

CHOCOLATE BREAD PARFAIT

Pane di Cioccolato al Cucchiaino - Serves 6

This recalls for me the chocolate-and-bread sandwiches that sometimes were my lunch, and always a special treat. And it is another inventive way surplus is used in Umbrian cuisine, with leftover country bread serving as the foundation of an elegant layered dessert. Though it is soaked with chocolate and espresso sauce and buried in whipped cream, the bread doesn't disintegrate, and provides a pleasing textural contrast in every heavenly spoonful.

- **8 ounces bitter-sweet or semi-sweet chocolate, finely chopped**
- **8 ounces country-style white bread, crusts removed**
- **One half cup freshly brewed espresso**
- **2 tablespoons dark rum**
- **2 tablespoons sugar**
- **1 AND A HALF cups chilled heavy cream**
- **1 cup sliced almonds, toasted**



Lidia Cooks from the Heart of Italy (Knopf 2009)

Recommended equipment:

A large rimmed tray or baking sheet, such as a half-sheet pan (12 by 18 inches); a spouted measuring cup, 1 pint or larger;
6 parfait glasses or wineglasses, preferably balloon-shaped

Put the chopped chocolate in a bowl set in a pan of hot (not boiling) water. When the chocolate begins to melt, stir until completely smooth. Keep it warm, over the water, off the heat.

Slice the bread into HALF-inch-thick slices, and lay them flat in one layer, close together, on the tray or baking sheet.

Pour the warm espresso into a spouted measuring cup, stir in the rum and sugar until sugar dissolves, then stir in half the melted chocolate. Pour the sauce all over the bread slices, then flip them over and turn them on the tray, to make sure all the surfaces are coated. Let the bread absorb the sauce for a few minutes.

Whip the cream until soft peaks form, by hand or with an electric mixer.

To assemble the parfaits: Break the bread into 1-inch pieces. Use half the pieces to make the bottom parfait layer in the six serving glasses, dropping an equal amount of chocolatey bread into each. Scrape up some of the unabsorbed chocolate sauce that remains on the baking sheet, and drizzle a bit over the bread layers. Next, drop a layer of whipped cream in the glasses, using up half the cream. Top the cream layer with toasted almonds, using half the nuts.

Repeat the layering sequence: drop more soaked bread into each glass, drizzle over it the chocolate sauce from the tray and the remaining melted chocolate. Dollop another layer of whipped cream in the glasses, using it all up, and sprinkle the remaining almonds on top of each parfait. This dessert is best when served immediately while the melted chocolate is still warm and runny.



Our
TOP 10
Romantic
Wines

Stew Leonard's Wines

Wines that go with a SPECIAL DINNER...

SANTA CATERINA Collio Bianco

Very aromatic, redolent of white flowers, citrus, melon and spice. It's crisp on entry but opens to layers of flavors that persist thru the lengthy finish.

\$12.99

NOBLE SIRE Chateauneuf du Pape

Rhone wines are our personal favorites; sweet red fruits, silky tannins and long, spicy finishes make these wines really shine!

Sire blew us away,

\$27.99



Wines that go with DESSERT...

LE DAUPHINE DE GUIRAUD Sauternes

Deeply golden, lovely quince, pear and orange flavours mingle with a little botrytis spiced-orange-treacle.

\$19.99



SPARKLING Wines

NICOLAS FRANCOIS Rose

A fresh light pink sparkling that makes a great aperitif and will go great with grilled meats.

\$9.99

PONTE Prosecco

We love this Italian sparkler for its light fruitiness, refreshing crispness.

\$12.99

CHAMPAGNES

DOM PERIGNON 2000

The ultimate toasting champagne.

\$129.99

VEUVE CLICQUOT Brut

Firm, with a fine mousse, this shows bright apple, lemon and floral flavors.

\$39.99



95
RATING
WINE
ENTHUSIAST



Perfect Pair!
Chocolate Bread Parfait
See Recipe on
back

Wines that go with CHOCOLATE...

BASTIANICH ROSATO

A unique expression of 100% Refosco from Friuli. Refosco, mainly known for producing spicy reds with dark fruit flavors, expresses itself here in a softer way, producing wine with slightly more structure and length than most roses.

\$13.99

ATTICUS JOHN Cabernet

One of St. Helena's top vineyards and producers. Unfined and unfiltered. Great fruit flavors of boysenberry, blackberry, cassis along with subtle spiciness from oak aging.

\$27.99

GREEN MEADOW Zinfandel

Ripe blackberry, plum, and hints of black pepper offer nuance with an intriguing, lingering finish.

\$15.99