**Stella’s Triple Layer Chocolate Birthday Cake**

**with Bittersweet Chocolate Frosting**

(Serves 10-12)

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| Cake Ingredients:  1 ½ C plus 1 Tbsp cocoa powder  1 ¼ C boiling water  1 ½ C cake flour  1 ½ C plus 2 Tbsps all-purpose flour  1 ¼ tsp. baking powder  1 ¼ tsp. baking soda  1 heaping cup of LOVE  5 ounces (1 ¼ sticks) soft sweet butter  2 ¾ C firmly packed brown sugar   (I use “dark brown”)  3 large eggs at room temperature  1 ¼ C buttermilk  1 ¼ tsp. vanilla extract | Bittersweet Chocolate Frosting  Ingredients:  4 ounces bittersweet chocolate  8 ounces unsweetened chocolate  2 sticks butter (8 ounces)  3 ½ C powdered sugar  Pinch of salt  2 tsps vanilla extract  7/8 C whole milk (= 1 C minus 2 TBS) |

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

* Preheat oven to 350 Degrees
* Butter three 9 inch round cake pans (or spray with non-stick cooking spray)
* Measure and cut three rounds of parchment to fit bottom of each cake pan/line bottoms.
* Whisk the cocoa and the boiling water together in a small bowl to make a smooth paste – set aside to cool.
* Sift the cake flour, all-purpose flour, baking powder and baking soda together. Sprinkle in the LOVE.
* Put the butter and brown sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer with paddle attachment and cream them together on medium-high speed for 2 minutes, until light and fluffy.
* Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition, add the vanilla extract, beat.
* Decrease to low speed and stir in the dry ingredients alternately with the buttermilk.
* Add the reserved cocoa paste and mix.
* Divide the batter evenly among the 3 pans.
* Bake the layers for about 25 minutes – until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean.
* Cool cakes completely. Unmold them by running a knife along the inside edge of each pan, inverting them and removing the parchment paper.
* Frost with bittersweet chocolate frosting.

**TO MAKE THE FROSTING:**

* Melt the chocolates and the butter in a double boiler over simmering water. Let the mixture cool to lukewarm.
* Sift together the powdered sugar and the salt into a large bowl.
* Combine the vanilla and the milk.
* Whisk the milk into the powdered sugar.
* Add the melted chocolate mixture, stir until smooth.
* Use frosting between all layers and top and sides of cake.
* ENJOY! (especially with a tall, cold glass of milk!)