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Chocolate And Vanilla



Synopsis

Love Vanilla? Award-winning pastry chef and Food Network star Gale Gand considers vanilla the lingerie of baking: It's an invisible essential, the thing you put on before anything else; but when given the spotlight, it's every bit as sexy and alluring as chocolate. Even vanilla fans would say even more so. In this flip/cookbook, Gand offers tips on working with both vanilla beans and vanilla extract, revealing which is best for what, and includes a helpful substitution guide. And then it's on to the good stuff: recipes for irresistible sweets that showcase vanilla's beguiling flavor. With one section devoted to desserts using whole vanilla beans—and another focusing on extract—such as Vanilla-Blueberry Crumb Cake and Boston Cream Cupcakes—these are recipes that are anything but plain vanilla. Love Chocolate? Say the word chocolate and a chocoholic's face lights up with visions of utterly satisfying, rich pleasures. In this fun flip/cookbook, award-winning pastry chef and Food Network star Gale Gand shares her favorite ways to indulge family and friends—and yourself. Gand offers tips on buying and working with chocolate, including demystifying those ever-confusing cacao percentages, before getting down to business with more than thirty luscious, tempting recipes. Organized by type of chocolate—dark, semi-sweet, milk, and white—they run the gamut from simple treats such as Chocolate-Praline Cake in a Jar and Creamy Dreamy Walnut Fudge to impress-the-guests desserts that include Mexican Hot Chocolate Fondue and Chocolate-Almond Upside-Down Cake. Accompanied by amusing anecdotes, helpful make-ahead notes, and clear, uncomplicated techniques, Gand's creations are as much fun to make as they are to eat.

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Customer Reviews

Gale Gand is the James Beard AwardÃ¢â€šâ€œwinning executive pastry chef and partner of the acclaimed restaurant Tru in Chicago. Known across the country as the host of Sweet Dreams, which was the Food NetworkÃ¢â€šâ€œs first daily show devoted entirely to baking, Gand has her own root beer company and line of bakeware. She lives in Illinois with her husband and three children. This is her sixth cookbook.

Chocolate-Praline Cake in a Jar Makes 10 to 12 servings
For a few years now I've been a judge at the Whirlpool Accubake Unique Cake Contest, which is similar to the Pillsbury Bake-Off. A chocolate cake with a pecan and butterscotch toffee topping called Chocolate Coffee Toffee Cake by Elizabeth Kirsch from Pennsylvania won first place in 2002 and the \$10,000 prize, which she donated to Heifer International. Elizabeth told me she made her cakes in glass canning jars and would tuck one into her husband's business trip luggage so he wouldn't miss his favorite cake while he was out of town. This simplified version of her cake would be perfect to take to a picnic or even a backyard barbecue. You'll Need Ten to twelve 1/2-pint canning jars
Rimmed baking sheet or roasting pan
For The Cake 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
1 1/2 cups packed light brown sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
6 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups sifted cake flour
2/3 cup sour cream
2/3 cup brewed coffee (I just use the morningÃ¢â€šâ€œs leftover coffee)
For the Praline Topping 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
3/4 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1/2 cup water
1 cup powdered sugar
1/2 cup pecan halves or pieces
Preheat the oven to 350Ã F. Place 10 to 12 1/2-pint glass canning jars on a rimmed baking sheet, evenly arranged with space between them. (If you have a Silpat liner, place it under the jars to prevent them from sliding around.) To make the cakes, in a mixer fitted with a whisk attachment, beat the butter until smooth. Add the brown sugar and eggs and mix until fluffy, about 2 minutes. Add the vanilla, cocoa, baking soda, and salt and mix until combined. Add half of the flour, then half of the sour cream, and mix until combined. Repeat with the remaining flour and sour cream. Drizzle in the coffee and mix until smooth. The batter will be thin, like heavy cream. Pour the batter into the jars, filling them halfway. Bake until the tops of the cakes are firm to the touch, about 25 minutes.* To make the topping, melt the butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat, then add the brown sugar and 1 1/2 cup water and stir with a wooden

spoon until the sugar is dissolved, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the powdered sugar until combined, then return to the heat and bring to a boil. Stir in the nuts. Pour the praline topping over the cakes to cover, working quickly, because the praline hardens quickly as it cools. Let the cakes cool completely if they aren't already, before screwing on jar lids.**

Do-Aheads *The cakes can be made ahead, cooled, covered, and kept at room temperature for 2 days or in the refrigerator for up to 4 days.**The finished cakes will keep for up to 4 days at room temperature.

vanilla charlotteMakes one 8-inch charlotte, or 6 to 8 servings No one makes charlottes anymore, which means they're destined for a comeback. A charlotte is a dessert formed in a high, straight-walled mold lined with ladyfingers, cake, or sliced bread and filled with either cooked fruit, such as apples, or a vanilla Bavarian cream like the one I'm using here. Made in one large mold (you can find charlotte molds in good cookware shops), it's a regal-looking dessert that makes an unusual yet light ending for a special occasion. You'll Need

1 (7-ounce) package store-bought ladyfingers
2 (1/2 pint) containers raspberries
4 cups whole milk
1 vanilla bean, halved lengthwise
1 tablespoon powdered gelatin
2 tablespoons cold water
12 large egg yolks
1 1/3 cups granulated sugar
White chocolate curls (see below)
Powdered sugar

If you have a charlotte mold you do not need to line it. Otherwise, line an 8-inch springform pan or souffle dish with parchment paper using a circle for the bottom and a strip 4 inches wide around the sides. Dab a little softened butter or a spritz of nonstick cooking spray in the pan to anchor the paper. Generously spray or grease the parchment or charlotte mold. Stand the ladyfingers up around the insides of the pan. Pick over the raspberries, setting aside the best ones, a little less than 1/2 pint, to make a circle around the edge of the finished charlotte. Have ready near your cooktop a large bowl. Fill the bowl three-quarters full with ice and cover the ice with water. Bring the milk and vanilla bean to a boil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. As soon as it comes to a boil, turn off the heat and let the vanilla steep in the milk for 10 minutes. Gradually sprinkle the gelatin over the cold water in a small bowl and set aside for the gelatin to soften. In a medium bowl, whisk the egg yolks with the granulated sugar for about 1 minute to combine and then gradually pour in the hot milk, whisking continuously. Return the mixture to the saucepan and, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, cook over medium heat until the sauce has thickened and is 180° F on an instant-read thermometer, being careful not to overcook it or it will break. (If you don't have a thermometer, test the mixture by dipping a wooden spoon into it, and then running your finger down the back of the spoon. If the stripe remains intact,

the mixture is ready; if the edges blur, the mixture is not cooked enough yet.) Immediately stir the softened gelatin into the custard until it's dissolved and then strain the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve into a medium bowl. Put the bowl of custard into the bowl of ice water and stir frequently until the custard starts to cool and thicken. Fold in the less-than-perfect berries (don't worry if the berries break up a bit) and then pour the custard into the pan lined with the ladyfingers. Spread the top of the custard to smooth it. Cover the charlotte with plastic wrap and put in the refrigerator to chill for at least 4 hours.* To serve, trim the ladyfingers even with the top of the custard. Put a serving platter upside down over the pan and quickly invert it. Remove the mold and parchment. Arrange the reserved raspberries around the edge of the charlotte and pile white chocolate curls in the center. Dust with powdered sugar and cut into wedges for serving. Making Chocolate Curls To make beautiful chocolate curls for decorating desserts, the two keys are to use a block of chocolate and have it at barely above room temperature. If it's too cold it will break into shards as you peel it. At the restaurant we leave the chocolate block near or over a warm oven. At home you could warm it with a hair dryer set on low, or try wrapping it in a tea towel and warming it with the heat of your hands. Use a vegetable peeler and pull across the side of the block so the chocolate comes off in curls. Place them on a plate and refrigerate until you need them. Do-Ahead * The charlotte will keep in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Wonderful product. Thank you!

Full of wonderful recipes!

I was very excited about this purchase and jumped right in as soon as I received the book. I was most intrigued by the vanilla caramel recipe. I tried that recipe many, many times trying to figure out why it wouldn't come out right. I never figured it out. After going through ten pounds of sugar trying I gave up. I'm hesitant to try other recipes because of what happened with the first one I tried.

This is a very good book. Gives some great insight in excess of just the recipe. I'd buy it again.

'chocolate and vanilla' by Chicago star pastry chef and Food Network maven, Gale Gand, with co-author credits for Lisa Weiss is a gimmick book on at least two levels. Ms. Gand is the co-owner of Tru (along with former husband, executive chef Rick Tramonto), one of the most highly honored restaurants in Chicago. But unlike her business partner Rick's cookbooks, which aspire to the

heights of sophistication reached by Thomas Keller and fellow Chicagoan, Charlie Trotter, Ms. Gand's books all tend to be very light, with recipes almost always oriented to simply having fun in the kitchen. This also sets her books apart from the excellent cookbooks by other leading pastry chefs such as 'The Sweet Life' by Chanterelle pastry chef, Kate Zuckerman and 'The Secrets of Baking' by Spago pastry chef, Sherry Yard. This is above all, a gimmick book, which is rare in cookbooks for adults. The most obvious manifestation of the book's surprise approach is that it is not really a book about chocolate and vanilla together, but two completely separate books, one about vanilla and the other about chocolate. The two are bound together between the same covers, but the book on the one subject is printed upside down and backwards against the text of the other text. This is initially surprising, since vanilla and chocolate together is one of the most dramatic arguments for the notion of 'terroir' in the whole culinary world. As Ms. Gand points out in her independent introductions to the two products, both are native to central America, including what is now southern Mexico, and, the pre-Columbian cultures actually used the two together in their 'hot chocolate' preparations, along with another famous New World product, chiles. This admixture of vanilla and chocolate is no geographical accident, as it is still a universal practice today to add vanilla to chocolate products to help bring out its flavor. When these two products made their way to Europe on the conquistador's galleons, the combination fell into disuse, as the combination of chocolate with sugar made a much bigger impression on the early European chocoheads. I must note at this point that Ms. Gand and her book team at Clarkson Potter dropped the ball in editing this book when they referred to Europe and not the Americas as the 'New World'. There are a few other geographical oddities of expression, but none except this one will do anything to spoil your enjoyment of this book. Since this book is all about having fun with baking, it may not be seen as a 'must buy', especially for those who already own several good books on baking and at least one good book on chocolate. This is especially true as Ms. Gand does not even present the technique of tempering chocolate, and none of her recipes require that the home cook do any tempering themselves. She has a nice but short story of how chocolate was distributed around the world and how its processing evolved over the last 400 years, but a book dedicated to chocolate will have all this and more. The real hero of this book is not chocolate, but vanilla. Vanilla may be the Rodney Dangerfield of culinary products. Where everyone craves chocolate and saffron has the pride of being the most expensive spice, vanilla languishes as the second most expensive spice and a supporting player to chocolate's star. As a result, vanilla gets little or no special notice in all the cookbooks I've read, even the best ones on herbs and spices. Ms. Gand redresses all these lapses. Her treatment of how to make the best use of vanilla is easily the best to be found anywhere. For

starters, she identifies the very best geographical sources for vanilla bean. But, her biggest contribution for the culinarily fussy may be her technique for coaxing the vanilla seeds from their pods in a way that avoids also picking up strands of fiber, similar to the white webbing which holds the seeds in chiles. Miss Gale predictably warns us against artificial vanilla flavorings and 'vanillin flavoring', a blend of natural and artificial vanilla. On the other hand, she instructs us on the uncommon preparations, vanilla paste and vanilla powder, both made from natural vanilla. Another especially valuable bit of information is the source of the very best vanilla products (Nielsen-Massey). Unfortunately, this appears on the page of sources that appears only on page 79 of big brother chocolate's half of the book. Just as the chocolate recipes are divided up between dark, semi-sweet, light and milk, and white chocolate ingredients, vanilla recipes are divided up between those that use vanilla seeds and those that use vanilla extract. The hallmark application of vanilla seeds on its own is in custards and the world of products derived from them such as ice cream, flans, crème Anglaise, mousse, pastry fillings, and glazes. The most typical use of vanilla extract is baked goods such as cakes, where the flavor is intimately mixed with flour and sugar. I confess the boundary between seed and extract seems pretty thin, and I suspect that the two are pretty interchangeable, except where you want to avoid the sight of the little black specks in your finished goods. As I said above, almost all the recipes in this book lie somewhere between easy (vanilla flan) and really easy (vanilla malteds) for someone who likes to bake. Like Missy Gand's earlier books, that makes it an especially good resource for baking with kids. That doesn't mean the recipes are quick. It also doesn't mean they have no interest to the hoity-toity among us who like recipes with a pedigree. I can think on two more well bred recipes than the vanilla charlotte (a dish destined to be making a comeback) and the vanilla-scented peach Tarte Tatin. If your guests have seen one too many tiramisu dishes, try the charlotte! At half the price of the premium baking books, this one is worth every penny.

Only average. Not up to the hype.

I found this book as good as all Gale's books are love it.

Although this book is called Chocolate and Vanilla, most of the recipes don't use chocolate and vanilla in a balanced way. The recipes either focus on the chocolate flavor or the vanilla flavor. The recipes whose highlight is on chocolate usually only have vanilla extract as the vanilla component whereas a lot of the recipes whose highlight is on vanilla don't use

even use chocolate. Therefore, it feels more like two separate cookbooks instead of one united cookbook. I would have expected more fused recipes because even though the author says that she has noticed that most people are either a chocolate person or a vanilla person, she herself has not yet decided if she was a "chocolate chick or golden girl." As someone who also likes both chocolate and vanilla components in my desserts, I was a little disappointed by the recipes in this book.

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