

ESB Monthly Bake - AUGUST

Garden Party Strawberry Cake



Inspired by late summer Garden Parties, my Garden Party Strawberry Cake will knock the socks off guests at any BBQ - whether or not the sun shines!

Ingredients and Equipment

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For the cake

8 oz (200g) butter, softened

8 oz (200g) caster sugar

4 eggs

8 oz (200g) self raising flour

1 tsp baking powder

2 tbsps milk

For the filling

300ml double cream

250g strawberries

A jar of strawberry jam

Equipment

2 8inch/20cm sandwich tins

Greaseproof paper and a butter wrapper

A large bowl

A wooden spoon

A small bowl

A Fork

A metal spoon

A table knife

A whisk

A Sieve

A cake plate or serving plate

A sharp knife

A wire rack

How to make the bake

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C or equivalent temperatures and grease and line two 20cm/8 inch sandwich tins.
2. In a large bowl, beat the butter and sugar with a wooden spoon until they are light and fluffy. For this recipe it's very important that the butter is soft so that it mixes easily together and makes the finished sponge full of bounce and air! When the butter and sugar are ready, crack the eggs into a small bowl. Whisk together with a fork before adding to the mix a little bit at a time. Don't add too much egg too fast as it will make the mixture curdle.
3. Finally sieve in the flour and baking powder and fold in with a metal spoon. Using a metal spoon ensures you don't lose any of the air you have just put in. If the mixture is a little stiff, add in a couple of tablespoons of milk to loosen it, to make the mix a dropping consistency - which means it will fall off the spoon easily.
4. Spoon the sponge mix into the tins as equally as you can and smooth the top with a slight dip in the centre to be sure of an even rise. Then bake the cakes in the centre of the oven for 30 - 40 minutes till they spring back, are golden brown and a knife gently poked in the centre comes out clean. When the cakes are baked and beautifully risen, leave to cool in the tins for 5 minutes before turning out onto a wire rack to cool completely.
5. While the cakes are cooling, prepare the filling. Whip the cream in a small bowl with a whisk for a couple of minutes until the cream stands in soft peaks. Also, prepare the strawberries by hulling and slicing in half.
6. To assemble the cake, turn one sponge upside down and spread with a good layer of strawberry jam with a table knife. Try and get it right to the edges so that each serving has a good amount. Then place the strawberries in a circular pattern around the cake on top of the jam in one layer. Finally, top with soft peaks of cream before sandwiching together with the other sponge carefully on top. Add the finishing touch of sprinkling the cake with caster sugar before sharing with your guests. A perfect summer treat despite the unpredictable weather!