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Classic Yellow Cake with Chocolate Crème Fraîche Frosting

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Ingredients

For the Yellow Cake:

(makes one 6-inch, three layer cake)

- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- 2 large egg yolks, at room temperature
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 3/4 cup (6 ounces) sour cream, at room temperature
- 1/4 cup (2 fluid ounces) buttermilk, at room temperature
- 2 cups (10 ounces) all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups (10.5 ounces) granulated sugar
- 3/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks // 8 ounces) unsalted butter, at room temperature, cut into 1-inch pieces

For the Chocolate Crème Fraîche Frosting:

(makes enough for one 6-inch, three layer cake)

- 12 ounces bittersweet (at least 60% cacao) chocolate, coarsely chopped
 - 1/2 cup (1 stick // 4 ounces) unsalted butter, cut into 1-inch cubes
 - 2 tablespoons (1 fluid ounce) light corn syrup
 - 1/2 cup (4 ounces) crème fraîche, at room temperature
 - 1/4 cup (2 fluid ounces) half-and-half, at room temperature
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Recipe

For the Yellow Cake:

1. Center a rack in the oven and preheat to 350 (F). Prepare three 6-inch cake pans by spraying generously with cooking spray and lining the bottom of each pan with one parchment paper circle; spray the parchment paper as well.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together 3 large eggs, 2 large egg yolks, 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract, 3/4 cup sour cream, and 1/4 cup buttermilk. Set aside.
3. In the bowl of a freestanding electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, combine 2 cups all-purpose flour, 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar, 3/4 teaspoon baking powder, 3/4 teaspoon baking soda, and 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt. Mix on low speed for about 30 seconds or so until combined. Keep the mixer on its slowest setting and add 1 cup unsalted butter cubes a piece at a time, beating until the mixture resembles coarse sand. With the mixer still on its lowest setting, slowly add half the wet ingredients (from the 2nd step). Increase the mixer speed to medium and beat until incorporated, about 30 seconds. Turn back the mixer to its slowest setting and add the rest of the wet ingredients, mixing until just combined. Increase the speed to medium and beat for another 20 seconds — at this point, the batter may still look a little bumpy, but that's okay! Use a rubber spatula to scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl, and mix the batter a few more time.
4. Divide the batter between the prepared tops and use an offset spatula to smooth the tops. Tap the pans gently on the counter 2 times each to help smoothen out the batter some more and get rid of any bubbles. Bake 25 to 30 minutes, until the cakes are golden brown and pull slightly away from the sides of the pan. A wooden skewer inserted into the center of each cake should come out clean.
5. Transfer the pans to a wire rack and let cool for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, turn the cakes out onto the rack, remove the parchment paper, and let cool completely before frosting.

For the Chocolate Crème Fraîche Frosting:

1. Combine 12 ounces bittersweet chocolate, 1/2 cup unsalted butter, and 2 tablespoons light corn syrup in a double boiler or a heatproof bowl sitting on top of a pan with simmering water (make sure the bottom of the bowl does not touch the water in the pan!). Melt the ingredients completely, using a heatproof rubber spatula to stir occasionally to release heat and fully combine the ingredients.
2. Once the chocolate and butter have fully melted, remove from heat. Whisk the mixture gently to release more heat, before whisking in 1/2 cup crème fraîche and 1/4 cup half-and-half. Continue whisking until both the crème fraîche and half-and-half are fully integrated and the frosting is a uniform dark chocolate color. Set the frosting aside for 15 minutes to cool some more, giving the frosting a gentle whisk or two every 5 minutes to allow heat to escape. After 15 minutes, use the frosting. At first, it will seem too liquidy, but the frosting will quickly cool as it is spread throughout the cake. Work quickly to frost the cake before the frosting cools completely — it will harden as it cools.

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