

**You will need:** a medium saucepan; a heatproof mixing bowl; two additional large mixing bowls; a whisk or electric mixer; something to serve the mousse in, e.g., small bowls, flute glasses, ramekins, juice glasses, or teacups; five squares of good-quality semisweet or bittersweet chocolate (there is no additional sugar in this dessert, so choose a chocolate you would eat on its own); a half pint (1 cup) of very cold whipping cream; three egg whites with *no* trace of yolk

Step  
1

Fill the saucepan with one to two inches of water and bring it to a simmer over medium heat. Place the heatproof bowl over the water, making sure it's not touching the water.

Step  
2

Chop the chocolate into small, uniform pieces and place them in the heatproof bowl along with a quarter cup of the whipping cream. (Place the remaining cream back in the refrigerator until ready to use.)

Step  
3

Stir occasionally until the chocolate is melted and the cream is evenly mixed in. Remove the bowl from the saucepan and set it aside.

Step  
4

Place the egg whites in one of the clean bowls (note: If the bowls, whisk, or whites have any trace of fat or oils, the whites will not properly whip) and whisk vigorously until stiff peaks form. This means that the egg whites will thicken, turn from clear to opaque, and stand up on their own in pointed peaks. This will take about three minutes. (Alternatively, you can use an electric mixer.)

\*From the store to the kitchen to the table: We outline the steps that get you from raw ingredients to your dinner tonight, free of measurements and complicated techniques. It's a method you'll remember and whip out whenever you like. It is the most basic way to make the thing you're making.

Step  
5

Clean and dry your whisk (or your beaters if you're using an electric mixer). Pour the rest of the whipping cream into the third clean bowl and whisk until it forms stiff peaks. You should now have three bowls: one with melted chocolate and cream, one with stiff egg whites, and one with whipped cream.

Step  
6

Fold half of the whipped cream into the melted chocolate, then gently stir in the rest. You're trying to incorporate, but not deflate, the whipped cream.

Step  
7

Gently fold all of the egg whites into the chocolate-cream mixture, again incorporating, not deflating. You can stop folding when there are no longer pockets of either whipped cream or egg white, but be careful not to overmix.

Step  
8

Spoon the mousse into your serving cups.

Step  
9

Put the cups in the refrigerator, chill for two hours, then serve with additional sweetened or flavored whipped cream if desired.

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