

Chocolate Torte Topped with Chocolate Pâté and Butter Pecan Mousse

Serves 8

Chocolate Torte

You may use your favorite chocolate torte recipe. (Or, if you're in a hurry, just substitute a brownie for this layer.)

Chocolate Pâté

(adapted from *Secrets of Chicago Chefs Cookbook*)

10 ounces extra bitter chocolate
16 ounces unsalted butter
cup sugar
2 tablespoons cocoa
7 egg yolks
5 egg whites
1 cups heavy cream

Chop chocolate into small pieces and place in a small bowl over simmering water. Add cup sugar, cocoa and butter. Melt ingredients over medium heat so as not to burn the chocolate. Do not overheat the mixture. Stir occasionally. When cool, add the egg yolks.

In a large bowl, whisk the egg whites and remaining sugar to a firm peak. In a separate bowl, whip cream to medium peak. Fold the egg whites and whipped cream together, then fold in the chocolate mixture. This should be done in three stages to help retain the volume of the egg white mixture.

Line a loaf pan with overlapping pieces of plastic wrap. Pour mixture into the pan and fold the plastic over the top. Refrigerate overnight.

Butter Pecan Mousse

(adapted from *The Ultimate Southern Living Cookbook*)

(This makes more than you'll need for the desserts, so you'll have a treat for yourself the next day.)

1 tablespoon butter
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup finely chopped pecans
16 ounces cream cheese
cup sugar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup firmly packed brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup heavy cream, whipped
cup pecan pieces, toasted or
edible flowers (available at Creation Gardens), for garnish

Melt butter in a small skillet. Add cup pecans and cook, stirring constantly, until pecans are toasted. Remove from heat and set aside.

Beat cream cheese with an electric mixer until smooth. Add sugars and vanilla, beating well. Stir in cup toasted pecans.

Gently fold whipped cream into cream cheese mixture. Cover and chill at least four hours.

To Serve the Dessert: Place a slice of torte or a brownie on each dessert plate. Invert the loaf pan with the pâté onto a plate and remove the pate by gently pulling on the plastic wrap. With a knife heated in hot water, slice the pâté into pieces the same size as the torte and place on top of the torte. Top with the Butter Pecan Mousse. Garnish as desired.