

TOBY TRAIN BIRTHDAY CAKE

<http://andreasrecipes.com/2010/03/03/toby-train-birthday-cake/>

Serves 20 to 30, possibly more depending on serving sizes.

EQUIPMENT

Toby train toy or book with photo

2 (9×13) cake pans, greased with a layer of parchment in the bottom

stand mixer with paddle attachment (or hand mixer and large bowl)

foam, approximately 2 feet (61 cm) x 3 feet (91 cm)

wax paper

masking tape

box cutter or X-Acto knife

32-ounce yogurt container lid (as pattern for the wheels)

3 chopsticks

small hammer

1 large pizza pan or serving platter

5 #3 piping tips + couplers

5 quart-sized freezer bags (for piping frosting)

angled frosting spatula

toothpicks (for portioning gel colors)

popsicle stick

INGREDIENTS

chocolate cake or other cake of your choice (make 2 9×13 cakes)

chocolate frosting (1-1/2 batches, no shortening or with shortening, see below) * *We only use shortening when the weather is really hot and humid.*

vanilla frosting (no shortening, make 2 batches) OR

vanilla frosting (with shortening, make 2 batches) * *Again, we only use shortening when the weather is really hot and humid.*

marshmallow fondant (recipe below)

no-taste red frosting gel color

yellow frosting gel color

black frosting gel color

MARSHMALLOW FONDANT

Adapted from a post on Wilton.com forums.

EQUIPMENT

microwave safe bowl OR 2-quart pot
silicone spatula
rolling pin (for rolling the fondant)
toothpick (for dipping the gel color)
food service gloves

Ingredients

1 cup mini marshmallows, packed well
1 tablespoon water
1-1/2 cups confectioners sugar

COLOR

black frosting gel color

PREPARATION

1. Put the mini marshmallows in the microwave safe bowl and add the water. Cook in the microwave for 20 seconds, just until they soften and look puffy. If you prefer to do it on the stove, put the marshmallows in a 3-quart pot and add the water. Cook and stir over medium-low heat until the marshmallows look soupy.
2. Add the confectioners sugar and stir using the silicone spatula until the mixture is fully incorporated and no longer sticky. It will get stiff.
3. Sprinkle more confectioners sugar on a work surface and spoon the marshmallow mixture onto the surface. Coat your hands with confectioners sugar and knead the dough until it is smooth, about 5 minutes.
4. Set aside a small amount, equal to about 3 peas. Do not tint.
5. GRAY: (Note: Wear the gloves while coloring the fondant.) Add a tiny amount of black gel color a little at a time and knead it in with your hands. Don't add too much, you want the color to be pale gray. The color will look streaked at first, then will become more consistent as you work it.
6. If you make the fondant a day or more ahead, roll it into balls and wrap each piece tightly in plastic wrap and store in zip plastic bags to keep it fresh. Do not refrigerate. If it's well-wrapped, this marshmallow fondant will keep at room temperature for up to 30 days.

CHOCOLATE FROSTING

Make 1-1/2 batches of either recipe.

Ingredients

CHOCOLATE BUTTERCREAM (with shortening)

Adapted from Wilton.

1/2 cup (1/2 stick/195 g) trans fat free shortening
8 tablespoons (1 stick/113 g) unsalted butter, softened
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 ounces (85 g) Ghirardelli 100% cacao baking squares, melted, or 3/4 cup (82 g) cocoa powder, sifted
16 ounces (454 g) confectioners sugar, sifted
2 to 4 tablespoons cold milk (*Amount depends on humidity and whether you chose the melted chocolate or cocoa powder.*)

CHOCOLATE BUTTERCREAM (no shortening)

Adapted from America's Test Kitchen.

8 ounces (227 g) semi-sweet or dark chocolate, melted
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
pinch of salt
2-1/2 sticks (20 tablespoons/283 g) unsalted butter, softened
2 cups (260 g) confectioners sugar
2 tablespoons cocoa powder

CHOCOLATE FROSTING (WITH SHORTENING) PREPARATION

1. In the bowl of the stand mixer at medium speed, cream together the shortening and butter until smooth.
2. Add the vanilla extract and melted chocolate and stir until thoroughly combined.
3. Add the sifted confectioners sugar, one cup at a time, scraping down the bowl between each addition.
4. Add the milk one tablespoon at a time, just until the frosting is creamy, not runny. You may not need all the milk. Whip at medium speed for about 1 minute to combine all the ingredients thoroughly.
5. Use promptly or refrigerated with plastic wrap pressed onto the surface. Allow to come to room temperature and whip again before using.

CHOCOLATE FROSTING (NO SHORTENING) PREPARATION

1. Stir together the melted chocolate, vanilla, and salt in a bowl until the salt dissolves.
2. In a stand mixer with paddle attachments, beat the butter until it is smooth, about 30 to 60 seconds. In a bowl, whisk together the confectioners sugar and cocoa powder. Reduce the mixer speed to low, then slowly add to the butter, beating until smooth, 2 to 5 minutes.
3. Beat in the melted chocolate mixture. Increase speed to medium-high and beat until fluffy, 4 to 8 minutes.

ASSEMBLY

1. COLOR THE VANILLA BUTTERCREAM: Tint the frosting as you make each batch. (You can do this up to 3 days ahead.) You'll need the following amounts:
 - 1 batch (3 cups) black frosting
 - 1/2 batch (1.5 cups) gray frosting
 - 1/4 cup (0.75 cups) red frosting
 - 1/4 cup (0.75 cups) yellow frosting
 - 1/2 batches (1.5 cups) white frosting (*only if you want to use between the layers*)
2. MAKE THE BASE: Cut the foam into 2 pieces (5 inches x 12 inches/12.5 cm x 30.5 cm), 1 piece (3 inches x 12 inches/12.5 cm x 30.5 cm), and 2 pieces (3 inches x 3 inches/8 cm x 8 cm). Stack them as shown. Wrap masking tape around them to hold together.
3. Cut the cardboard platform piece, wrap in plastic wrap, and place it on top. Use a small hammer to drive two chopsticks through the foam to stabilize the pieces.
4. Coat wheels and base area under the platform with black frosting.
5. Coat the foam layers with gray frosting.
6. Cut each 9×13 cake in half lengthwise and place one half on the cardboard platform. Do this carefully since you have to push the cake over the chopsticks. Apply a layer of frosting, then repeat with two more cake halves. Shave a little cake off the top to give the edges a rounded look. (Not shaved in photo.)
7. Coat the cake layers with chocolate buttercream.
8. TOP: Cut off about 1/3 cup of the fondant and set aside. On a board sprinkled with confectioner sugar, roll the large out the fondant in a 5 x 13-inch rectangle. Trim the edges to square them off, lay it on top of the cake. Trim as necessary.
9. FACE: On the board, roll out the smaller piece of fondant, making a square about 4 x 4 inches. Trim the edges to square them off. Roll three little pea-sized balls of fondant and place them under the face in the locations for the nose and cheeks. Divide the small piece of

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white fondant into three equal pieces, then flatten two of them into circles for the eyes. Trim as necessary. Roll the other white piece of fondant into a small snake for the mouth. Lightly dampen the face where the eyes and mouth will go, then gently press them into place, curving the mouth slightly to make Toby smile. Pipe round black circles on the eyes. Dip the end of the popsicle stick, just barely, into the black gel color, then press into the face to make the eyebrows. Poke a chopstick in Toby's nose to make two nose holes.

10. DETAILS: Fit the piping bags with couplers and tips, then fill each with one of the five different buttercream colors. Pipe the black window, door, end details, and wheel details. Pipe the gray details on the base and the bars on the doors. Pipe the yellow 7, then pipe the red around it. Finally, pipe the chocolate details on the sides and ends. (See the 360 views below.) You can also add the yellow and black details on top, just follow your model.

11. Just before serving, mount the face. Pipe frosting on the back of the face, going around the square about 1/4 inch away from the edge, then fill in the middle. Be careful not to press on the face or it will smooch. Carefully pick it up and place on the end of the cake, then gently press against the edges and corners to seal it in place.