

HAZELNUT CHOCOLATE TORTE

SERVES: 8-10

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup ground hazelnuts
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 1/2 cup dark chocolate, melted
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons hazelnut liqueur (optional)

For Ganache Topping:

- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 cup chopped dark chocolate
- 1/4 cup whole hazelnuts, toasted and chopped

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and grease a 9-inch springform pan with butter.
2. Toast whole hazelnuts in a dry skillet for 5-7 minutes until fragrant, then grind half into a fine meal.
3. In a large mixing bowl, cream together butter and sugar until light and fluffy, approximately 3-4 minutes. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition to ensure full incorporation.
4. Fold in melted chocolate, ground hazelnuts, cocoa powder, vanilla extract, and salt until a smooth batter forms.
5. If using, gently stir in hazelnut liqueur.
6. Pour batter into the prepared springform pan and smooth the top with a spatula.
7. Bake for 35-40 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out with a few moist crumbs. Allow cake to cool completely in the pan.
8. For ganache, heat heavy cream until just simmering and pour over chopped chocolate.
9. Let sit for 2 minutes, then stir until smooth and glossy.
10. Pour ganache over cooled cake, allowing it to drip down the sides.
11. Sprinkle toasted chopped hazelnuts over the top of the ganache.
12. Refrigerate for 30 minutes to set before serving.