

Italian Hot Chocolate (Cioccolata Calda)

Italian Hot Chocolate (Cioccolata Calda)

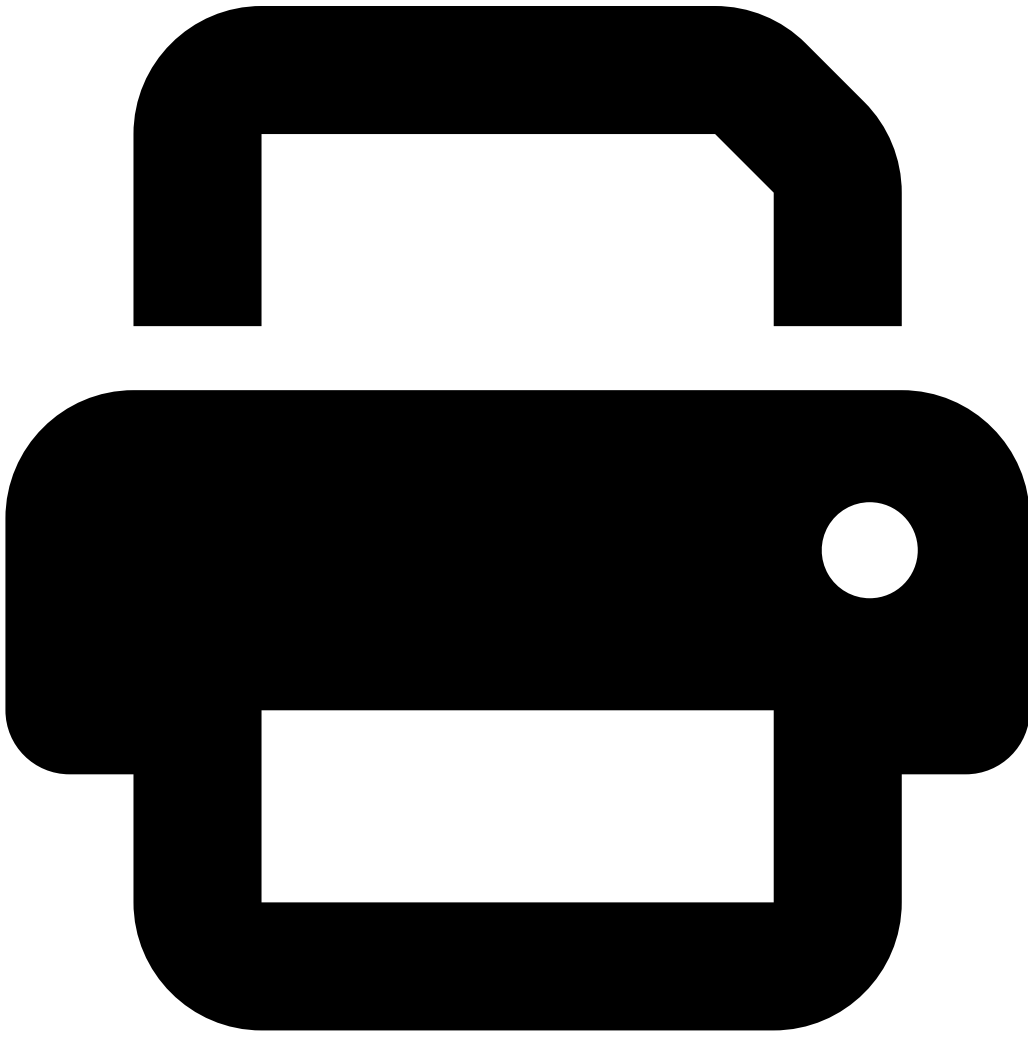
This post may contain affiliate links, that help support this blog. If you make a purchase through these links, I may earn a commission—at no cost to you. For more information read my disclosure policy.











Italian hot chocolate, or *cioccolata calda*, is rich, thick, and intensely chocolatey—nothing like the thin versions most of us grew up with. In Italy, it's meant to be slowly enjoyed, often served with a spoon, and savored on cold days at a café or at home. Made with just a handful of simple ingredients, this traditional recipe delivers a smooth, velvety texture and deep chocolate flavor that feels both comforting and indulgent.

Things to know about Italian Hot Chocolate (Cioccolata Calda)

- Italian hot chocolate is meant to be **thick and spoonable**, not thin like American-style hot chocolate.
- Using **high-quality dark chocolate** makes a noticeable difference in both flavor and texture.

- Always whisk the cornstarch with cold milk first to avoid lumps and ensure a silky finish.
- This recipe thickens quickly, so stir constantly and remove from heat as soon as it reaches the desired consistency.
- If you make this Italian hot chocolate, leave a comment below and let me know how you enjoyed it. For the perfect pairing, serve it with one of my classic Italian cookies—Angel wings, , or **Pizzicati Pinch Cookies**. The rich, thick chocolate is especially delicious alongside crisp or nutty cookies. Be sure to click through to those recipes and explore more traditional Italian cookie favorites here on the blog.

Italian Hot Chocolate (Cioccolata Calda)



- 2 cups whole milk
- 3 ounces high-quality dark chocolate (70% cacao), finely chopped
- 2 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1 tbsp cornstarch
- Pinch of salt

1. In a small bowl, whisk the **cornstarch with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the milk** until completely smooth, creating a slurry. Set aside.
2. In a small saucepan over medium heat, add the remaining milk, cocoa powder, sugar, and salt. Whisk well until fully combined.
3. Warm the mixture until steaming but **do not let it boil**.
4. Add the chopped dark chocolate and stir until melted and smooth.
5. Whisk in the cornstarch slurry and continue cooking, stirring constantly.
6. Cook for **2–4 minutes**, until the hot chocolate thickens to a rich, velvety, spoon-coating consistency.
7. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla or citrus zest, if using.
8. Serve immediately in small cups, just as it's enjoyed in Italian cafés. Optional top with fresh whipped cream.