for at least 2 hours.
8. Using a peeler, shave remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ bar of chocolate. When ready to serve the cake, spread more whipped topping in the center of the frosted cake and decorate with chocolate shavings. Garnish with maraschino cherries.