



BEYOND *the Black Forest*

BLACK FOREST CAKE—THE MOST REQUESTED DESSERT BY RICARDO'S DAUGHTERS—IS A DECADENT MIX OF MOIST CHOCOLATE SPONGE LAYERS, LASHINGS OF CREAM, CHOCOLATE CURLS AND KIRSCH-KISSED MORELLO CHERRIES. WE BRANCHED OUT WITH THREE VARIATIONS ON THE LUSCIOUS FAVOURITE: THE TRADITIONAL, A DELICATE PAVLOVA (AN ODE TO MERINGUE) AND A PERFECTLY SINFUL CHEESECAKE.



Tall **ORDER**

The name of this sumptuous dessert hails from the German *Schwarzwälder Kirschtorte* (Black Forest cherry torte), a nod to the region and its signature ingredient: kirsch (see p. 108). We topped ours with fresh and jarred morello cherries (the dark, tart kind in a light syrup): a bittersweet mix ripe for a flavour explosion. Four layers tall and airy as can be, this chocolate extravaganza gets its lightness from the chocolate genoise cakes, fluffed up with whisked eggs rather than baking powder.







Cherries **ON TOP**

With its crisp, crunchy outer shell and soft, chewy centre, the secret to pavlova's wondrous texture rests in the vinegar and cornstarch that are added to the meringue. Once topped with a layer of whipped cream, crimson morello cherries spiked with kirsch, and dark chocolate shavings, it *must* be eaten right away.



Dairy **QUEEN**

Top to bottom, this velvety, voluptuous cheesecake is a total showstopper. The tangy topping crowned with dark chocolate curls and juicy, glistening, ruby-red cherries might make you temporarily forget strawberries even exist...while the crunch of the chocolate crust will make you crumble. Just when you thought cheesecake couldn't possibly get any better, it did.



Black Forest Cake

photo p. 99

PREPARATION 55 minutes

COOKING 30 minutes

COOLING 2 hours

SERVINGS 10

THE GENOISE CAKE FREEZES WELL

Chocolate Genoise Cakes

¼ cup (105 g) unbleached all-purpose flour

½ cup (50 g) cocoa powder

1 tsp baking powder

¼ tsp salt

6 eggs, at room temperature

1 cup (210 g) sugar

1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla extract

Cherry Mixture

¼ cup (55 g) sugar

3 tbsp (25 g) cornstarch

1 jar (19 oz/540 ml) morello cherries, the juice and cherries separated

2 tbsp (30 ml) kirsch

Filling

3 cups (750 ml) 35% whipping cream

6 tbsp (50 g) icing sugar

½ tsp (2.5 ml) vanilla extract

1 ½ cups (40 g) dark chocolate curls (see note)

A few fresh cherries (optional)

Chocolate Genoise Cakes

1 With the rack in the middle position, preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line the bottom of two 8-inch (20 cm) springform pans with parchment paper. Do not butter.

2 In a bowl, combine the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt. Set aside.

3 In another bowl, beat the eggs, sugar and vanilla with an electric mixer for about 10 minutes or until the mixture triples in volume and forms a ribbon.

4 Sift the dry ingredients over the eggs and fold in with a spatula or whisk. Spoon the batter into the prepared pans.

5 Bake for about 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Let cool on a wire rack. Run a thin blade between the cake and the pan to unmould.

Cherry Mixture

6 In a saucepan off the heat, combine the sugar and cornstarch. Add the cherry juice and bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Add the kirsch and continue cooking for 1 minute. Transfer to a bowl. Let cool.

7 Cover with plastic wrap directly on the surface of the mixture and refrigerate for 2 hours or until completely chilled.

8 Stir the chilled mixture with a spatula or whisk to soften. Stir in the drained cherries. Set aside.

Assembly

9 In a bowl, whip the cream, icing sugar and vanilla until stiff peaks form.

10 Slice each cake in half horizontally to make four slices.

11 On a serving plate, alternately layer a slice of cake, a quarter of the whipped cream and a third of the cherry mixture. Repeat with the remaining ingredients. Top with chocolate curls and fresh cherries.

12 The cake will keep for 2 days in the refrigerator.

NOTES

Morello cherries in syrup are available at grocery stores across the country and at Middle Eastern specialty stores. They are not to be confused with canned Bing cherries.

Ask your local chocolate shop for large chocolate shavings.



Or watch how to make chocolate curls at ricardocuisine.com.

Black Forest Pavlova

photo p. 100

PREPARATION 45 minutes

COOKING 1 hour 25 minutes

COOLING 2 hours

SERVINGS 10

Meringue

- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 1 tsp (5 ml) white vinegar
- 4 egg whites, at room temperature
- 1 cup (210 g) sugar

Cherry Mixture

- ¼ cup (55 g) sugar
- 3 tbsp (25 g) cornstarch
- 1 jar (19 oz/540 ml) morello cherries, the juice and cherries separated
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) kirsch

Topping

- 1 cup (250 ml) 35% whipping cream
- 3 tbsp (25 g) icing sugar
- 1 ½ cups (40 g) dark chocolate curls
- A few fresh cherries (optional)

Meringue

- 1** With the rack in the middle position, preheat the oven to 275°F (135°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- 2** In a small bowl, dissolve the cornstarch in the vinegar. Set aside.
- 3** In a bowl, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until frothy. Gradually sprinkle in the sugar, beating until stiff peaks form. Stir in the cornstarch mixture.
- 4** Spoon the meringue onto the baking sheet and shape into an 8-inch (20 cm) disc.
- 5** Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes or until the meringue is lightly golden brown. Remove from the oven and let cool completely. The meringue will sink slightly as it cools.

Cherry Mixture

- 6** In a saucepan off the heat, combine the sugar and cornstarch. Add the cherry juice and bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Add the kirsch and continue cooking for 1 minute. Transfer to a bowl. Let cool.
- 7** Cover with plastic wrap directly on the surface of the mixture and refrigerate for 2 hours or until completely chilled.
- 8** Stir the chilled mixture with a spatula or whisk to soften. Stir in the drained cherries. Set aside.

Assembly

- 9** In another bowl, whip the cream with the icing sugar until stiff but pliable peaks form.
- 10** On a serving plate, spread the whipped cream on the meringue. Top with the cherry mixture. Garnish with the chocolate curls and fresh cherries.
- 11** Serve immediately.



Black Forest Cheesecake

photo p. 103

PREPARATION 45 minutes
COOKING 2 hours 15 minutes
COOLING 6 hours
SERVINGS 10

Crust

- 1 ¼ cups (155 g) Oreo cookie crumbs**
- ¼ cup (55 g) unsalted butter, melted**
- 2 sheets heavy-duty aluminum foil, 18 inches (45 cm) wide**

Cream Cheese Filling

- 1 ¼ cups (265 g) sugar**
- 2 tbsp (20 g) unbleached all-purpose flour**
- 4 blocks (8 oz/250 g) cream cheese, at room temperature**
- ¾ cup (180 ml) sour cream**
- 4 eggs**
- 2 egg yolks**
- 1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla extract**

Cherry Mixture

- ¼ cup (55 g) sugar**
- 3 tbsp (25 g) cornstarch**
- 1 jar (19 oz/540 ml) morello cherries, the juice and cherries separated**
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) kirsch**

Topping

- 1 ½ cups (40 g) dark chocolate curls**
- A few fresh cherries (optional)**

Crust

- 1** With the rack in the middle position, preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line the bottom of an 8-inch (20 cm) springform pan with parchment paper.
- 2** In a bowl, combine the cookie crumbs and butter. Press lightly onto the bottom of the prepared pan. Bake for about 12 minutes. Let cool completely and butter the inner wall of the pan.
- 3** Tightly wrap the base and outer sides of the pan with aluminum foil, letting it extend upward. Wrap again with a second sheet of aluminum foil. Reduce the oven temperature to 325°F (165°C).

Cream Cheese Filling

- 4** In a food processor, combine the sugar and flour. Add the cream cheese and pulse until creamy. Add the remaining ingredients and pulse until just smooth. With a spatula, scrape the sides a few times during the process. Pour onto the crust.
- 5** Prepare a water bath: Place the cake in a large baking dish and pour enough hot water into the dish to reach a third of the way up the side of the pan.

- 6** Bake for 1 hour and 50 minutes or until a thermometer inserted into the centre of the cake reads 150°F (65°C). Remove the cake from the water bath and from the aluminum foil. Let cool for 1 hour. Cover and refrigerate for 6 to 8 hours or until completely chilled.

Cherry Mixture

- 7** In a saucepan off the heat, combine the sugar and cornstarch. Add the cherry juice and bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Add the kirsch and continue cooking for 1 minute. Transfer to a bowl. Let cool.
- 8** Cover with plastic wrap directly on the surface of the mixture and refrigerate for 2 hours or until completely chilled.
- 9** Stir the chilled mixture with a spatula or whisk to soften. Stir in the drained cherries. Set aside.

Assembly

- 10** Run the blade of a knife between the cake and the pan and unmould.
- 11** On a serving plate, place the cheesecake. Top with the cherry mixture and garnish with the chocolate curls and fresh cherries.
- 12** The cheesecake will keep for 3 to 4 days in the refrigerator.

For the love of **KIRSCH**

Kirschwasser—or kirsch, for short—is a dry colourless brandy distilled from the juice of fermented black morello cherries. We add it to our sour cherry mixture for roundness, without adding extra sweetness. The best kirsch has subtle cherry notes and a bitter-almond taste that comes from the fruit's stones.