

Peanut Butter Torte

(Source: [Baking: From My Home to Yours](#) by [Dorie Greenspan](#), pages 282-283)

Yield: 6 to 8 servings

1¼ cups finely chopped salted peanuts (for the filling, crunch, and toppings)
2 teaspoons sugar
½ teaspoon instant espresso powder (or finely ground instant coffee)
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
½ cup mini chocolate chips (or finely chopped semisweet chocolate)
24 Oreo cookies, finely crumbled or ground in a food processor or blender
½ stick (4 tablespoons) unsalted butter, melted and cooled
Small pinch of salt
2½ cups heavy cream
1¼ cups confectioners' sugar, sifted
12 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
1½ cups salted peanut butter - crunchy or smooth (not natural)
2 tablespoons whole milk
4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped

Getting Ready: Center a rack in the oven and preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Butter a 9-inch springform pan and place it on a baking sheet lined with parchment or a silicone mat.

Toss ½ cup of the chopped peanuts, the sugar, espresso powder, cinnamon, nutmeg and chocolate chips together in a small bowl. Set aside.

Put the Oreo crumbs, melted butter and salt in another small bowl and stir with a fork just until the crumbs are moistened. Press the crumbs evenly over the bottom and up the sides of the springform pan (they should go up about 2 inches on the sides). Freeze the crust for 10 minutes.

Bake the crust for 10 minutes, then transfer it to a rack and let it cool completely before filling.

Working with a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment or with a hand mixer in a large bowl, whip 2 cups of the cream until it holds medium peaks. Beat in ¼ cup of the confectioners' sugar and whip until the cream holds medium-firm peaks. Scrape the cream into a bowl and refrigerate until needed.

Wipe out (no need to wash) the bowl, fit the stand mixer with the paddle attachment if you have one, or continue with the hand mixer, and beat the cream cheese with the remaining 1 cup confectioners' sugar on medium speed until the cream cheese is satiny smooth. Beat in the peanut butter, ¼ cup of the chopped peanuts and the milk.

Using a large rubber spatula, gently stir in about one quarter of the whipped cream, just to lighten the mousse. Still working with the spatula, stir in the crunchy peanut mixture, then gingerly fold in the remaining whipped cream. Scrape the mousse into the crust, mounding and smoothing the top. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours, or overnight; cover with plastic wrap as soon as the mousse firms.

To Finish the Torte: Put the chopped chocolate in a heatproof bowl and set the bowl over a saucepan of simmering water. Leave the bowl over the water just until the chocolate softens and starts to melt, about 3 minutes; remove the bowl from the saucepan.

Bring the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cream to a full boil. Pour the cream over the chocolate and, working with a rubber spatula, very gently stir together until the ganache is completely blended and glossy.

Pour the ganache over the torte, smoothing it with a metal icing spatula. Scatter the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup peanuts over the top and chill to set the topping, about 20 minutes.

When the ganache is firm, remove the sides of the springform pan; it's easiest to warm the pan with a hairdryer, then remove the sides, but you can also wrap a kitchen towel dampened with hot water around the pan and leave it there for 10 seconds. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Serving: I like to serve the torte with strong espresso, but it lends itself to being paired with black tea, hot cocoa or even a not-too-thick not-too-sweet coffee milkshake.

Storing: Well covered, the torte will keep in the refrigerator for about 2 days; just make sure to keep it away from foods with strong odors.