

AT A GLANCE

Makes / Serves

One 9 x 13-inch cake

Prep time

About 15 minutes

Bake time

40 minutes

Cool time

Cool completely

Method / Setting

Bake at 375°F

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup unsweetened cacao powder
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup coconut or vegetable oil
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons vinegar
- 2 cups cold brewed coffee
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- Powdered sugar, for finishing



DIRECTIONS

1. PREHEAT & PREPARE

Heat oven to 375°F. Grease and flour a 9 x 13-inch pan or stoneware baker.

2. SIFT THE DRY INGREDIENTS

Sift the flour, cacao powder, baking soda, and salt together.

3. COMBINE OIL & SUGAR

In a large mixing bowl, combine the oil and sugar until evenly blended.

4. COMBINE THE LIQUIDS

Stir together the vinegar, cold brewed coffee, and vanilla.

5. MIX THE BATTER

Add the dry mixture and coffee mixture alternately to the oil-sugar mixture. Mix only until everything is incorporated.

6. BAKE

Pour into the prepared pan. Bake for 40 minutes, or until the center tests done.

7. COOL & FINISH

Cool completely. Dust with powdered sugar, using a paper doily or handmade stencil if desired.

FAMILY RECIPE NOTE: The original recipe used unsweetened cocoa and 2 cups warm water. This filmed variation uses cacao and 2 cups cold brewed coffee for a deeper chocolate flavor.

HSH ENOUGH IN HIS HANDS DEVOTIONAL

SCRIPTURE

"The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry...."

1 Kings 17:14 (NKJV)

A Cake with a Story

When I was growing up, my mother always baked each of us our favorite cake for our birthdays. Mine became Crazy Chocolate Cake. Mom got the recipe from my older sister, Pam, and before long it became a family favorite.

After I married, I continued making it for my own family. Once, when we were newly married, I baked one for my husband's birthday. We placed the leftover cake on top of our full-size refrigerator before leaving the house, certain it was safe there. When we came home, we discovered that our Australian shepherd had somehow managed to get it down - and had eaten the entire cake! Fortunately, he wasn't sick. From then on, we refrigerated every leftover piece.

Our children had major sensitivities to artificial food coloring, so Crazy Chocolate Cake became an especially welcome part of our family routine. Cocoa supplied all its deep color and rich flavor, with no artificial coloring needed.

Years later, I created a family recipe book and copied it for each of my children as a legacy of the much-loved recipes from their childhood. On the Crazy Chocolate Cake page, I included a photograph of my eight-year-old son, Nick. One look at that picture tells you how much he loved it.

The recipe had traveled from my sister to my mother, from my mother to me, and from me to my children. Now I am preserving it once more for the generations still to come.



Eight-year-old Nick enjoying the family favorite.

What the Recipe Doesn't Need

Crazy Chocolate Cake gets its unusual name from what the recipe leaves out. It contains no eggs, no milk, and no butter. Vinegar and baking soda make it rise, while a few ordinary pantry ingredients become a wonderfully rich chocolate cake.

At first glance, the recipe can appear incomplete. We are accustomed to seeing eggs, milk, and butter in a cake, so when they are absent, we naturally assume something is missing.

But those ingredients are not missing from Crazy Chocolate Cake. They are simply not required for this particular cake to become what it was intended to be. It already contains everything its recipe requires.

Sometimes we look at our own lives and assume they are incomplete because they do not contain all the ingredients we expected.

The Recipe We Expected

HSB ENOUGH IN HIS HANDS DEVOTIONAL

We carry ideas about what a normal life should contain: good health, sufficient money, dependable relationships, answered prayers, and plans that unfold on schedule. When something expected is absent, we may wonder how anything good can come from what remains.

Some absences are genuine losses. The widow of Zarephath was not imagining her scarcity. During a severe drought, she had only a handful of flour and a little oil. God met her in that real need.

Through Elijah, God promised that her flour and oil would last until rain returned. She obeyed His word, and God sustained her household.

Her pantry did not determine the limits of God's provision.

Enough for the Next Faithful Step

Crazy Chocolate Cake is simply a cake, but it reminds us that our first inventory is not God's final word. He can provide what is truly lacking and teach us to use faithfully what remains in our hands.

Perhaps you are looking at an area of your life and seeing only what is absent. Bring that honest inventory to God. Ask what is truly needed, what He has already provided, and what the next faithful step should be.

The widow could not produce rain, end the famine, or fill her pantry. But she could listen to God's word and faithfully use what remained in her hands.

We are not responsible for producing what only God can provide. We are responsible for faithfully stewarding what He has already entrusted to us.

From My Home to Yours

This cake carries more than chocolate flavor. It carries memories of birthdays, a clever Australian shepherd, children gathered around the table, and a little boy who loved his mother's cake. It also reminds us that something need not follow the expected formula to become good.

Perhaps that is part of legacy: passing along the things that fed us, blessed us, and testified to God's faithfulness. Do not begin only with what appears to be missing. Look again at what God has placed in your hands and home, then entrust it to Him.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, You are Jehovah Jireh, my wise and faithful Provider. You see everything I possess, everything I lack, and everything You intend to accomplish through my life.

Your Word shows me that scarcity does not place me beyond Your reach. You sustained the widow and her household when their own resources could not carry them through the famine.

I confess that I sometimes measure my life by what appears to be missing. Please show me what You have already placed in my hands and how I can steward it faithfully. I will do the work that belongs to me and entrust to You what only You can provide. Thank You for daily bread, remembered recipes, family stories, and the privilege of passing Your faithfulness to another generation. In Jesus' name, Amen.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY: What appears insufficient in my hands is never beyond God's knowledge, direction, or provision.

A MOMENT TO REFLECT

1. What area of my life have I judged as incomplete because it does not contain something I expected?
2. What has God already placed in my hands, and what is the next faithful step I can take with it?
3. What recipe, story, truth, or testimony of God's faithfulness am I responsible for preserving and passing to the next generation?