



PREP: 40 min  
COOK: 90 min  
SERVES: 12

## Choc Cherry Hazelnut Simnel Cake

Traditionally served as a fruit cake and topped with marzipan balls, we've given this classic Easter cake an update with rich chocolate ganache and sour cherries for a sophisticated finish.

### Ingredients

#### Hazelnut Marzipan

2 large egg whites, lightly beaten  
1 cup (170g) hazelnut meal  
100g caster sugar  
cup (100g) icing sugar

#### Cake

1 cup (250ml) sour cream  
1/3 cup (80ml) water  
2 tsp Queen Vanilla Bean Paste  
1 1/2 cups (225g) plain flour  
3/4 cup (80g) cocoa powder  
1 1/2 tsp baking powder

### Method - Marzipan

#### STEP 1

Place hazelnut meal and sugars in the bowl of a food processor, blend until evenly mixed. Add egg whites and blend to a smooth paste. Wrap in cling wrap and place in the fridge for 30 minutes to firm up.

#### STEP 2

Roll the marzipan to 3-4mm thickness on a surface lightly dusted with icing sugar. Using the base of a 20cm cake tin as a stencil, cut into a circle. Roll remaining marzipan into 11 balls and place onto a baking tray lined with baking paper. Set aside.

### Method - Cake

#### STEP 1

Preheat oven to 180°C (fan forced). Grease and line a deep 20cm cake tin.

#### STEP 2

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## Ingredients

¾ tsp bicarbonate of soda  
Pinch of salt  
230g unsalted butter, room temperature  
1 1/3 cups (295g) firmly packed brown sugar  
3 large eggs  
1 cup (125g) morello/sour cherries

## Ganache

100g dark chocolate, chopped  
100ml thickened cream  
Cocoa powder, to dust

## Method - Cake

Combine sour cream, water, Vanilla Bean Paste in a jug, mix well.  
Combine flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda and salt.  
Set aside.

### STEP 3

Using a stand mixer or electric beaters, cream butter and sugar for 5 minutes until pale and creamy. Beat in eggs one at a time, mixing well in between.

### STEP 4

Add half of flour mixture to butter mixture, mix well then add half of sour cream mixture, mixing in between. Repeat with remaining mixture and mix until well combined. Add cherries and mix to incorporate.

### STEP 5

Add a little over half of the batter to prepared tin and place the 20cm round of marzipan on top. Spoon remaining batter on top and bake for 1 ¼-½ hours or until until an inserted skewer comes out clean. Once cake is cooked, allow to cool in tin for 10 minutes before inverting onto a wire rack to cool completely.

### STEP 6

In the final 10 minutes of cooking place marzipan balls into oven and allow to cook until slightly browned on top.

## Method - Ganache and Assembly

### STEP 1

Place chocolate in a bowl. Set aside. Gently heat cream in a saucepan over a low heat until it reaches a simmer. Pour over chocolate and allow to sit for 3 minutes before stirring until smooth. Set aside to cool slightly.

### STEP 2

Smooth ganache over the top of the cake, chill cake to slightly harden ganache before placing marzipan balls around the edge of the cake. Dust with cocoa powder before serving.

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