

Holiday Yule Log
Mahaila McKellar
Yield: 10 Servings

Ingredients:

Cake:

8 large organic Eggs, separated
1/3 cup pure Maple Syrup, preferably light amber
1/32 teaspoon (a pinch) Sea Salt
1 teaspoon real Vanilla Extract
1 cup unsweetened organic raw Cacao Powder
Unbleached Parchment Paper
Rimmed baking pan (aka, jelly roll pan)
1 clean thin tea towel (at least as large as the baking pan)

Filling and topping:

1 1/2 cup organic Heavy Cream, chilled
1/2 cup pure Maple Syrup, preferably light amber
1 teaspoon real Vanilla Extract
3 tablespoons unsweetened organic raw Cacao Powder

Decor:

About 7 oz Marzipan, aka Almond Candy Dough
Food Coloring, natural sourced if possible
Small watercolor paint brush
Organic Powdered Sugar for dusting, optional

Directions:

For the cake:

1. Preheat oven to 355°F and line a rimmed baking pan with unbleached parchment paper.
2. Whisk egg whites until stiff peaks form.
3. In a separate bowl, beat the egg yolks with the maple syrup and salt. Then stir in the vanilla extract.
4. Sift the cacao powder into the egg yolk bowl and stir together.
5. Gently fold the egg whites into the egg yolk mixture. Be gentle and patient, so it becomes fully combined while keeping some air in. (You can begin this by first adding a dollop of egg whites to the yolk mixture to thin it out a bit, then gently fold in the remainder of the egg whites.)

6. Gently - so you keep as much air in the batter as possible - spread the batter onto the parchment lined pan. You want the maximum thickness to be about 3/8 inch, and the batter to be evenly spread.
7. Place the pan on the middle rack of the preheated oven. Bake for 12 - 15 minutes. Check for doneness at 12 minutes. Do not overbake or your cake will crack when you roll it.
8. When the cake is finished baking, take it from the oven and while it is still warm turn the cake out onto the tea towel. Lift off the pan and then slowly, gently peel the parchment paper off of the cake.
9. Roll up the cake along with the towel jelly roll style, (so the towel is in between the spiral layers). For a larger spiral, roll the cake from the short end of the towel.
10. Cool completely on a wire rack, seam side down.

For the filling and topping:

1. In a mixing bowl, whip the cream until it begins to thicken.
2. Beat the maple syrup into the cream and continue beating until it's fully thickened. (Don't overbeat and make butter.)
3. Mix in the vanilla extract.
4. Take 1/3 of the whipped cream, put it in a separate bowl and set aside.
5. Add the cacao powder to the mixing bowl with the remaining 2/3 of the whipped cream, mixing it in completely.
6. Cover and chill both bowls of whipped cream.

For the decor:

1. Use plain marzipan, aka almond candy dough, to create shapes like holly leaves, holly berries, snowmen and mushrooms.
2. Once the shapes are formed, use a small paint brush to "paint" them with food coloring.
3. Allow to dry.

Directions for assembly:

(When the cake is completely cool, you can assemble it)

1. Gently unroll the cake, removing the towel from it.
2. Spread the vanilla whipped cream onto all 4 edges of the inside of the roll. Then gently spread the cream so it covers the entire surface of the inside of the roll, making sure that the cream fully extends to all four edges.
3. Roll up the cake again (so the cream is on the inside) and place it seam side down on your serving plate.
4. Use the chocolate whipped cream to cover the log completely.

5. You can use a fork to make wavy lines in the chocolate cream so it resembles the bark of a tree.
6. Cover loosely and chill for at least 1 hour before serving.

Directions to serve:

1. Uncover the cake and decorate it with the marzipan figures.
2. If you want a snowy effect, sprinkle the cake and plate with a little powdered sugar.
3. Present your cake to your guests. They're going to love it! And then slice into it and see their delight at the lovely white spiral inside. :)

Notes:

1. This recipe is gluten-free.
2. With so much cream, this cake is very rich, so a thin slice is the usual serving size.
3. I like to use raw cacao powder for all its good nutrients. If you don't have cacao powder, you can use unsweetened cocoa powder.
4. I prefer using the light amber maple syrup because it's lighter in flavor.
5. I usually dust my tea towel with a little powdered sugar to help keep the cake from sticking to it.
6. Wait until just before serving the cake to place the marzipan figures on it. The moisture from the cream can cause the colors to bleed from the marzipan if they're touching for too long.