

## **Hazelnut Chocolate Cake**

### **Cake Ingredients:**

2 cups all-purpose flour

½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder

1 ½ tsp. baking soda

¼ tsp. salt

½ cup butter, at room temperature

1 cup sugar

1 cup light brown sugar

2 large eggs, at room temperature

2 tsp. vanilla extract

1 cup lukewarm water

½ cup buttermilk

### **Frosting Ingredients:**

8 oz. Mascarpone cheese, at room temperature

¾ cup powdered sugar

1 tsp. vanilla extract

1 ¼ cup heavy whipping cream

2 cups Nutella or hazelnut chocolate spread, divided

1 cup hazelnuts, toasted & roughly chopped for topping

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Sift together the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt into a bowl.

In another bowl, with an electric mixer on medium-high speed, beat the butter and sugars until light and fluffy, about 2 to 3 minutes.

Add the eggs and vanilla and beat until combined.

Add the flour mixture in 3 additions, alternating with water and buttermilk, beating on low speed until just combined; scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed. Beat on medium-high speed just until no traces of flour remain, about 30 seconds; do not overbeat.

Divide the batter evenly into 2 8-inch round pans that have been greased and floured.

Bake for about 30 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean.

To make the cream, whip together cheese, sugar, vanilla, and heavy whipping cream with electric beaters until peaks form. Putting it in a chilled stainless-steel bowl will help it to whip faster.

Add 1 cup Nutella and beat until well blended.

Microwave the remaining 1 cup Nutella for a short time (20 seconds) IF it isn't easy to spread.

Spread evenly over the bottom layer of the cake and set in the freezer for 5-10 minutes.

Once the Nutella layer sets, spread a layer of chocolate hazelnut whipped cream over it.

Top with other cake layer and frost the sides and top of the cake with cream.

Top with chopped hazelnuts. Reserving a few to serve on the plate with the cake is nice. You might pipe a design around the top and bottom sides of the cake; you will have more than enough frosting to do so.