CHRISTMAS DAY · DECEMBER 25

Bûche de Noël, the Christmas yule log cake

Prep 45 min **Cook** 12 min **Cool and chill** 2 hr **Total** 2 hr 57 min **Makes** One log, about 10 slices
Level Medium

ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED
Cooking is for children and grown-ups together. An adult should supervise at all times and handle the oven, stovetop, knives, and anything hot. A grown-up turns out and rolls the hot cake, heats the cream, and cuts the branch with a serrated knife.

ALLERGY INFORMATION
Contains wheat (gluten), milk, and egg. Most chocolate also contains soy, and some is made where nuts are processed, so check the label. Always read ingredient labels, since brands vary, and ask about food allergies before you cook or share.

INGREDIENTS

Chocolate sponge

- 4 large eggs, at room temperature
- ¾ cup (150 g) granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ cup (65 g) all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup (30 g) unsweetened cocoa powder, plus more for the towel
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Whipped cream filling

- 1½ cups (360 ml) cold heavy cream
- ⅓ cup (40 g) powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, or 2 tablespoons cocoa powder for a chocolate filling

Bark and snow

- 6 oz (170 g) semisweet chocolate, chopped, or 1 cup chocolate chips
- ¾ cup (180 ml) heavy cream
- Powdered sugar, for snow

METHOD

1. Heat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Line a greased 10 x 15-inch (25 x 38 cm) rimmed baking sheet with parchment and grease the paper.
2. Beat the eggs and sugar on high for 5 to 7 minutes, until thick and pale. Beat in the vanilla. Sift the flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt over the top and fold gently until no streaks remain.
3. Spread the batter in the pan and bake 10 to 12 minutes, until the top springs back. Meanwhile, sift cocoa over a clean kitchen towel.
4. Right away, a grown-up turns the hot cake out onto the towel, peels off the paper, and rolls it up with the towel from a short end. Cool seam side down, about 1 hour.
5. For the bark, pour steaming-hot cream over the chopped chocolate, wait 5 minutes, and stir until smooth. Let it thicken at room temperature, about 1 hour.
6. Whip the cold cream with the powdered sugar and vanilla (or cocoa) to stiff peaks. Unroll the cake, spread the cream almost to the edges, and roll it up again without the towel.
7. Cut a short slanted piece off one end and set it against the side as a branch. Spread the chocolate over the log, mark bark with a fork, and chill 1 hour. Dust with powdered sugar snow to serve.

LITTLE HELPERS CAN (WITH A GROWN-UP)

- Sift cocoa over the towel
- Spread the whipped cream on the cooled cake
- Draw the bark with a fork
- Shake powdered sugar snow over the log

GOOD TO KNOW

- For meringue mushrooms, pipe stiff meringue (2 egg whites, ½ cup or 100 g sugar) into caps and stems and bake at 200°F (95°C) for about 1½ hours.
- Small cracks are fine: the bark covers them. The log keeps 2 days in the fridge.

A BLESSING BEFORE WE EAT

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen. Lord Jesus, Light of the World, shine in our home this Christmas and in every dark place.