

Vegan Chocolate Orange Marble Cake with Ganache and Candied Orange Peel for Lent

As you may already know I am Coptic Orthodox – an Orthodox Christian from Egypt. We have one of the more rigorous traditions of fasting especially during Lent. We adopt a vegan diet during Lent and centuries of this tradition have led to a sort of uber-specialization of vegan recipes among Copts. Now whether or not it is truly a sacrifice to indulge in cakes such as this one during Lent may be debated for another several centuries but, for now at least, sugar is not forsaken during Lent!



Now, let me back up a bit and explain why I made this cake. The cake itself is one I have made many times and is in my [cookbook](#). My mother made it during Lent when I was younger and I loved the cake, whether I was fasting or not. But I have never made it with ganache before. I usually just drizzled it with icing . Then we started a meal service at the Coptic-American Orthodox church we attend now.



Since we are a small congregation each week the members sign up for a potluck of sorts to provide the lunch after mass. Well, of course, I was delighted because here was the perfect opportunity to practice baking and experiment with different recipes and also feel like I was contributing somehow. But, the dilemma. We are all modern educated mothers with definite ideas on what dessert should look like for our children. In fact, one of our mothers suggested a “fruit cake” or, essentially, a tower of fruit as dessert. This became the running joke for a while. Well, I tried.



But I got carried away. First I was going to make a naked cake with just a little ganache between layers. But the edges of the cake were not perfect so it needed a little crumb coat. And then the crumb coat wasn't that attractive so it needed a final coat of ganache. And then it was too plain with just a ganache frosting so it needed a ganache drizzle.



And then since I was using fresh orange juice inside the cake why waste the peel when I could candy it? And then it snowballed. By the time the cake got to the church the “naked fruit cake” became a fully clothed chocolate cake with candied fruit. And the very children whose mother was most concerned about them having fruit for dessert ended up consuming the candied orange peel en masse. But it was an amazing cake.

Keep in mind that the ganache drizzle will only retain its shine for about six hours after its poured. If it starts to lose its shine you can bring it back by patiently running a blow dryer on its coolest warm setting over the cake. Hold

the blow dryer about two feet over the cake and wave it back and forth. The cake does not need to be refrigerated and the ganache will go completely dull if you do put it in the fridge.

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