

Chocolate Mousse

(adapted from *The Silver Palate Cookbook*)

½ pound (8 oz) dark/semi-sweet chocolate morsels (aka chocolate chips; ideally cacao-sugar ratio of 60/40 or so)

½ cup espresso coffee (or water)

½ cup Grand Marnier

4 egg yolks

2 cups heavy cream (1 in the mousse, 1 for topping)

¼ cup sugar

8 egg whites (*Note:* double the amount of yolks)

Pinch of salt

½ teaspoon vanilla

Serves 8

1. Melt the chocolate in a heavy saucepan over very low heat, stirring constantly. Add the espresso (or water), then stir in the Grand Marnier. Let the mixture cool to room temperature.

2. Add the egg yolks, one at a time, beating thoroughly after each addition.

3. Whip 1 cup of the cream until thickened. Gradually add the sugar, beating until the cream is stiff.

4. Beat the egg whites with the salt until they form stiff peaks. Gently fold the egg whites into the whipped cream.

5. Stir about one third of the cream mixture thoroughly into the chocolate mixture. Then scrape the remaining cream mixture over the chocolate base and gently fold them together. *Finito!*

6. Transfer the mousse into individual dessert cups or a serving bowl and refrigerate until set—around 2 hours.

7. At serving time, whip up the remaining cup of cream until thickened. Add vanilla and whip into soft peaks. Top each portion of mousse with a dollop of whipped cream.

(Make sure to keep cold, and do not store in the refrigerator for longer than a day or two—mainly because of the raw eggs.)