

THE FABLED ALCHEMIST

Hot Chocolate *Bar Plan*

One slow cooker, a short row of toppings, and guests who serve themselves. Everything you need for 8, 12 or 20 people.

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SCAN FOR THE FULL GUIDE

Your *numbers*

Fill these in first. For other guest counts, multiply the page 4 recipe by your batches.

Party date _____

Guests _____

Mugs needed
guests × 1 1/2, or × 2 for a long party _____

Batches
mugs ÷ 10, rounded up; recipe on page 4 _____

How much to *make*

GUESTS	8 OZ MUGS	BATCHES	6-QUART COOKERS
8	12 to 16	2	1
12	18 to 24	2 to 3	1 to 2
20	30 to 40	3 to 4	2

Use the lighter number, **1 1/2 mugs each**, for a short get-together and **2 each** for a long evening. Two batches, about 18 cups, fit one 6-quart cooker. Leftover cocoa keeps in the fridge, so rounding up costs less than running out.

The *toppings*

Three to five toppings, not twenty. Marshmallows come in 10 oz bags; fewer open bags means fewer jars to buy.

GUESTS	MARSHMALLOWS	WHIPPED CREAM	CHOCOLATE CHIPS	PEPPERMINT
8	1 bag (10 oz)	1 can	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
12	1 bag (10 oz)	1 can, plus a spare	3/4 cup	3/4 cup
20	2 bags	2 cans	1 cup	1 cup

Sauces

One jar each of **caramel** and **chocolate sauce** covers about 20 guests. Use squeeze bottles and wipe the tips.

Kids coming?

They go through marshmallows fast. Put out extra, and set the smaller mugs and the sprinkles at their end of the table.

Stir-ins that cost almost *nothing*

- [ ] Cinnamon sticks
- [ ] A pinch of sea salt
- [ ] Peppermint sticks
- [ ] A dash of cinnamon from the shaker

The base *cocoa*

10 servings in a slow cooker. Prep 5 minutes, cook about 2 hours.



Ingredients

- [ ] **6 cups** milk
- [ ] **2 cups** semisweet chocolate chips
- [ ] **1 can (14 oz)** sweetened condensed milk
- [ ] **1 1/2 cups** heavy whipping cream
- [ ] **1 tsp** vanilla extract

Method

1. Put everything in the slow cooker and stir to combine.
2. Cover and cook on low, stirring now and then, until the chocolate melts and it's smooth, about 2 hours.
3. Whisk before serving. Hold on warm at **140°F or hotter**, checked with a thermometer.

For every *guest*

A dairy-free pot and an adults-only add-in, both kept apart from the main pot.

The dairy-free *twin*

Whisk together **2 cups** coconut milk powder, **2 cups** confectioners' sugar, **1 cup** unsweetened cocoa powder and **1/2 tsp** fine salt. Keeps airtight up to 3 months. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

Heat water in a kettle or a second slow cooker, with the mix in a jar and a whisk beside it. Per mug, whisk 1/2 cup of mix into 1 cup of hot water. Give it its own pot and ladle, away from the whipped cream, and read every label before calling it dairy-free.

For the *adults*

One bottle of **Baileys Original Irish Cream**. The pots stay alcohol-free; pour **1.5 oz** into the mug from its own labeled tray, away from the kids' end.

Notes

Shopping *list*

2 batches for 8 or 12 guests, 3 to 4 for 20. Two mugs each at 12? Add a third.

GOT IT	ITEM	8 GUESTS	12 GUESTS	20 GUESTS
Cocoa base				
☐	Milk	12 cups	12 cups	18 to 24 cups
☐	Semisweet chocolate chips	4 cups	4 cups	6 to 8 cups
☐	Sweetened condensed milk, 14 oz cans	2	2	3 to 4
☐	Heavy whipping cream	3 cups	3 cups	4 1/2 to 6 cups
☐	Vanilla extract	2 tsp	2 tsp	3 to 4 tsp
Toppings				
☐	Mini marshmallows, 10 oz bags	1	1	2
☐	Whipped cream, cans	1	1 + a spare	2
☐	Chocolate chips for topping	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup
☐	Crushed peppermint or candy canes	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup
☐	Caramel sauce, jars	1	1	1
☐	Chocolate sauce, jars	1	1	1
Dairy-free pot, if you're making one: one batch of mix, 8 to 10 mugs				
☐	Coconut milk powder	2 cups	2 cups	2 cups
☐	Confectioners' sugar	2 cups	2 cups	2 cups
☐	Unsweetened cocoa powder	1 cup	1 cup	1 cup
☐	Fine salt	1/2 tsp	1/2 tsp	1/2 tsp

Gear and *savings*

Use what you own. Mixed sizes look better than a matching set.

- [ ] A 6-quart slow cooker, a ladle and a spoon rest
- [ ] A kettle or second cooker for the dairy-free pot
- [ ] Mugs or cups for every guest, plus a few spares
- [ ] A small bowl and spoon for each topping
- [ ] Napkins, stir sticks and a tray under the cooker
- [ ] A bowl for used spoons, and a food thermometer

Spend less, not less *fun*

1. Three to five toppings, not ten. Fewer open bags go stale.
2. A homemade dry mix instead of store packets.
3. Mason jars, mixing bowls and mugs you already own.
4. Make the dry mix, the pot and the crushed candy canes (a rolling pin over a zip bag). Buy the whipped cream, marshmallows and cookies.

Notes

Set up the *line*

Build the table in the order guests move, so nobody doubles back with a full mug.



1. **Warm mugs**, rinsed under hot water and dried. Cold ceramic cools cocoa fast.
2. **Cocoa pots** on low, ladle on a spoon rest, label facing out.
3. **Toppings** in small bowls on a tray, marshmallows in a wide jar with a scoop.
4. **Spoons and napkins** at the far end, with a bowl for used spoons.

Cord behind the table, cooker away from small hands. Label any dairy, nuts or alcohol.

Prep *timeline*

Most of the work happens before anyone arrives.

A week ahead	☐ Make the dry mix and store it airtight ☐ Buy toppings; check cups, ladle and thermometer
2 to 3 days	☐ Print and cut the labels; crush the candy canes ☐ Check the slow cooker lid and cord
Day before	☐ Make the cocoa, cool it and refrigerate it ☐ Portion toppings into bowls; chill the whipped cream
Morning of	☐ Reheat the cocoa on low until hot all the way through ☐ Wash and dry the mugs
Hour before	☐ Set the table in serving order; warm the mugs; lamps on
During	☐ Stir now and then; refill bowls a little at a time, from behind the table
After	☐ Cool leftover cocoa quickly and refrigerate it

Keep the cocoa at **140°F or hotter** and whipped cream at **40°F or colder**. Perishables left out without hot or cold holding for more than **2 hours**, or **1 hour above 90°F**, get thrown out.

Quick *fixes*

Six problems, six fixes. Keep this page by the pot.

PROBLEM	WHAT TO DO
Skin on top	Stir now and then and keep it on low or warm.
Chocolate settling	Stir from the bottom up each time you check the pot.
Too thin	Whisk in a few more chocolate chips until melted.
Too thick	Whisk in warm milk, a little at a time. Cold milk can make it grainy.
Flat flavor	Add a pinch of salt or a little vanilla.
Running out	Make an extra batch the day before and keep a spare pot ready to top up.

Recipes, photos and more drink stations at **thefabledalchemist.com**

Notes

Table *labels*

Cut on the gray dashes, fold on the solid brass line, and stand each card in front of its bowl. Check every package and write in any allergen.

