

Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Chocolate

by Mary Rose

The February Bakers Dozen program "Long Live Chocolate Cake" was made for chocoholics. More than two dozen chocolate cakes were baked and presented for tasting by our members, all in the interest of pure research, of course.

A single-layer, unfrosted chocolate cake was made from one of two recipes: Feathery Fudge Cake (adapted from a 1953 *Better Homes and Gardens Cookbook*) in which the creaming method is used to mix the cake. The Rich Chocolate Cake from the *Baker's Dozen Cookbook* first combines the dry ingredients. Then the butter, eggs and other wet ingredients are added and mixed.

It's probably no surprise that each cake was slightly different from the others. A contributing factor was the raw ingredients that were used. Melted chocolate included Guittard, Scharffen Berger, Ghirardelli and Callebaut. Flours ranged from Pillsbury and Gold Medal to King Arthur and Giusto's. Butter came from Challenge, Kirkland, Trader Joe's or Clover.

THIS WOULD BE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY FOR ATTENDEES TO PARTICIPATE IN A FACEBOOK FORUM ABOUT THE MERITS OF THE RECIPES AND THE INGREDIENTS. THE FORUM IS OPEN!!

Guest speaker Micki Weinberg from Guittard Chocolate had 2 sizes of chips and 2 very different 72% chocolate bars for attendees to taste in order to demonstrate particle size and grind of the beans, as well as percentages of chocolate liquor and how they influence flavor. Micki, a Baker's Dozen member, also explained how cocoa powder is dutched to alter the pH and the influence that would have on baking. The lecture and tasting leads us to more experimentation and inspiration to try different chocolates with old and new recipes.