



Classic Victoria Sponge

Ingredients

- 200g caster sugar
- 200g softened butter
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 200g self-raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 2 tbsp milk
- For the filling
- 100g butter, softened
- 140g icing sugar, sifted
- drop vanilla extract (optional)
- half a 340g jar good-quality strawberry jam (we used Tiptree Little Scarlet)
- icing sugar, to decorate

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 190C/fan 170C/gas 5. Butter two 20cm sandwich tins and line with non-stick baking paper.
2. In a large bowl, beat 200g caster sugar, 200g softened butter, 4 beaten eggs, 200g self-raising flour, 1 tsp baking powder and 2 tbsp milk together until you have a smooth, soft batter.
3. Divide the mixture between the tins, smooth the surface with a spatula or the back of a spoon.
4. Bake for about 20 mins until golden and the cake springs back when pressed.
5. Turn onto a cooling rack and leave to cool completely.
6. To make the filling, beat the 100g softened butter until smooth and creamy, then gradually beat in 140g sifted icing sugar and a drop of vanilla extract (if you're using it).
7. Spread the buttercream over the bottom of one of the sponges. Top it with 170g strawberry jam and sandwich the second sponge on top.
8. Dust with a little icing sugar before serving. Keep in an airtight container and eat within 2 days.



Chocolate Rice Krispie Cakes

Ingredients

- 100g milk chocolate, broken up
- 50g dark chocolate, broken up
- 100g butter
- 4 tbsp golden syrup
- 100g rice pops (or Rice Krispies)

To decorate

- 50g milk chocolate, melted
- sprinkles, mini marshmallows, nuts, Smarties, dried fruit or white chocolate buttons

1. Put the chocolate in a heatproof bowl with the butter and golden syrup and gently melt in 10-second bursts in the microwave, or melt it over a pan of simmering water, making sure the bowl doesn't touch the water. Stir until smooth, then take off the heat and stir in the rice pops, coating them gently with the chocolate until they are all completely covered.
2. Divide the mixture between nine cupcake or 12 fairy cake paper cases – it's easier if you slide these into a muffin tin as it will help them hold their shape. Leave to set. If you want them to set faster, put in the fridge for 1 hr.
3. Drizzle with a little melted chocolate and decorate with sweets, dried fruit or nuts while they are still wet enough to stick them on. Will keep in an airtight container for five days.



Carrot Cake

Ingredients

- 175g light muscovado sugar
- 175ml sunflower oil
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 140g grated carrot (about 3 medium)
- 100g raisins
- grated zest of 1 large orange
- 175g self-raising flour
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp grated nutmeg (freshly grated will give you the best flavour)

For the frosting

- 175g icing sugar
- 1½-2 tbsp orange juice

1. Heat the oven to 180C/fan160C/gas 4. Oil and line the base and sides of an 18cm square cake tin with baking parchment.
2. Tip 175g light muscovado sugar, 175ml sunflower oil and 3 large beaten eggs into a big mixing bowl. Lightly mix with a wooden spoon. Stir in 140g grated carrots, 100g raisins and grated zest of 1 large orange.
3. Sift 175g self-raising flour, 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda, 1 tsp ground cinnamon and ½ tsp grated nutmeg into the bowl. Mix everything together, the mixture will be soft and almost runny.
4. Pour the mixture into the prepared tin and bake for 40-45 mins or until it feels firm and springy when you press it in the centre.
5. Cool in the tin for 5 mins, then turn it out, peel off the paper and cool on a wire rack. (You can freeze the cake at this point if you want to serve it at a later date.)
6. Beat 175g icing sugar and 1½ - 2 tbsp orange juice in a small bowl until smooth – you want the icing about as runny as single cream.
7. Put the cake on a serving plate and boldly drizzle the icing back and forth in diagonal lines over the top, letting it drip down the sides.