

The first time I made this dessert, I made it for 6, as the recipe instructs. The next time it was for 12 and so on. I've successfully made 60 for dinner, with no mishaps, it is a very simple dessert, and you'll only be limited by the amount of ramekins you have on hand. That being said, I have made mini ones using a muffin pan. You need to watch the timing if using muffin tins as they're metal and hold less than a $\frac{3}{4}$ c ramekin.

These are a wonderful dessert for a dinner party. The individual cakes can be made ahead and then popped in the oven 20 minutes before serving. For anyone who loves the richness of chocolate these will be just the ticket, however they're not particularly heavy, the portions are moderate, and when served with a tart raspberry coulis make a great ending to a meal.

Lava Cakes

Makes 6

Ingredients:

10½ oz. semisweet chocolate pieces (4½ oz + 6 oz) (I use Callebaut)
2 T cream
¾ c butter
3 eggs
3 egg yolks
⅓ c granulated sugar
1½ t vanilla
⅓ c all-purpose flour
3 T unsweetened cocoa powder

Directions:

Chocolate for the centers - in a small heavy saucepan combine 4½ oz. of the chocolate pieces and the cream. Cook and stir over low heat until the chocolate melts. Remove the pan from heat.

Cool, stirring occasionally. Cover and chill about 45 minutes or until just firm.

Meanwhile, in a medium heavy saucepan cook and stir the 1 cup chocolate pieces and the butter over low heat until melted. Remove from heat; cool at room temperature, stirring occasionally.

Form chilled filling into 6 equal-size balls; set aside. If it is too hard to form, let it sit at room temperature for 15 minutes or so. The balls do not need to be perfectly round, they can be a bit lumpy and weirdly shaped and still work perfectly.

Lightly grease & flour six $\frac{3}{4}$ cup ramekins, alternatively you can use cooking spray. Place ramekins on a parchment lined, rimmed baking sheet; set aside.

In a mixing bowl beat eggs, egg yolks, granulated sugar, and vanilla with an electric mixer on high speed 5 minutes or until lemon-colored.

Beat in cooled chocolate-butter mixture on medium speed.

Sift flour and cocoa powder over mixture; beat on low speed just until combined.

Divide batter into dishes.

Place 1 ball of filling into each dish, push into batter until covered.

Bake cakes in a 400° oven for 15 minutes or until cakes feel firm at edges.

Cool in dishes at least 5 minutes, before serving.

Using a knife, loosen cakes from sides of dishes. Invert onto dessert plates. They can be served right side up or inverted. The photos show inverted, but it makes for a better presentation if you right them up again to serve.

Serve immediately. Makes: 6 servings

Make-ahead directions: Prepare as above except for baking. Cover and chill until ready to bake for up to 6 hours. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes before baking as directed.

Serve with fresh raspberry coulis and a dollop of whipped cream.