

## Chocolate Peanut Butter Cupcakes



### For the Chocolate Cake:

1 1/2 cups cake flour, plus more for flouring the cake pans  
1 1/2 cups sugar, plus more for unmolding the cake  
8 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened at room temperature  
1/3 cup unsweetened Dutch-process cocoa powder  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1/4 teaspoon baking powder  
1/3 cup melted unsweetened Baker's chocolate  
1/2 cup hot water  
4 extra-large eggs, at room temperature  
1/2 cup buttermilk  
1 pkg Reese's peanut butter cups minis or 3-4 2ack of the larger Reese's Peanut butter cups cut in half for minis and in quarters for larger ones.

**Yields:** Makes 2 9-inch rounds if you want to make a cake or 24 cupcakes

Position a rack in the center of the oven, and preheat the oven to 350°F. Put the flour, sugar, butter, cocoa, baking soda and baking powder in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. (If you don't have a stand mixer, you can also put the ingredients in a bowl and use a hand mixer with the blending attachments.)

Mix on slow just until the ingredients are blended together, a few seconds, then raise the speed to low-medium and continue to mix until smooth, approximately 1 additional minute. Stop the motor and pour in chocolate. Mix for 1 minute, then, with the motor running, pour in the hot water. Then add the eggs, 1 egg at a time, adding the next one after the previous one has been absorbed into the mixture.

Stop the motor periodically and scrape the bowl from the bottom with a rubber spatula to integrate ingredients, and return the mixer to low-medium speed. After all the eggs are added, continue to mix for an additional minute to ensure the eggs have been thoroughly mixed in.

**NOTE:** This last step will help guarantee that the sugar is dissolved and that the flour has been thoroughly mixed in, which will help produce a luxurious mouth-feel in the final cake.

With the motor running, add the buttermilk, stopping the motor to scrape the sides and bottom. Continue to mix for another minute or until the mixture appears smooth. Before baking, be sure the batter is at 70-73°F or the cake will crown.

**To assemble a Cake:** Grease two 9-inch cake pans (2 inches high) with the butter, and flour them. Divide the batter evenly between the two cake pans, using a rubber spatula to scrape down the bowl and get as much batter as possible out.

Dip a quarter of a peanut butter cup in flour to prevent it from sinking to the bottom and burning and insert randomly around and into the cake batter

Bake until the cake begins to pull from the sides of the pan and is springy to the touch, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove the cakes from the oven and let cool for at least 30 minutes, preferably an hour. The cakes should be at room temperature before you remove them from the pan.

Put a piece of parchment paper on a cookie sheet, top with sugar, and one at a time, turn the pans over and turn the cakes out onto parchment; the sugar will keep it from sticking. Refrigerate or freeze until ready to decorate.

**To assemble Cupcakes:** pour batter into a cupcake tin 3/4 of the way. Dip a quarter of a peanut butter cup in flour to prevent it from sinking to the bottom and burning and insert into the cupcake batter

### **For the Peanut Butter Frosting:**

1 cup butter  
1 cup Peanut Butter  
5 1/2 cups powdered sugar  
1-2 cups heavy cream

In a mixer on slow, Mix soft butter and peanut butter. Mix in sugar until it has the consistency of damp sand. Add the cream slowly until the frosting is the thickness of your liking.

Place into a piping bag with decorative tip or into a gallon zip lock bag, corner snipped,  
and pipe or spread on top of cooled Cake/Cup cakes and  
add any leftover Reese's cups sprinkled on top