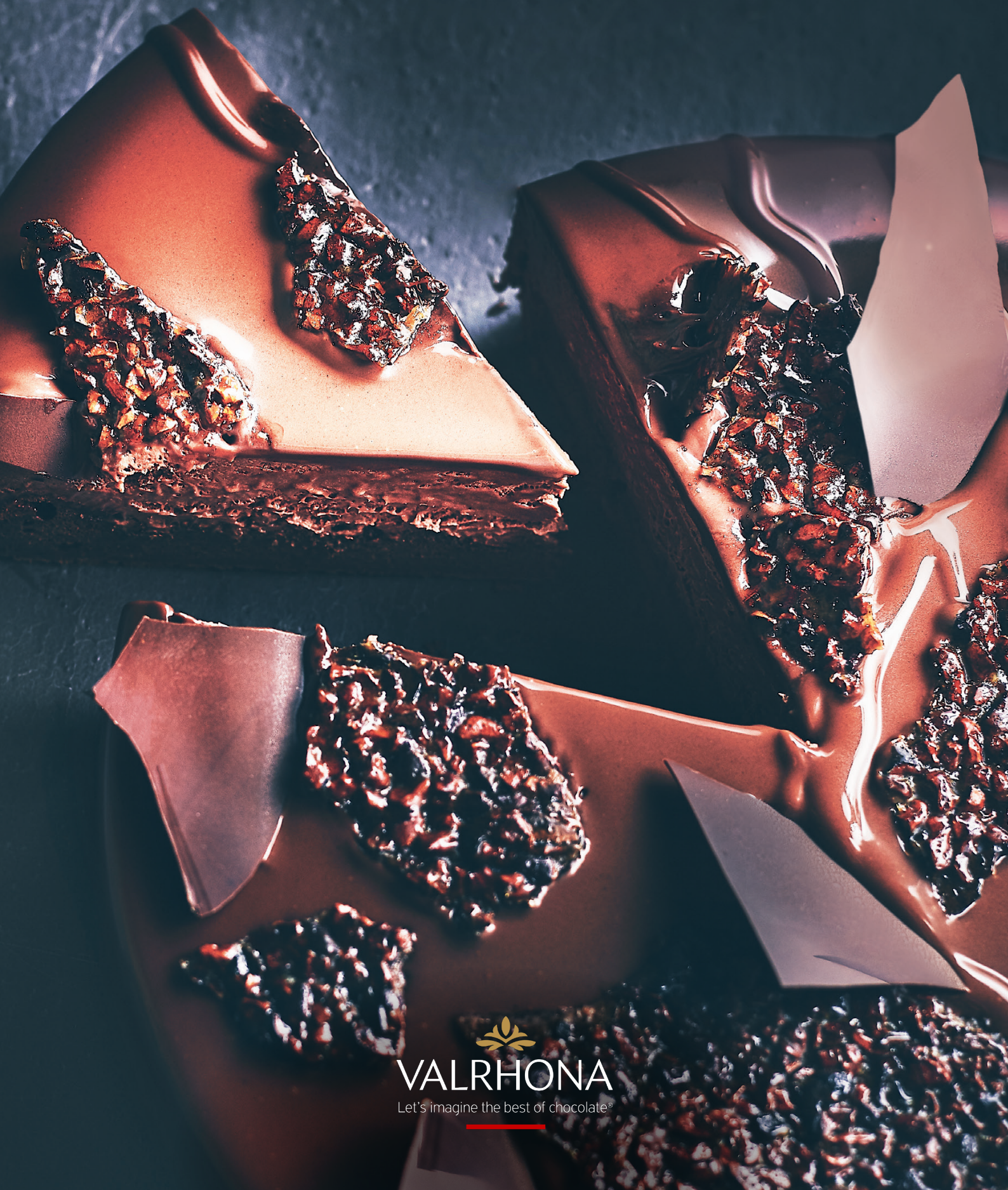


THE DARK **CIRCLE**



VALRHONA

Let's imagine the best of chocolate®

THE DARK CIRCLE

FOR 6-8 PEOPLE • PREPARATION: 2 HOURS • COOKING: 15-30 MINUTES • FREEZING: 3-4 HOURS

COCOA NIB NOUGATINE

- 100g (3/4 cup) cocoa nibs
- 50g (1/4 cup) butter
- 75g (1/4 cup + 2 Tbsp) sugar
- 25g (1 Tbsp) glucose syrup (or honey)
- 2g (1 tsp) yellow pectin (or 5g (1 tsp) cornstarch)
- 20g (1 Tbsp) water
- 7-8 finely ground Timut pepper corns

CARAÏBE 66% CHOCOLATE SPONGE

- 100g Caraïbe 66% dark chocolate
- 70g (1/3 cup) 35% fat heavy cream
- 125g (4) egg whites
- 30g (2) egg yolks
- 50g (1/4 cup) sugar
- 10g (1 Tbsp) Valrhona Cocoa Powder
- Butter for the mold

FOAMY GANACHE

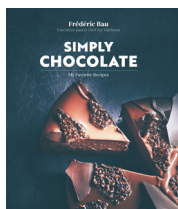
- 200g Caraïbe 66% dark chocolate
- 350g (150g very cold + 200g) (2/3 cup very cold + 1 1/2 cups) 35% fat heavy cream
- 1 1/2 Tbsp (30g) acacia honey

CARAÏBE 66% CHOCOLATE GLAZE

- 150g Caraïbe 66% chocolate (96.8-100.4°F (36-38°C))
- 5g (1/2 Tbsp) Valrhona Cocoa Powder
- 110g (1/3 cup) unsweetened condensed milk
- 80g (1/3 cup) 35% fat heavy cream
- 40g (3 Tbsp) sugar
- 2g (1 tsp) yellow pectin
- 5g (1/2 tsp) glucose syrup (or honey)
- 35g (2 1/2 Tbsp) water

EQUIPMENT

- 7 1/2 inch metal ring, 1 1/2 inches high (20cm diameter, 4cm high)
- 1 1/2 inch wide (4cm wide) polyethylene strip
- Rack



Recipes extracted from *Simply chocolate* by Frédéric Bau © - 2020 Albin Michel editions. Guillaume Czerw picture, Julie Schwob design.

A FEW HOURS BEFORE

COCOA NIB NOUGATINE. Preheat the oven to 360-370°F (180-190°C). In a pot, mix the sugar with the pectin. Add the butter, water, glucose syrup, and Timut pepper. Cook over low heat, but don't stir too much. Once everything is combined, simmer a few seconds.

Add the cocoa nibs. Spread a thin layer of this mixture on a baking sheet lined with baking paper. Bake for 12-15 minutes. Once cool, break the nougatine into large pieces. Keep a few for decoration.

CHOCOLATE SPONGE. Preheat the oven to 360-370°F (180-190°C). Melt the chocolate to 118-122°F (45-50°C). Add the cream, the egg yolks, and finally the cocoa powder. Stir vigorously with a spatula until the batter is smooth and elastic. Whip the egg whites to stiff peaks* (description below) with the sugar. Fold the beaten egg whites into the chocolate mixture in two or three parts.

Line a baking sheet with baking paper. Pour the batter into a lightly buttered 7 1/2 inch metal ring (20cm diameter) on the sheet. Bake for 9-10 minutes. Remove the cake from the oven and cover it with chunks of the nougatine. Bake for 3-4 minutes more so that the nougatine sticks to the cake. Unmold while still warm and let cool.

***Stiff Peaks:** Used to refer to a whipped preparation (chantilly, egg whites, etc.) which forms a point or peak as soon as the whisk is removed. Its consistency is firm, but supple.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER. Line the metal ring with the PVC strip. Place on a baking sheet lined with baking paper. Put the cake in the center. There should be about 1/8 inch (5mm) of space on all sides. Keep in the refrigerator while making the ganache.

FOAMY GANACHE. Whip 150g (cup) of very cold cream to soft peaks. Keep aside. Over low heat, boil 200g (1 1/2 cups) of cream. Pour about a third of the mixture over the chocolate; mix, then repeat two more times. Mix with a spatula until a smooth and shiny emulsion is formed. At 95-104°F (35-40°C), add the whipped cream.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER. Pour the ganache over the cake and freeze for at least 3-4 hours in order to glaze.

BEFORE THE MEAL

CHOCOLATE GLAZE AND PRESENTATION. Boil the cream, evaporated milk, water, sugar, pectin, cocoa powder, glucose syrup. Gradually pour the hot liquid over the chocolate while stirring to create a smooth, shiny, elastic core.

Immediately blend with an immersion blender to finish the emulsion. Keep in the refrigerator or use right away at the temperature: 97-100°F (36-38°C).

Remove the metal ring and polyethylene strip; place the cake on a rack and quickly cover with the chocolate glaze. Remove the excess with a metal spatula and let set for 30 seconds. Place on a serving plate and decorate with the nougatine chunks. Keep in the refrigerator.

FREDERIC BAU ADVICES

MELTING CHOCOLATE

In theory, all chocolates melt on their own, thanks to the cocoa butter. It's a huge error to add any water to help them melt. On the contrary, it might make things difficult later on! Always melt chocolate slowly. It burns easily, and excessive heat may damage it. It's best to use a double boiler or a microwave on a defrost setting or at 500 watts maximum. When we specify temperatures to reach, it's important to respect this information. Otherwise, the chocolate may crystallize. In other recipes, like the ones where we add a hot liquid, for example, the temperature of the melted chocolate isn't as important and, therefore, is not specified.