

CAKES OF QUALITY



Tender layers of sponge cake are sandwiched together with a cherry-banana filling and prettily garnished with cherries, banana "petals," and whipped cream.

Family Weekly Cookbook MELANIE DE PROFT, Food Editor

Cherry-Banana Sponge Cake

- 1 1-lb. can pitted dark sweet cherries, drained (reserve sirup)
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 3 tablespoons apricot preserve
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 1 cup chilled whipping cream
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup confectioners' sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon almond extract
- 4 medium-sized all-yellow bananas
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- 2 9-in. sponge cake layers (see recipe)

1. Add enough water to cherry sirup to yield 1 cup. Stir a small amount of the sirup into cornstarch in a saucepan; blend until smooth. Mix in apricot preserve. Add remaining cherry sirup and salt; bring to boiling and boil 3 min., stirring constantly. Stir in lemon peel and cherries (reserve about 12 for garnish); cool and chill.
2. Just before assembling cake, whip cream until soft peaks are formed; with final few strokes, blend in the confectioners' sugar and extracts. Set in refrigerator.
3. Cut three of the bananas in half crosswise; slice each half lengthwise into 3 or 4 petals; drizzle with orange juice.
4. Slice remaining banana into $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. slices and mix into cherry filling.
5. Place one cake layer on serving plate and spoon on the filling; top with second cake layer. Arrange banana petals around top edge of cake and pile whipped cream in the center. Garnish with a ring of reserved cherries (see photo).

One 9-in. filled layer cake

Burnt-Sugar Cake



- 3 cups sifted cake flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup butter or margarine
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar
- 3 eggs, well beaten
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooled burnt-sugar sirup*
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk

1. Lightly grease (bottoms only) two 9-in. round layer cake pans; line bottoms with waxed paper and grease paper; set aside.
2. Blend together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Set aside.
3. Cream butter and extract. Add sugar gradually, creaming well after each addition.
4. Add eggs in thirds, beating thoroughly after each addition.
5. Combine the burnt-sugar sirup with the milk, stirring until thoroughly blended. Alternately add dry ingredients in fourths and milk mixture in thirds to creamed mixture, beating only until blended after each addition. Turn into pans.
6. Bake at 350°F 30 to 35 min., or until cake tester inserted in center of each layer comes out clean.
7. Remove from oven to cooling racks and cool 10 min. Remove from pans, peel off paper, and cool completely.
8. Fill and frost cake with *Burnt-Sugar Frosting*. Sprinkle top with chopped toasted pecans, if desired.

One 9-in. layer cake

Burnt-Sugar Frosting

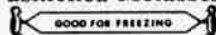
- 6 tablespoons butter or margarine
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons vanilla extract
- 3 cups sifted confectioners' sugar
- Few grains salt
- 2 tablespoons cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooled burnt-sugar sirup*

1. Cream butter and extract until softened.
2. Add sugar with salt gradually, beating well after each addition. Gradually add a mixture of the cream and burnt-sugar sirup, beating until frosting is creamy and of spreading consistency.

Enough to fill and frost a 9-in. two-layer cake

***Burnt-Sugar Sirup** (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups)—Heat 2 cups sugar in a heavy, light-colored skillet over low heat; using back of wooden spoon, gently keep sugar moving toward center of skillet until melted. Heat until a rich brown and foam appears. Remove from heat and very gradually add $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups boiling water, stirring constantly. Return to heat and stir until bubbles are the size of dimes, about 5 min. Cool completely. (Store sirup, covered, in refrigerator.)

Old-Fashioned Molasses Cake



Top this cake with a creamy butter frosting or a sprinkling of confectioners' sugar. Serve with fragrant hot coffee and vanilla ice cream.

- $4\frac{1}{2}$ cups sifted flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons ground ginger
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground cloves
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups light molasses
- 3 eggs, well beaten
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups hot water

1. Grease (bottom only) a 13x9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x2-in. pan.
2. Blend together the first seven ingredients.
3. Cream butter until softened; add sugar gradually, creaming until fluffy. Blend in molasses.
4. Stir in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the flour mixture. Add eggs in thirds, beating well after each addition.
5. Alternately add the remaining flour mixture in fourths and hot water in thirds, beating only until smooth after each addition. Turn into pan.
6. Bake at 350°F 50 min., or until cake tests done. Cool completely.

One 13x9-in. cake

Hot Milk Sponge Cake

- 1 cup sifted cake flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 3 eggs, well beaten
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 or 3 teaspoons lemon juice
- 6 tablespoons hot milk (do not boil)

1. Blend first three ingredients; set aside.
2. Add sugar gradually to the beaten eggs, beating well after each addition. Mix in lemon juice.
3. Sift dry ingredients over egg mixture about one-fourth at a time; gently fold in until just blended after each addition.
4. Add hot milk all at one time and quickly mix just until smooth. Turn batter into two 9-in. round layer cake pans (do not grease).
5. Bake at 375°F about 15 min., or until cake surface springs back when lightly touched. Invert cake pans and rest on edges of two cooling racks; let cake hang in pan until cool. Remove from pans.

Two 9-in. sponge cake layers