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## A Twist on Tiramisu

By Susie Iventosch



Tiramisu Photo Susie Iventosch

with a little less coffee soaking the lady fingers, so the cake stayed intact. If you prefer this dessert more soaked, then simply soak the lady fingers in the espresso mixture and voila, you will have your favorite texture. (Though you may need to make a little more espresso!)

I also thought it would be fun to use the cheese in both the custard and the whipped cream because Mascarpone is so delicious! And, what fun it might be to actually mix the cocoa powder in, rather than just the dusting on top. So, while this may be an unconventional tiramisu, give it a whirl, and see what you think. Remember, you can always use your imagination, and since there are about 10,000 different recipes for tiramisu, you cannot go wrong!

## Chocolate-Toffee Tiramisu



Tiramisu ready for the party Photo Susie Iventosch

I was never really a huge tiramisu fan, until one day I saw the most darling tiramisu ever, sitting in the case of a bakery section. It was all wrapped up like a package with a ribbon ... just waiting to join someone's special festivity. It was so cute in fact, that I marched over, picked up four packages of lady fingers and vowed to myself that one day I would try making this quintessential Italian dessert. Tiramisu literally means "pick me up" or "pull me up" in Italian, and one can certainly see why, with the espresso, cocoa and eggs, it gives the body a spark!

My reason for not loving the dessert before has entirely to do with texture, and isn't that the funny thing about food? Texture plays such a huge role in whether or not we enjoy eating certain things. One person's "absolutely divine, darling" is on another's "won't touch it with a ten-foot pole" list!

Every time I'd had it, the cake or lady fingers seemed so heavily soaked with coffee that the texture became very grainy, which was not so pleasing to my palate. Now, for some of you, that may be exactly how you like your tiramisu, like my own mom. But for me, I needed to make it

Makes one 9x5x3 loaf size, which serves 6-8.

### Ingredients

#### Cake

2 packages Lady Fingers (24 whole or 48 split halves)  
1/2 cup espresso mixed with 2 tablespoons Torani  
caramel flavoring syrup (optional)

#### Custard

4 egg yolks  
1/2 cup sugar  
2 teaspoons Amaretto or Brandy  
1 cup Mascarpone cheese (buy one pound, because you'll split it between cream and custard)

#### Cream

1 cup whipping cream  
2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder  
1 cup Mascarpone cheese

#### Topping

3/4 cup crushed Almond Roca or your favorite  
English toffee  
1-2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder, optional

### Directions

For custard, beat sugar and egg yolks until fluffy, and cook over medium heat in a double boiler, or a mixing bowl placed over a pot of boiling water, until mixture becomes thick and falls in ribbons from a spoon or whisk. Stir in Amaretto or brandy and remove from heat to cool. When cooled to room temperature, stir in 1 cup of the Mascarpone cheese. Set aside.

Meanwhile, beat 1 cup whipping cream until stiff and sift in cocoa powder. Fold 1 cup Mascarpone cheese into whipped cream. Set aside.

### Assembly

Line bottom and sides of a 9x5 inch loaf pan with plastic wrap, leaving wrap hanging over all edges. Spray with cooking spray. With a pastry brush, lightly coat espresso-caramel mixture over tops of lady fingers, and lay, round side up, on bottom of pan. Spread the custard mixture over the lady fingers. Repeat with another layer of lady fingers, (brushed with espresso) and spread chocolate-whipped cream mixture over this layer. Cover and chill for several hours, or overnight.

When ready to serve, lift tiramisu from pan by holding onto plastic wrap, and lay on a platter. Gently remove the wrap from the bottom by lifting each end with a long spatula. If you desire the additional cocoa powder, which is customary, dust the top of the dessert evenly with the cocoa powder. Sprinkle chopped Almond Roca (or toffee) over top and arrange remaining lady fingers around the tiramisu, kind of like a little castle and wrap with a colorful ribbon. Cut into slices or squares to serve.



Susie Iventosch is the author of *Tax Bites and Tasty Morsels*, which can be found at Across the Way in Moraga, [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), and [www.taxbites.net](http://www.taxbites.net). Susie can be reached at [suziven@gmail.com](mailto:suziven@gmail.com).

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