



## Chocolate & Pear Cake with Caramel Drip & Poached Pears

If you think about the perfect showstopper cake for autumn, this could very well be it!

This is a rich chocolate sponge cake baked with pears in it. A white chocolate frosting is used to sandwich the decadent sponge layers. Finally, a caramel drip and poached pears complete this masterpiece.

I hope you have fun making this in home and then enjoying it with your friends and family.

<p><b>Ingredients</b></p> <p><b>For the chocolate and pear sponge</b></p> <p>350g unsalted butter  350g caster sugar  6 free range medium eggs  290g self-raising flour  ½ tsp baking powder  80g coco powder  2tsp vanilla bean paste  2 medium ripe pears (peeled, chopped and coated with 1tbsp of flour)</p> <p><b>For the white chocolate buttercream</b></p> <p>250g salted butter  200g icing sugar  300g white chocolate (melted)</p>	<p><b>For the poached pears</b></p> <p>500ml water  200g caster sugar  ¼ of a lemon  3 firm small conference pears (peeled)  2-3 cardamom pods  2 star anise</p> <p><b>Decoration</b></p> <p>120g salted caramel sauce</p> <p><b>Serves:</b> 8-10  <b>Preparation time:</b> 10-15mins  <b>Cooking/baking time:</b> 40-45mins for baking + 15-20mins for poaching</p>
---	--

## Method

### Chocolate and pear sponge

Preheat the oven to 160°C fan. Grease and line three 15cm baking tins with baking paper. Whisk together all the sponge ingredients (except the chopped pears) using an electric whisk for about a minute then scrape the sides of the bowl and whisk for a further 30 seconds. Sprinkle flour coated pear pieces onto the batter and fold them in carefully. Divide the batter into prepared tins and bake for 45-50mins, until a skewer inserted comes out clean. Once baked, take the tins out of the oven and let the sponges cool in the tin for 10-15mins. Then carefully take them out of the tins and place on a wire rack to cool completely.

### White chocolate buttercream

Whisk all the ingredients for the buttercream together using an electric whisk for 2-3mins, or until you get a smooth, spreadable frosting.

### Poached pears

Place all ingredients in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Lower the hob to a medium heat and let the pears poach for 15-20mins, until they are soft but hold their shape.

### Assemble

Once the sponges are cooled, sandwich them using white chocolate buttercream and coat the sides using the same buttercream. Use a pallet knife or a dough scraper to smooth the sides. Transfer the cake into the fridge and let it set for an hour – 30 mins in the freezer would also work. To decorate, slowly drizzle the salted caramel sauce on top of the cake. Carefully place the poached pears on top of the cake and serve.