

## **Molten Chocolate Cakes**

**Makes Four 5.5 ounce (165g) Cakes.**

5 ounce (150g) dark bittersweet chocolate 70%, preferably Valrhona Guanaja  
1 stick (113g) unsalted butter, chopped  
4 ea. (200g) large eggs  
3/4 cup (150g) granulated sugar  
1/3 cup (50g) all-purpose flour, sifted  
1 vanilla bean, scrap out the seeds or 1/2 tsp (2.5ml) vanilla extract (optional)

### **Method**

Preheat the oven to 450°F (230°C). Lower temperature to 425°F (220°C) if using a convection oven. Butter and lightly flour four 6 ounce ramekins or 3x1.8-inch (7.5x4.5cm) round-cake pastry rings (available online), tap out the excess flour. Or, make four 10x1.5 inch (25x4cm) parchment paper strips and lightly grease molds with butter or cooking spray. Place one paper strip inside each mold. Set the round-cake pastry rings on a baking sheet lined with parchment or silicone mat.

In a water-bath, over simmering water, melt the butter with the chocolate. In a large bowl, beat the eggs with the sugar until foamy. Stir the chocolate mixture until completely smooth; do not over heat. Whisk it into the egg mixture along with the sifted flour. Scoop the batter into the prepared ramekins or round-pastry rings and bake for 12 minutes, or until the sides of the cakes are firm but the centers are soft. If using ramekins, let the cakes cool in the ramekins for 5 minutes, then cover each with an inverted dessert plate. Carefully turn each one over, let stand for a few seconds and then unmold. Serve immediately.

The batter can be refrigerated up to 3 days; bring to room temperature before baking. Baked molten chocolate cakes can also be made in advance, refrigerated or place in the freezer for weeks. If frozen, leave lava cakes to room temperature for an hour and microwave them for about 20 seconds or until warm and serve. Garnish with some fresh raspberries, currants, mint leaves and powdered sugar if you wish.