Chocolate Zucchini Loaf Cake

By Jesse Szewczyk

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Time: 1-1/2 Hours, plus cooking

Yield: 1 loaf (about 8 servings)

**Ingredients**

Nonstick cooking spray or neutral oil

2 large eggs

1½ cups/330 grams packed light brown sugar

¾ cup/180 milliliters neutral oil (such as vegetable or safflower)

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

1 teaspoon kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal)

2 cups/280 grams lightly packed coarsely grated zucchini (from about 1 large or 2 small zucchini)

1¾ cups/223 grams all-purpose flour

⅔ cup/63 grams unsweetened natural cocoa powder

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 cup/173 grams bittersweet or semisweet chocolate chips

1 tablespoon coarse sugar (such as turbinado or Demerara)

PREPARATION

1. Heat oven to 325 degrees. Grease a 9-by-5-inch loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray and line with a strip of parchment paper that hangs over the long sides to create a sling.
2. In a large bowl, vigorously whisk together the eggs, light brown sugar, oil, vanilla extract and salt until smooth and glossy, about 30 seconds. Add the grated zucchini and mix with a rubber spatula until incorporated.
3. Using a fine-mesh strainer, sift the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and baking soda directly into the bowl and stir with a rubber spatula just until combined and no pockets of unincorporated flour remain. (Try not to overmix.) Add all but 1 tablespoon of the chocolate chips to the batter and stir until evenly distributed.
4. Transfer the batter to the prepared pan. Sprinkle the top with coarse sugar and the reserved chocolate chips, pressing them in slightly so they stick. Bake until the cake puffs slightly and a skewer or cake tester inserted into the center comes out clean with just a few moist crumbs attached or with smudges of melted chocolate chips (the chips will be dark brown versus the lighter color of uncooked cake batter), 75 to 80 minutes.
5. Let the loaf cake cool in the pan for 15 minutes. Using the parchment paper, lift the cake out of the pan and let cool completely on a rack before slicing, about 2 hours.

*“TIP: The cake can be baked in a 9-by-2-inch round cake or springform pan. Grease the pan and line the bottom with a parchment paper round. Bake until a cake tester inserted into the center comes out clean with just a few moist crumbs attached, 50 to 55 minutes.”*