

Cleo Coyle's Twinkie Rum Baba (Baba au Rhum)

Text and photos (c) by Alice Alfonsi
who writes [The Coffeehouse Mysteries](#)
as [Cleo Coyle](#) with her husband, Marc Cerasini.

This shockingly delicious dessert was made famous by the Beverly Hills Italian restaurant Domo. My readers may recall my amateur sleuth, coffeehouse manager Clare Cosi, enjoying it in [Once Upon a Grind](#). Of course, rum baba (aka "baba au rhum") has taken many forms over the years. Basically, it's a yeast or sponge cake fortified with an easy-to-make rum syrup. I grew up with an Italian version that included pastry cream in the center. That's why the Twinkie makes a great shortcut to an impressive dessert. It's also a fun conversation piece for holiday trays. But you don't have to use Twinkies. You can always substitute thick slices of pound cake, brioche, or even challah. It's delightful with coffee or tea, so it makes a wonderful after-dinner treat...or midnight snack. And its level of sophistication may surprise you. The rum and vanilla in the syrup lift the Twinkie to happy heights. In fact, after a single Twinkie Rum Baba, I had my very own happy hour. May you too eat with joy! ~ Cleo

Makes 10 Twinkies (there are 10 to a box)

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup water
- 1/2 cup white, granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup good dark rum
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 10 Twinkies (1 box of Twinkies, regular or banana flavored)
- Homemade Whipped Cream or Coconut Cream (recipes follow)

Step 1 - Make the rum syrup: Place water and sugar in a saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat. Continue boiling for 5 full minutes. Remove from heat and allow to cool for 5 full minutes. Stir in 1/3 cup good dark rum and 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract. This will yield a little over 3/4 cup of syrup.



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by Cleo Coyle

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Step 2 - Brush with patience: Cover plates with plastic wrap. Place 10 regular Twinkies (or banana Twinkies) on the plates leaving a bit of room between each. Use a pastry brush to generously brush the top and sides of the golden cakes. Repeat the brushing. Then set your timer for 5 minutes and wait for the syrup to be absorbed by the cake. Repeat this a few more times until most of the syrup is used up. This process may take as long as 20 minutes, but be patient! You want to give the cake time to absorb the liquid without losing its shape or integrity.

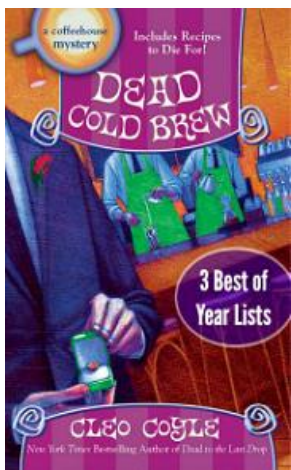


Step 3 - Chill, baby: Place the plates in your refrigerator for 1 hour or your freezer for about 20 minutes. This chilling will allow the cake to regain its solidity and allow you to gently transfer it to serving plates. Serve with whipped cream (recipe below) and, if you like, a few fresh raspberries or blackberries.

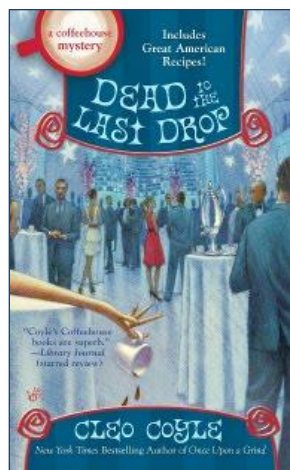
HOMEMADE WHIPPED CREAM: Into a chilled metal, glass, or ceramic bowl, pour 1 cup very cold heavy cream (aka whipping cream). Add 2 tablespoons white, granulated sugar and about 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract. Using an electric mixer with chilled beaters, whip until stiff peaks form. To store one or two days, dollop into a plastic container, cover, and refrigerate.



(Dairy-Free) COCONUT CREAM
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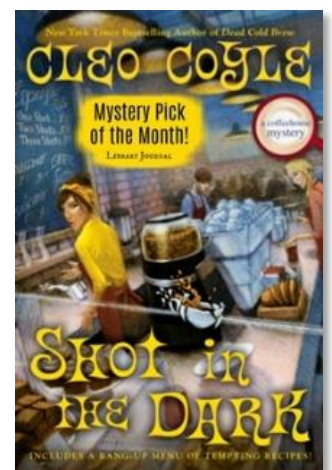


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