Prep Time: 20 minutes
Cook Time: 55 minutes
Cooling Time: 1 hour
Total Time: 2 hours 15 minutes
Servings: 10 slices
Calories: ~410 kcal per serving

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Why You'll Love This Loaf Cake

There is a quiet elegance to a loaf cake. It doesn't demand the fuss of a layered showstopper

or the precision of a soufflé. It is the kind of bake you pull out on a Sunday afternoon, slice thickly, and enjoy with a strong cup of coffee while the rain taps against the window. This Chocolate Loaf Cake is deeply, unapologetically chocolatey—moist, tender, and rich enough to satisfy the most serious cocoa craving, yet sturdy enough to slice cleanly without crumbling. The batter comes together in one bowl, the loaf keeps beautifully for days, and the simple chocolate ganache glaze crowned with toasted walnuts adds a professional finish that takes it from “nice cake” to “showstopper.” Whether you are a seasoned baker or a weekend novice, this is a recipe that will earn a permanent spot in your rotation.

Ingredients

For the Chocolate Loaf Cake

- 1½ cups (190g) all-purpose flour
- 1 cup (200g) granulated sugar
- ½ cup (50g) unsweetened cocoa powder (Dutch-process preferred for deeper color and flavor)
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp fine sea salt

- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 cup (240ml) whole milk, at room temperature
- ½ cup (120ml) neutral oil (vegetable or canola)
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract
- ½ cup (120ml) boiling water or hot brewed coffee (this blooms the cocoa and intensifies the chocolate flavor)

For the Chocolate Ganache Glaze

- 4 oz (115g) dark chocolate (60–70% cacao), finely chopped
- ½ cup (120ml) heavy cream
- 1 tbsp unsalted butter (optional, for shine)
- Pinch of fine sea salt

For the Topping

- ½ cup (60g) walnut halves, lightly toasted

- Flaky sea salt (optional, for finishing)

Equipment Needed

- 9×5-inch (23x13cm) loaf pan
- Parchment paper
- Large mixing bowl
- Whisk
- Spatula
- Small saucepan or microwave-safe bowl (for ganache)
- Wire cooling rack
- Toothpick or cake tester

Instructions

Phase 1: Prep & Preheat (Time: 10 mins | Intensity: Low)

1. Preheat the Oven: Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Position a rack in the lower-middle of the oven.

2. Prepare the Pan: Grease the 9×5-inch loaf pan generously with butter or non-stick spray. Line the bottom and the two long sides with a sling of parchment paper, leaving an overhang so you can lift the cake out later.

3. Toast the Walnuts (Optional but Recommended): Spread the walnut halves on a small baking sheet and toast in the oven for 6–8 minutes, until fragrant and lightly golden. Set aside to cool. Toasting transforms the flavor from raw and bitter to nutty and sweet.

4. Measure & Prep: Measure all your dry ingredients into a bowl. Ensure your eggs and milk are at room temperature—cold ingredients can cause the batter to seize and result in a denser crumb.

Phase 2: Mix the Batter (Time: 10 mins | Intensity: Medium)

1. Combine Dry Ingredients: In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking soda, baking powder, and salt. Whisk vigorously for 30 seconds to ensure the cocoa and leavening agents are evenly distributed.

2. Add the Wet Ingredients: Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients. Add the eggs, milk, oil, and vanilla extract. Whisk gently, starting from the center and working outward, until the batter is just combined and smooth. Do not overmix—a few small

lumps are perfectly fine.

3. Add the Hot Liquid: Carefully pour in the boiling water (or hot coffee). The batter will be very thin and liquid—this is correct and is the secret to a moist, tender crumb. Whisk gently until fully incorporated and the batter is glossy.

4. Transfer to Pan: Pour the batter into the prepared loaf pan. Tap the pan gently on the counter a few times to release any large air bubbles.

Phase 3: Bake & Cool (Time: 55 mins | Intensity: Low)

1. Bake: Bake for 50–55 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out with a few moist crumbs attached. Start checking at 50 minutes. If the top is browning too quickly, tent it loosely with foil for the final 10 minutes.

2. Cool in Pan: Remove the cake from the oven and let it cool in the pan for 10 minutes. This allows the structure to set.

3. Turn Out: Using the parchment overhang, lift the cake out of the pan and transfer it to a wire cooling rack. Let it cool completely—at least 1 hour—before glazing. Glazing a warm cake will cause the ganache to melt and slide off.

Phase 4: The Ganache Glaze (Time: 10 mins + 15 mins setting | Intensity: Medium)

1. Heat the Cream: In a small saucepan over medium heat (or in a microwave-safe bowl in

30-second bursts), heat the heavy cream until it just begins to simmer. Do not let it boil over.

2. Pour Over Chocolate: Place the chopped dark chocolate in a heatproof bowl. Pour the hot cream over the chocolate and let it sit undisturbed for 2–3 minutes to soften.

3. Whisk Smooth: Gently whisk the mixture until smooth and glossy. Stir in the butter and a pinch of salt. The ganache should be thick but pourable—if it is too thin, let it cool for a few minutes; if it is too thick, warm it very briefly.

4. Glaze the Cake: Set the cooled cake on the wire rack over a baking sheet (to catch drips). Pour the ganache over the top of the loaf, letting it pool slightly and drip down the sides. Use an offset spatula to spread it evenly if needed.

5. Top with Walnuts: Immediately scatter the toasted walnut halves over the wet ganache, pressing them in gently.

6. Set: Let the glaze set at room temperature for 15–20 minutes before slicing. For a firmer set, place the cake in the refrigerator for 10 minutes—but serve at room temperature for the best flavor.

Phase 5: Slice & Serve (Time: 5 mins | Intensity: Low)

1. Slice: Using a sharp knife, cut the loaf into thick slices. Wipe the knife clean between cuts for neat, professional edges.

2. Serve: Serve with a cup of coffee, a glass of cold milk, or a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Store leftovers in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 4 days.

Intensity & Timing Guide (At a Glance)

Phase	Task	Time	Intensity Level
Prep	Pan prep & toasting walnuts	10 mins	Low (Relaxed)
Mix	Whisking batter	10 mins	Medium (Gentle folding)
Bake	Oven time	50–55 mins	Low (Hands-off)
Ganache	Melting & glazing	10 mins	Medium (Careful heating)
Cool & Set	Resting & slicing	1 hr 15 mins	Low (Passive)

Recipe Notes & Tips

- Dutch-Process Cocoa: This recipe works with natural cocoa powder, but Dutch-process cocoa gives a deeper, darker color and a smoother, less acidic chocolate flavor. It is the difference between a “good” loaf and a bakery-quality one.

- The Hot Water/Coffee Trick: Adding boiling liquid to the batter might seem unusual, but it blooms the cocoa powder, dissolving its fat-soluble flavor compounds, and creates a thin batter that bakes into an incredibly moist cake. Coffee enhances the chocolate flavor without making the cake taste like coffee.

- Room Temperature Ingredients: Eggs and milk at room temperature emulsify more easily into the batter, resulting in a smoother texture and better rise. If you forget to take them out ahead of time, place the eggs in warm water for 10 minutes and

microwave the milk for 15 seconds.

- Do Not Overmix: Once the flour hits the wet ingredients, stop mixing as soon as the streaks disappear. Overmixing develops the gluten and results in a tough, rubbery cake.

- Ganache Troubleshooting: If your ganache looks broken or oily, whisk in a teaspoon of warm milk or water until it comes back together. If it is too runny, let it cool for 10–15 minutes—do not add more chocolate, or it will become too thick.

- Storage: This cake stays moist for days. Store at room temperature in an airtight container. For longer storage, wrap individual slices tightly and freeze for up to 2 months; thaw at room temperature before serving.

Nutrition Facts (Estimated)

Based on 10 slices (including ganache and walnuts). Nutritional values are estimates and will vary based on specific ingredients used.

- Calories: 412 kcal

- Total Fat: 24g (Saturated Fat: 8g)

- Cholesterol: 62mg

- Sodium: 210mg

- Total Carbohydrates: 44g (Dietary Fiber: 3g, Sugars: 27g)
- Protein: 6g
- Vitamin A: 6% DV
- Vitamin C: 1% DV
- Calcium: 6% DV
- Iron: 15% DV