Chocolate Zucchini Cake

From Nelson’s Kitchen

Adapted from Bon Appétit, November 1995.

The adaptations here are to make the recipe dairy free. I replaced buttermilk for a combination of almond milk and lemon juice, and the butter for vegetable oil.

Ingredients:

- 2 1/4 cups all purpose flour (11 oz 3/4, 330 grams)
- 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder (1 1/2 oz, 45 grams)
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon of baking powder
- 1 3/4 cups sugar (11 3/4 oz, 335 grams)
- 1 cup vegetable oil (8 oz, 230 grams)
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon of lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups grated unpeeled zucchini (about 2 1/2 medium) (10 oz, 300 grams)
- 1/2 cup almond milk
- 1 6-ounce package (about 1 cup) bittersweet chocolate chips or chopped unsweetened chocolate bars (70% cocoa)
- 3/4 cup chopped walnuts (optional)

Procedure:

1. Preheat oven and prepare the pan
   - Preheat oven to 325 F.
   - Cut a rectangular piece of parchment paper that covers the bottom of a \(9 \times 2\) rectangular pan and that comes up the long side of the pan.
   - Spray the bottom of the pan with cooking spray.
   - Line the pan with the parchment paper and spray the parchment paper with the cooking spray.

2. Grate the zucchini
   - Grate the zucchini in the large holes of a box grater or in a food processor equipped with the disc with large holes.

3. Sift the dry ingredients
Cut a large square of parchment paper and lay on top of counter
Using a large strainer, sift the flour, cocoa power, baking soda and baking powder on top of the parchment paper.

4. **Mix the batter**
   - In a large bowl, using a whisk, mix the sugar, oil, eggs, vanilla, lemon juice, and salt.
   - Add 1/3 of the dry mixture and stir gently until incorporated followed by 1/3 of the almond milk. Repeat until all the dry ingredients and milk have been incorporated.
   - Add the grated zucchini and mix until incorporated.
   - Add the chocolate chips, or chopped chocolate, and nuts (if using).

5. **Bake, cool and serve**
   - Pour the batter in the prepared loaf pan.
   - Bake at 325 F for 50 minutes to one hour or until a toothpick comes out clean when inserted in the middle of the loaf. Rotate the pan in the oven after 25 minutes to ensure even baking.
   - Remove from oven and let it cool, in the pan, on a rack for 10 minutes.
   - Run a sharp knife along the short ends of the pan that were not covered by the parchment paper to release the bread.
   - Invert on top of a cutting board.
   - Peel the parchment paper from the bread.
   - Invert again (you want the top side up now) on top of the cooling rack.
   - Serve warm or let cool to room temperature.
   - If it is completely cool when you serve, you may warm up a slice for 20 seconds in full power in the microwave. Best is to have a plastic cover over the slice.
   - Serve warm with a spoonful of sour cream, creme fraiche, or with some whipped cream.