

VELVETY CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

This easy, make-ahead, 5-ingredient recipe is elegant and easy.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 2/3 cups (13 1/4 ounces) heavy cream
- 6 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- 4 tablespoons (2 ounces) unsalted butter, cut into 4 pieces
- 2 teaspoons bourbon, other liqueur, or pure vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt
- Lightly sweetened whipped cream, chocolate shavings or shards or other toppings (including fruits or nuts)

DIRECTIONS

1. Put the heavy cream and chocolate in a medium, heatproof bowl. Microwave in 30 second bursts, stirring in between, until the cream is very hot and the chocolate is melted and the mixture is smooth. (This can also be done by setting the bowl over a pot of simmering water). Repeat the microwaving as needed if there are any stubborn chocolate bits. Add the butter pieces to the warm mixture and stir gently until the butter has melted. Stir in the bourbon (or other liqueur or vanilla) and salt.
2. Chill, stirring occasionally, until thick and very cold, about two hours or up to two days. (For faster cooling, set the bowl over a larger bowl filled with ice and a little water, stirring and scraping the sides frequently until very cold.)
3. Using an electric handheld mixer, beat the chilled mixture on medium-high speed until thick enough to hold medium-firm peaks on a spatula, 1 to 2 minutes, stopping occasionally to scrape down the sides of the bowl. (Note, if using a standing mixer, the whipping goes very fast – don't walk away or you may overbeat the mixture. You want it to be creamy and somewhat stiff, but not grainy.)
4. Spoon or pipe the mousse into serving cups or small bowls. If serving right away, top with whipped cream and chocolate shavings or shards (if using) or other toppings. Or vary your presentation by layering with other ingredients. Alternatively, you can cover the mousse cups (without topping) and refrigerate for up to two days.

Notes:

If you want to serve a larger crowd, double or triple the recipe – just remember to use a bigger bowl for the larger amount of ingredients and allow more time for chilling the chocolate mixture before whipping.

*Recipe credit: Abigail Johnson Dodge, Martha's Vineyard Magazine
Serves 4*