



Flourless Chocolate Walnut Cake with Caramel Sauce

Servings: 6-8

4 large eggs, separated
 1 cup granulated (baker's) sugar
 2 teaspoons vanilla
 3 cups lightly toasted walnuts,
 finely ground
 ½ cup ground bittersweet
 chocolate

Caramel Sauce for garnish, optional

1 cup of sugar
 6 Tbsp butter
 ½ cup heavy whipping cream

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Cut parchment in a circle to fit the bottom of an 8-inch round cake pan. Butter and flour once parchment has been laid into the pan. With an electric mixer and paddle attachment, beat the egg yolks and sugar together until light and fluffy, 4-5 minutes. Stir in the vanilla.

In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites until they just hold stiff peaks using the whisk attachment. Fold 1/3 of the egg whites into the egg yolk mixture. Add the walnuts and chocolate and stir to blend. Fold in the remaining egg whites just until incorporated.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 45-55 minutes or until firm and golden brown. Cool before removing the cake from the pan.

To serve: cut into wedges and garnish with a drizzle of caramel sauce (optional) or a scoop of vanilla gelato.

CARAMEL SAUCE RECIPE

Yield: Makes a little over one cup of sauce

Note: Before you begin, make sure you have everything ready to go, your “mise en place,” the cream and the butter measured out and next to the pan. It is important to work quickly, with all ingredients at hand, or the sugar may burn.

Heat sugar on moderately high heat in a heavy-bottomed 2-quart or 3-quart saucepan. (It is important to use a pan with high sides since the addition of the heavy cream will cause the caramel to foam up considerably.) As the sugar begins to melt, stir vigorously with a whisk or wooden spoon. As soon as the sugar comes to a boil, stop stirring. You can swirl the pan a bit if you want, from this point on.

As soon as all of the sugar crystals have melted (the liquid sugar should be dark amber in color), immediately add the butter to the pan. Whisk until the butter has melted.

Once the butter has melted, take the pan off the heat. After 5 seconds, slowly add the cream to the pan and continue to whisk to incorporate.

Whisk until caramel sauce is smooth. Let cool in the pan for a couple of minutes, then pour into a glass jar and let sit to cool to room temperature. Once cooled, you can store in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. Warm before serving.

IN YOUR GLASS

We've enjoyed finishing a meal with this cake and a little of Shafer's Firebreak, a Cabernet dessert wine, or a double espresso.