



Chocolate Ganache

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Anna's Gourmet Goodies*



Few foods evoke feelings of warmth and love like chocolate. And creating your own chocolate ganache takes this wonderful treat to a whole new level. It's easy, fun and oh so good.

Ganache is often used to cover baked goods. You'll find it in between layers of some cakes, and sometimes it can be used to coat an entire cake. This is also the basic recipe for chocolate used as fondue. The Swiss are sometimes credited with creating this mixture of chocolate and cream, but whoever gets the credit, it was a great idea!

For chocolate, I like to use a high quality semi-sweet dark chocolate. We use Schokinag from Germany, but it is not always available in retail stores in the chip form. Avoid baking chocolate; you'll want something a little sweeter. I like to find one with at least 50% cocoa butter as well.

For the cream, go all out and buy the heavy cream. Get the freshest date you can find – the longer out the expiration date the better.

To heat the cream and melt the chocolate, use the heaviest pan you have. Stainless steel is best since it does not interact with food and carry over flavors. Avoid cast iron or other 'seasoned' pans. You don't want to add any left over flavors to the chocolate.

In general, I like to use a 50/50 mixture of chocolate and cream. For one cup of cream, use 8 oz. of chocolate. You can vary this up and down either way. More chocolate creates a thicker coating. More cream makes it easier to pour if you are using it as a coating for a cake. Choose a pan size that is small enough for the cream to cover the bottom and come up the sides a little bit.

Chocolate Ganache

1 cup heavy cream
8 oz. semi sweet dark chocolate

If you are using chocolate in a bar form, break or cut into small pieces about the size of chips. Pour the cream into a cool pan. Place the pan over high heat, stir occasionally to prevent burning, and bring to a temperature that is just before a boil. Quickly and

carefully pour the chocolate into the cream and remove from the heat. Let stand for about 5 minutes.

Return the pan to a very low heat and stir gently to blend the chocolate. If the mixture is too thin, add a little more chocolate and stir to melt. Continue stirring until all the chunks are melted.

If you would like to add a touch of flavor, a tablespoon or so of your favorite liqueur, such as Grand Marnier, Kaluah, or Frangelico will do nicely.

If you have a fondue set, great! That will help keep your chocolate warm. If not, simply dip some of your favorite items into the chocolate and arrange on a platter. Some common favorites are:

- Strawberries
- Pineapple (dried slices work great!)
- Orange slices
- Cookies
- Angle food cake
- Marshmallows
- Graham crackers

So find someone you love and share this wonderful treat.

Bon Appetit!