

## **BUCHE DE NOEL**

(adapted from *Helen Fletcher's Pastries like a pro*)

for the chocolate spongecake:

¾ cup sifted cake flour (75 grams)

¼ cup sifted cocoa (25 grams)

¼ teaspoon baking powder

6 eggs separated

⅔ cup sugar, divided (140 grams)

1 teaspoon vanilla

for the filling:

1 cup unsalted butter softened (226g)

3 cups confectioners' sugar (380g) or more if needed

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1/4 cup 60–80ml heavy cream (60mL) or more if needed

1/3 cup black cherry jam or other jam of your choice

for the ganache coating:

170g semi-sweet chocolate, finely chopped

¾ cup (180ml) heavy cream

Heat the oven to 350. Spray the bottom of ½ sheet pan (11×17 inches) with cooking spray. Line with parchment paper and spray the paper. Do not spray sides of pan. Set aside.

Whisk together the flour, cocoa and baking powder, mixing well. Set aside. Combine the egg yolks, ⅓ cup sugar and vanilla in a mixing bowl fitted with the whisk attachment. Beat until very thick and very pale yellow.

In a clean mixing bowl with a clean whisk, beat the egg whites until soft peaks form. Slowly add the remaining ⅓ cup sugar and beat until fairly stiff. Place the egg yolks over the egg whites and sift half the flour/cocoa mixture over the beaten eggs. Fold together. Fold in the remaining flour/cocoa. Gently pour into the prepared pan and spread out evenly. Bake 10 to 12 minutes. The top will spring back when lightly touched. Immediately cover directly with foil and place on a rack to cool completely. When ready to assemble, it will roll out easily.

Make the filling: In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, mix together the butter and confectioners' sugar. Begin on low speed until crumbly, and then increase to high and beat for 3 minutes. Add vanilla extract and beat again for another minute. Add heavy cream 2 tablespoons at a time while mixing on high until the mixture is light and fluffy. Transfer the frosting to a piping bag.

Make the ganache: Place chopped chocolate in a medium bowl. Heat the cream in a small saucepan until it begins to simmer. Pour over chocolate, then let it sit for 2–3 minutes to gently soften the chocolate. Slowly stir until completely combined and chocolate has melted. Refrigerate, uncovered, for about 1 hour to thicken.

ASSEMBLE THE CAKE: Lay a large piece of aluminum foil and dust it with powdered sugar. Remove the foil on top of the cake and go around the edges of the pan with a spatula. Pick the spongecake up by the parchment and turn it out onto the powdered sugar lined foil. Remove the parchment paper. Spread the jam over the surface of the cake, then the buttercream, starting by piping large stripes of the cream over the surface (see my composite photo after the recipe). Using the foil as an assist, roll up the spongecake jelly roll style. The last roll should put the spongecake on the board. Cut the ends of the cake at a diagonal and use one or both cut pieces to make branches sitting next to the main log. Cover the log with ganache, making a design on top with the tines of fork. Decorate with fondant pieces or meringue mushrooms, sugared cranberries, chocolate leaves, whatever you desire. Refrigerate for a few hours before serving, and allow to come to room temperature before cutting your first slice.