

World Cakes, Inc...A Sampling of Favorite Cakes from around the world.....

Who says you can't have your cake and eat it too? We're going to sample some of the world's favorite cakes today. You'll notice that though they are not particularly fancy; each is most definitely rich in flavor! I've lightened up recipes where possible, without sacrificing flavor.

Tres Leches Cake

"Pastel de Tres Leches" or "Tres Leches Cake" is named for the three milks in the soaking liquid (Leche means milk in Spanish.) The three milks in the soaking sauce for Tres Leches are sweetened condensed milk, evaporated milk and heavy cream. The heavy cream is also whipped up to use as the topping. Due to the rich ingredients and that it is soaked in a creamy syrup, Tres Leches Cake is extremely dense and moist, almost like a custard. Tres Leches is sweet and delicious, but it is nothing like a traditional dry cake that is light and fluffy.

Ingredients

For the cake:

- Vegetable oil
- 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ ounces cake flour, plus extra for pan
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp kosher salt
- 4 ounces unsalted butter, room temperature
- 8 ounces sugar
- 3 whole eggs, 3 egg whites
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons vanilla extract

For the glaze:

- 1 (12-oz) can evaporated skim milk
- 1 (14-oz) can sweetened condensed low fat milk
- 1 cup half-and-half

For the topping:

- 2 cups light cream
- 6 ounces sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions

For the cake:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Lightly oil and flour a 13 by 9-inch metal pan and set aside.
2. Whisk together the cake flour, baking powder and salt in a medium mixing bowl and set aside.
3. Place the butter into the bowl of a stand mixer. Using the paddle attachment, beat on medium speed until fluffy, approximately 1 minute. Decrease the speed to low and with the mixer still running, gradually add the sugar over 1 minute. Stop to scrape down the sides of the bowl, if necessary. Add the eggs, 1 at a time, and mix to thoroughly combine. Add the vanilla extract and mix to combine. Add the flour mixture to the batter in 3 batches and mix just until combined. Transfer the batter to the prepared pan and spread evenly. This will appear to be a very small amount of batter. Bake on the middle rack of the oven for 20 to 25 minutes or until the cake is lightly golden and reaches an internal temperature of 200 degrees F.
4. Remove the cake pan to a cooling rack and allow to cool for 30 minutes. Poke the top of the cake all over with a skewer or fork. Allow the cake to cool completely and then prepare the glaze.

For the glaze:

1. Whisk together the evaporated milk, sweetened condensed milk and the half-and-half in a 1-quart measuring cup. Once combined, pour the glaze over the cake and refrigerate the cake overnight.

Topping: Place the heavy cream, sugar and vanilla into the bowl of a stand mixer. Using the whisk attachment, whisk together on low until stiff peaks are formed. Change to medium speed and whisk until thick. Spread the topping over the cake and allow to chill in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

GREEK YOGURT CAKE

With Lemon-Ouzo Syrup

INGREDIENTS

- ❑ BUTTER OR OIL & FLOUR FOR CAKE PAN
- ❑ 8 TBSPS (1 STICK) BUTTER, at room temperature
- ❑ ¾ CUP SUGAR
- ❑ 4 LARGE EGGS, separated
- ❑ 1 CUP NON FAT, PLAIN GREEK YOGURT (OR STRAINED STONYFIELD OR OTHER ALL- NATURAL YOGURT)
- ❑ 1 TBSP COARSELY CHOPPED LEMON ZEST
- ❑ 1 ¾ CUP UNBLEACHED ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
- ❑ 2 TSPS BAKING POWDER
- ❑ PINCH OF SALT
- ❑ LEMON -ANIS SYRUP (Recipe follows)

PREPARATION

- ① Pre-heat oven to 350° and grease & flour 10” springform pan
- ② Combine butter & sugar in a large bowl and beat with electric mixer until creamy. Beat in the egg yolks all at once, then the yogurt & zest. IN ANOTHER BOWL, mix the flour, baking powder and salt together, then sift them into a bowl with the yogurt mixture. Beat to mix well.
- ③ In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form. Whisk ½ of the whites into the batter mixture, then GENTLY fold in the remaining whites.
- ④ In Pour batter into cake pan and bake until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean and the edges of the cake are pulling away from the pan (about 45 minutes). Transfer pan to rack to cool.
- ⑤ When cool enough to handle, invert cake pan over large plate and unmold cake. If it doesn't fall out right away, use a plastic knife to gently pry loose.
- ⑥ Spoon about 1/3 of the syrup over the cake and allow it to soak for 5-10 minutes. Repeat twice w/remaining syrup. Set cake aside for at least 1 hour before serving. (It will keep for several days covered & stored at room temp.) OPTIONAL: Garnish with toasted slivered almonds before serving.

LEMON-ANISE SYRUP

INGREDIENTS

- ❑ 1 CUP SUGAR
- ❑ ¼ CUP FRESH LEMON JUICE – (1, 1 ½ lemons)
- ❑ ¾ CUP WATER
- ❑ 1 TBSP FINELY CHOPPED LEMON ZEST (2, 2 ½ lemons)
- ❑ 3 “STARS” OF WHOLE ANIS

PREPARATION

- ❶ Zest lemon(s), then squeeze lemon juice.
- ❷ Place all ingredients in medium sized saucepan over high heat and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer briskly until thick – about 10-12 minutes. Remove anis stars. Cool and use or store (covered, in ‘frig.).

MAHLEPI SYRUP

Mahlepi is a very unique Greek spice ; the kernels of the bitter fruit from this cherry tree are ground to a powder and used primarily to flavor special sweets; it can also be used to flavor beverages, syrups, sauces and stews. This syrup is great poured over melon balls, grilled peaches or poached pears – use your imagination and find your favorite way to enjoy it!

- ❑ 1 CUP SUGAR
 - ❑ 1 CUP HONEY
 - ❑ 1 CUP WATER
 - ❑ 1 TBSP FRESH LEMON JUICE
 - ❑ 2 TSPS FINELY GROUND MAHLEP SEEDS (Mahlepi Powder)
- ❶ Place all ingredients in medium sized saucepan over high heat and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer briskly until thick – 10 to 12 minutes. Cool and use or store, covered, in refrigerator.
 - ❷ Strain into a clean saucepan or bowl and set aside until ready to use; this syrup should be at room temp and pourable when you use it...if it has cooled too much, reheat it a bit.

Clelia's Apple Cake Recipe - La Torta Alle Mele Della Clelia

This recipe is drawn from a cookbook Wife Elisabetta recently gave her mom -- Daughter C liked it, so Graziella dictated the recipe over the phone, and Clelia and Elisabetta made it. Very good, too, so Elisabetta suggested Clelia and I make it one day she was out... Since it is an Italian recipe, we have weights, and the reason will soon be apparent.

INGREDIENTS

4 apples, peeled, cored and sliced fairly finely (we used Pink Ladies)

- 2 yolks
- 3/4 cup sugar (we used half white and half dark brown)
- ½ cup unsalted butter
- ½ cup 1% milk
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- 1 cup flour

- ½ tsp baking powder
- A pinch of salt
- A half cup raisins, plumped in warm water for 20 minutes and then drained
- A dusting powdered cinnamon (optional)
- A 9-inch (22 cm) diameter ring pan, buttered

PREPARATION

1. Preheat your oven to 360 F (180 C).
2. Melt a quarter of the quantity of butter you decide to use, combine it with a quarter of the sugar, and set the mixture aside. Peel, core, and slice the apples, and sprinkle them with about a teaspoon of cinnamon.
3. Cream the remaining butter with the remaining sugar, and when the mixture is light and pale yellow, beat in the yolks. C and I used a wooden spoon to do this, but you may use an electric mixer if you like.
4. Next, sift in the flour and salt, and stir in the milk. Finally, stir in the baking powder and the plumped raisins.
5. Turn the batter into the ring pan and, working quickly, stand the apple slices in the batter, arranging them like the spokes of a wheel.
6. Give the reserved butter-and-sugar mixture a stir and distribute it over all.
7. Bake for about 30-35 minutes.

French Chocolate Cake

from Michelle Chen

"This is typical of a French homemade cake - dense, dark, and delicious. The texture is very different from a sponge cake, and it is excellent dusted with confectioners' sugar and served with whipped cream."

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 10 (1 ounce) squares semi-sweet chocolate
- 3/4 cup unsalted butter, cubed
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
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- 5 eggs, separated
- 1/4 cup sifted all-purpose flour
- 1 TBSP espresso powder
- 1 dash cream of tartar
- salt to taste

PREPARATION

1. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F (165 degrees C). Generously grease a 9 1/2 inch springform cake tin. Dust with a little sugar, and tap out the excess.
2. Set aside 3 tablespoons of the sugar. Place the chocolate, butter, and remaining sugar in a large, heavy-based pan. Cook over moderate heat until the chocolate and butter have melted, and the sugar has dissolved. Remove the pan from heat. Stir in vanilla, and leave the mixture to cool slightly.
3. Beat the egg yolks into the chocolate mixture one at a time, beating well after each addition. Stir in the flour.
4. In a large bowl, scrupulously clean and grease free, beat the egg whites until foamy. Add cream of tartar and salt, and beat to stiff peaks. Sprinkle reserved sugar over egg whites, and beat until stiff and glossy. Beat 1/3 of the egg whites into the chocolate mixture, then carefully fold in the remaining whites. Carefully pour batter into the prepared tin, and tap the tin gently to release air bubbles.
5. Bake for about 45 minutes to 1 hour, until well risen and a skewer inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean. If the cake appears to rise unevenly, rotate after 30 to 35 minutes. If the cake starts to crack or become too brown, place a piece of foil lightly over the top. Transfer the cake to a wire cooling rack, and remove the sides of the springform tin. Cool completely, and then remove the base. Do not attempt to remove the cake before it 's completely cooled as this cake is very fragile.