

Tommie's Brownies aka Buttermilk Chocolate Texas Sheet Cake

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For the Cake:

1/2 cup buttermilk
2 eggs
2 cups granulated sugar
2 cups all purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon, optional
2 sticks (1 cup) of unsalted butter
2 tablespoons canola oil
1 cup water
6 tablespoons of unsweetened cocoa
1 teaspoon of pure vanilla extract

For the Frosting:

1 stick (1/2 cup) of unsalted butter
6 tablespoons of milk
4 tablespoons of unsweetened cocoa
1 (1 pound) box of powdered sugar
1 teaspoon of pure vanilla extract
1 cup of chopped pecans, toasted, optional

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. For a sheet cake, spray a jellyroll pan (a half sheet, sheet cake pan approx. 18" x 13" x 1") with butter flavored non-stick spray, or spray a 9 x 13 inch pan for a regular cake. In a measuring cup, measure out 1/2 cup of buttermilk. Add 2 eggs to that and beat until well blended; set aside. Whisk together in a large bowl, 2 cups sugar, 2 cups flour, 1 teaspoon baking soda, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and the cinnamon. Make a well in the center and set aside.

In a medium saucepan, combine the 2 sticks of butter, the 2 tablespoons oil and 1 cup of water and bring to a near boil. Remove pot from the heat and whisk in 6 tablespoons of cocoa, until smooth. Stir in 1 teaspoon of vanilla and add this mixture to the sugar and flour mixture; stir until well blended. Slowly add in the buttermilk and egg mixture and stir well. **(continued page 2)**

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Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake at 350 degrees until the center is set, about 20 to 25 minutes for a sheet cake, about 35 to 40 minutes for a regular 9 x 13 inch pan. While the cake is cooking, toast the pecans in a dry pan, tossing regularly until fragrant, about 5 minutes, set aside to cool.

When cake is about 5 minutes from being done, prepare the frosting. Do not do the frosting ahead of time because it will quickly stiffen. Heat the stick of butter and 6 tablespoons of milk in a saucepan just until it comes to a boil. It will need to be very hot. Remove from the heat and whisk in the remaining 4 tablespoons of cocoa. Mixture will thicken. Add in the powdered sugar and vanilla and quickly beat with a wooden spoon until smooth, returning to a low burner if mixture thickens too quickly. Immediately pour the frosting all over the cake. Working quickly, use a spatula to gently push the frosting out to the edges and to cover the cake evenly. Sprinkle top evenly with the cooled toasted pecans, if desired. Set entire pan aside on a wire rack and allow the cake to cool completely before slicing.

Cook's Notes: When the cake comes out of the oven, quickly poke holes all over it and then pour the icing on top. For brands, I prefer White Lily flour, Hershey's cocoa, Land O'Lakes butter and Domino sugar. May also use cake flour if you like.

Tips: This will be a very moist cake, so you aren't looking for a dry surface when it is done. As always, take care to not overcook your cake. If you shake the pan and the cake doesn't jiggle, it's done! Frosting will set fast, so ya gotta move fast! If your frosting stiffens too quickly, you can also thin it with a little additional milk if needed, and return it to a low heat.

Texas Turtle Sheet Cake: Prepare as above except right after pouring icing over the cake, sprinkle with 1/2 cup chopped pecans and 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips. Finish with caramel sauce, drizzled over the top.

White Texas Almond Sheet Cake: Prepare as above, except substitute 1/2 cup sour cream for the buttermilk, omit cocoa and substitute almond extract for the vanilla. For the frosting, also prepare as above except omit the cocoa and substitute sliced almonds and almond extract.

Pecan Praline Icing: Heat one stick butter with one cup of light brown sugar; bring to a boil. Remove from heat and whisk in milk, beat in 2 cups powdered sugar and vanilla and quickly beat with a wooden spoon until smooth, returning to a low burner if mixture thickens too quickly. Quickly stir in pecans and immediately pour the frosting all over the cake and gently push the frosting out to the edges and to cover the cake evenly.

Candy Cane Cake: Prepare cake as above, except for the icing, cream together 1/2 block (4 ounces) cream cheese and 1/2 stick (1/4 cup) butter. Add in 2 cups powdered sugar, 1 teaspoon pure vanilla and 1 to 2 tablespoons milk, until desired consistency is reached. Spread icing on cooled cake and sprinkle top with 1/3 cup crushed peppermint bits.

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Chocolate Buttercream Icing: If you prefer not to use the classic or praline icing, my buttercream frosting is also good on these. [Click here](#) for the full recipe with instructions.

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