

Fran Costigan

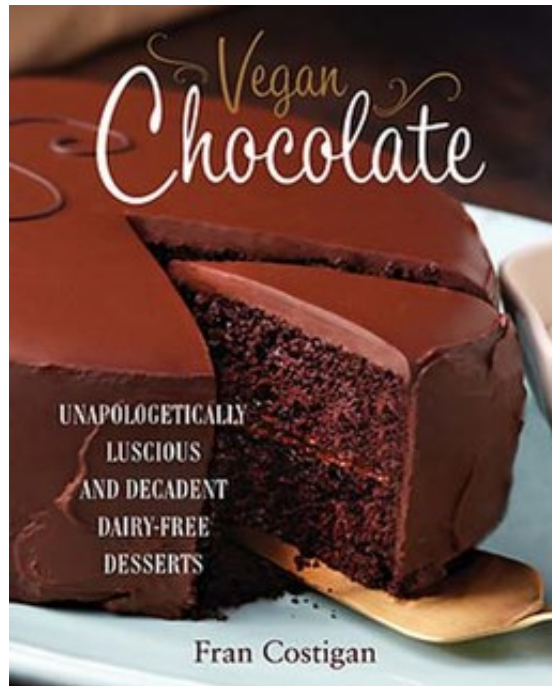
Vegan Chocolate - Imperfect copy

Extrait du livre

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de [Fran Costigan](#)

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Aztec Truffles

Savory spices incorporated into desserts yield fabulous results, but restraint is necessary, particularly when the spices are potent. Remember: adding spice is easy; removing it, especially in this recipe, is often impossible. While the dark chocolate in this recipe will temper the potency of the spice, use the minimum amount of ancho chili to start, tasting as you go. Then, add cautiously until the flavor reaches your preferred level of heat.

MAKES 28 TO 30

(1-INCH / 2.5-CM) TRUFFLES

8 ounces / 227 grams dark chocolate

(70% to 72%), finely chopped

**¾ cup / 180 ml almond milk or
soymilk**

**2 tablespoons / 26 grams organic
granulated sugar**

**1¼ to 1½ teaspoons / 2 to 3.5
grams ancho chili powder, plus
¼ teaspoon for cocoa coating,
if using**

¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon

**⅛ teaspoon fine sea salt, plus
⅛ teaspoon for coating**

**2 teaspoons / 10 ml mild tasting
or fruity extra-virgin olive oil**

**½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
Dutch-process cocoa powder, for
coating (optional)**

MAKE THE GANACHE

1. Put the chocolate to a heatproof bowl and set aside while you heat the milk. (Have a fine mesh strainer nearby for straining the milk over the chocolate.)
2. Pour the milk into a small saucepan. Add the sugar, 1 V* teaspoons of the chili powder, cinnamon, and salt. Cook over medium heat, whisking a few times, to a low boil.
3. Remove the saucepan from the heat. Let the milk sit for 30 minutes to infuse with the flavor of the spices, stirring a few times. The heat of the chili powder should be pronounced, so taste the milk now. If not, add some or all of the remaining 1A teaspoon chili powder and let the milk infuse for another few minutes.
4. Warm the milk over medium heat until small bubbles are visible around the sides. Immediately remove the saucepan from the heat.
5. Pour the milk quickly through the strainer over the chocolate all at once. Rotate the bowl so the chocolate is completely submerged. Cover the bowl with a plate and let stand undisturbed for 4 minutes.
6. Add the olive oil and the vanilla and whisk from the center out only until smooth and glossy. (If the chocolate is not completely melted, refer to page 36 for instructions on using a water bath to melt the chocolate.)
7. Keep the bowl of ganache at room temperature while you test the final consistency. A properly made truffle ganache is firm enough to scoop and shape but still tastes creamy. Dip a teaspoon into the ganache, set the coated spoon on a small plate, and refrigerate for 10 to 15 minutes. After chilling, the ganache on the spoon should be smooth and firm, but still taste creamy. It is unlikely, but if the glaze is too firm, add a tablespoon of room temperature milk, and repeat the test. Add a second tablespoon if needed.

(recipe continues)

TRUFFLES

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8. Cool the ganache in a shallow dish at room temperature for 30 minutes. (The ganache sets up fastest and most evenly in a 9-inch / 23-cm glass pie pan, but a wide bowl is fine too.) Refrigerate uncovered until the surface is no longer soft, then place a piece of parchment paper or plastic wrap directly onto the surface of the ganache, covering it completely, and refrigerate for at least 3 hours, or until very firm. The ganache can be refrigerated at this point for up to one week in an airtight container.

MAKE THE TRUFFLE CENTERS

Line a shallow container with parchment. Remove the ganache from the refrigerator. Use a spoon to scoop out 1-inch / 2.5-cm pieces of ganache and another to push the ganache off the spoon into the container. (If you prefer more uniform truffles, use a 1/2-tablespoon scoop.) When a half dozen or so are made, roll and press the pieces into irregularly shaped rounds. Repeat until all the ganache has been used, washing and drying your hands as needed. (If at any time the ganache becomes too soft to shape, refrigerate until cold and proceed.) Cover and refrigerate the truffle centers in layers separated by parchment paper for 15 to 25 minutes before finishing with the cocoa coating.

FINISH THE TRUFFLES

Choose one of the following three methods from the chapter introduction (page 36) to suit your time or taste: roll in cocoa powder, cinnamon, ancho chili powder, and flaked sea salt; coat in melted chocolate and cocoa powder (the hybrid method); or enrobe in tempered chocolate. Place the coated truffles in the refrigerator to set for 30 to 45 minutes.

Welcome to a treasure trove of stunning special occasion desserts,

guaranteed to dazzle at any birthday, anniversary, or holiday party or just to add some elegance to the everyday. Many of these more elaborate desserts are built by layering cake, creams, and glazes, and these recipes are more time-consuming than most. But the good news is that nearly every component can be made ahead and refrigerated or frozen, that so you can make most of the cake (if not the whole thing) in advance. Step-by-step instructions with tips for planning ahead, assembling, and plating are included in each recipe. And once you understand the basics of building a showstopper, it's easy to make your own unique design by mixing and matching fillings and cakes—perhaps for your own birthday!

Fran's Rulebook for Successful Showstoppers

1. Carefully read Fran's Rulebook for Successful Cakes (page 64) before you begin, especially for crucial notes on measuring ingredients, checking for doneness, and cooling.
2. Read the recipe all the way through, making note of the detailed guides for planning your time and preparing the components ahead of time; many need at least a few hours to set.
3. Clear enough space in your refrigerator. Most showstoppers need to be refrigerated at more than one stage.
4. Refrigerate the cakes until cold before dividing the layers or filling and frosting. Cold cakes are easier to handle.

TROUBLESHOOTING	
Cake layer broke when being moved	"Glue" it with frosting or glaze.
One side of a layer is substantially higher than the other	Stagger thin and thicker layers and fill with more or less frosting.
Frosting or glaze is too soft	Refrigerate it longer.

T H E R E C I P E S

Brooklyn Blackout Cake
White and Dark Chocolate Cheesecake
Chocolate Coconut Whipped Cream Cake
Chocolate Cherry Miroir Cake
Sachertorte
Chocolate Hazelnut Six-Layer Cake
Intensely Chocolate Trifle
Opera Cake
Bûche de Noël
Éclairs



Sachertorte

The legend of the Sachertorte—a chocolate cake filled with a thin layer of apricot jam and covered in a shiny chocolate glaze—dates to 1832. That's when Prince von Metternich of Austria instructed his chef to create a new dessert for a VIP guest, but when the chef took ill, he passed the task to his sixteen-year-old apprentice, Franz Sacher. Sacher created his namesake torte and his son Eduard, a trained pastry chef, perfected the recipe at both the Hotel Sacher and Demel's Bakery. Subsequently, a nine-year legal battle raged over the rights to use the words "The Original Sachertorte" and ended with the hotel calling it the "Original Sachertorte" and Demel's "Eduard Sachertorte." Despite the history and hype that continues today, legions of the Sacher-obsessed who have taste tested both are often disappointed, using words like "dry" and "austere" to describe the Sachers. No doubt this is why the cakes are served with whipped cream. No one would ever describe my Sachertorte this way. Moist and chocolaty, it has a healthy layer of apricot jam spread over a layer of ganache that adds flavor and texture while guarding against soggy cake. The entire cake is coated in two layers of Bittersweet Chocolate Ganache Glaze. Apricot-cognac sauce is swirled into Vanilla Custard Cream, which is served as a complement, not a necessity, as is writing "Sacher" on the cake—a nice touch but certainly optional. No matter which cake you use as the basis, this is an easy, elegant Showstopper.

Note: For a completely gluten-free dessert, use the gluten-free variation of the Chocolate Torte to Live For.

Here's my suggested game plan for the components in order of how far ahead you can prepare them:

1. Make and cool the cake layers; refrigerate until cold or up to 1 day ahead, or freeze for up to 1 month.
Use cold, but not frozen.
2. Make the Bittersweet Chocolate Ganache Glaze; allow to set until thick enough to pour, or refrigerate up to 5 days or freeze up to 1 month. Warm in a water bath until pourable (see page 28).
3. Soak the cashews for the Vanilla Custard Cream, if making, for 4 hours, or refrigerate up to a day ahead.
4. Make the Vanilla Custard Cream, if using; refrigerate until needed, up to a day ahead.
5. Glaze and assemble the cake layers, then glaze the cake; refrigerate to set the glaze.
6. Prepare the apricot-cognac sauce, if using.

MAKES ONE (8-INCH / 20-CM) CAKE, 8 TO 10 SERVINGS

**2 recipes Chocolate Torte to Live For (page 68),
refrigerated until cold, divided**

**1 recipe Bittersweet Chocolate Ganache Glaze (page
264), warmed in a water bath until pourable**

**1/3 cup / 80 ml good-quality apricot preserves, plus
1/4 cup / 60 ml for apricot-cognac sauce (optional),
divided**

**4 ounces / 113 grams dark chocolate (any percentage),
tempered (see page 28), for writing "Sacher "
(optional)**

**2 teaspoons / 10 ml cognac (optional) (substitute
1 teaspoon / 5 ml freshly squeezed and strained
lemon juice)**

**1/2 recipe Vanilla Custard Cream (page 282), for serving
(optional)**

(recipe continues)

SHOWSTOPPERS

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ASSEMBLE THE CAKE

1. Place the first cake layer on a cardboard cake circle that is exactly the same size or slightly smaller than the cake.
2. Spread a thin layer (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup / 60 ml) of Bitter sweet Chocolate Ganache Glaze on the layer. Allow the glaze to set.
3. Spread $\frac{3}{4}$ cup / 80 ml of apricot preserves over the glaze.
4. Spread the second layer of cake with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup / 60 ml of the ganache glaze and refrigerate until set.

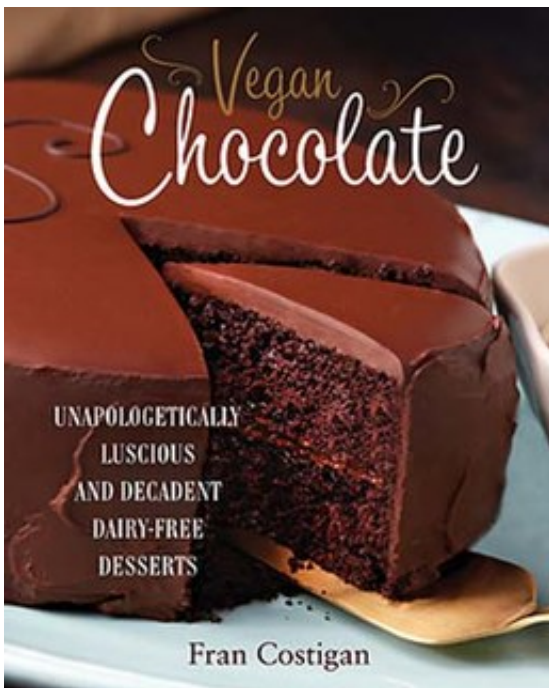
10. Make the apricot-cognac sauce: Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ cup/60 ml of the apricot preserves and the cognac together in a small bowl and refrigerate until needed. For an alcohol-free sauce, mix 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice into the spread.

SERVING

For the neatest slices, cut the cake while it is cold but serve at room temperature. If desired, spoon about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup/60 ml per serving of the Vanilla Custard Cream next to each slice. Stir 1 tablespoon / 15 ml of apricot-cognac sauce or alcohol-free apricot glaze into each portion of cream. Alternatively, omit the cream and serve with a puddle of sauce.

KEEPING

The glazed cake can be refrigerated for up to 2 days, unwrapped or in a cake box. (Keep the cake away from strong odors).



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