

STRAWBERRY CAKE



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Perfect for summer, a reduced strawberry purée infuses this cake with a touch of sweetness and vibrant colour.

Ingredients

For the reduced strawberry purée:

- 1 lb (16 oz) of fresh strawberries

For the cake:

- 3 cups (750 mL) cake flour
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) baking powder
- 1 tsp (5 mL) salt
- 1 cup (250 mL) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups (425 mL) granulated sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) vanilla extract

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- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (175 mL) milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL) reduced strawberry puree
- 1 to 2 drops of food pink food colouring (optional)

For the strawberry frosting:

- 4 cups (520 g) icing sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 mL) reduced strawberry purée
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp (2.5 mL) vanilla extract

Preparation

For the reduced strawberry purée:

1. Make the reduced strawberry purée first and allow it to cool completely.
2. In a food processor, purée rinsed strawberries until you have a little over two cups.
3. Over low-medium heat, simmer the puréed strawberries, occasionally stirring, until you are left with a little over one cup. This can take up to 20 minutes.
4. Set aside and allow to cool completely before using in the cake batter.

For the cake:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. Coat a 9 in. x 13 in. (25 cm x 33 cm) baking pan with cooking spray and set aside.
Alternatively, you can lightly spray the pan and use parchment paper to cover it (with the sides hanging over).
3. In a medium bowl, combine the cake flour, baking powder, and salt; set aside.
4. In a large bowl using a handheld mixer, or using a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment, whisk the butter and the sugar together until light and fluffy. Scrape down the sides of the bowl with a spatula as needed.
5. Add the vanilla and the eggs, one at a time. Mix until well incorporated and smooth.
6. Add half of the dry ingredients to the butter mixture. Mix until just combined.
7. Add the milk, again mixing until just combined.
8. Add the rest of the dry ingredients, followed by $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the reduced strawberry purée. If desired, add one or two drops of pink food colouring to brighten the batter.

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9. Stir, making sure there are no lumps at the bottom of the bowl.
10. Pour the batter evenly into the prepared baking pan. Bake until a toothpick inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean, about 30 minutes.
11. Allow the cake to cool completely in the pan on a wire rack before frosting.

For the frosting:

1. Prepare the strawberry frosting while the cake is baking. In a medium bowl, using a handheld mixer or using a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment, whisk the butter and the icing sugar together, one cup at a time, until smooth and creamy.
2. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the reduced strawberry purée and the vanilla. Beat until smooth and creamy. Makes about three cups of frosting.
3. The cake can remain in the baking pan after baking or, if using parchment paper, remove the cake by lifting the parchment paper flaps.
4. Spread the frosting evenly over the cooled cake.
5. Slice, serve and enjoy!

Notes:

Serving a big crowd? This cake can also be made in a 13 in. x 18 in. (33 cm x 46 cm) sheet cake pan. The bake time should be reduced to 18 to 20 minutes.

Yield: One cake