



JAPANESE CHRISTMAS CAKE



Harney Desteanations: Tokyo

Ingredients:

For the cake:

- 1 tbsp soft butter or cooking spray
- ½ C rice bran oil, or sunflower oil
- 6 large eggs, separated, whites reserved for the meringue
- ¾ C milk
- 2 ½ C all-purpose flour, sifted
- 1 ½ C caster sugar (superfine sugar)
- 2 tsp baking powder

For the meringue:

- ½ tsp cream of tartar
- 2 tsp vanilla extract

For the filling:

- 1 ½ lbs. fresh strawberries, hulled and quartered
- 4 C cold heavy cream

Directions Continued:

8. Pour the batter into the lined cake pan, gently level the top with the back of the spoon, then lift the cake pan 6 inches from the countertop and carefully drop as this will release any large air bubbles from the cake to ensure an even rise.
9. Bake in the middle of the oven for 55 minutes, check periodically so cake is not browning too quickly; if it is, lower the heat slightly.
10. Check that the cake is cooked by inserting a fine metal skewer into the center of the pan; it should come out clean and, if not, bake a while longer.
11. Leave the cake in the pan on a cooling rack for 15 minutes, then remove from the pan and leave to cool completely. Once cooled, remove the paper.

Decoration Instructions:

1. Once the cake is completely cold, slice across horizontally into 3 even slices.
2. Whip 2 cups of heavy cream to medium to firm peaks (the cream should stand up nicely when the beaters are lifted out), taking care to not over whip and make the cream too thick and hard.
3. Cut the strawberry quarters in half and fold into the whipped cream.
4. Place the bottom layer of the cake onto a cake stand or plate and spread evenly with half of the strawberry and cream mixture. Place the middle layer on the top and repeat. Finish with the top layer, then place in the refrigerator to chill slightly.
5. Whip the remaining cream to firm peaks and, using a palette knife, cover the cake in an even layer across the top and sides. The cream can either be smoothed out with the knife or left fluffy, as you prefer. Decorate with a circle of strawberries around the top.

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F.
2. Lightly grease or spray a 9 ½-inch round cake tin, then line the bottom and sides with parchment paper; let the paper on the sides stand 2-3 inches above the tin as this cake will rise very high. Set aside.
3. In a stand or electric hand mixer, whisk together the oil with the egg yolks and milk.
4. In a separate large baking bowl, lightly mix together the flour, ¾ cup of the sugar and the baking powder. Tip this mixture into the egg mixture and whisk until all are incorporated.
5. In a clean bowl, beat the egg whites, using a stand or electric hand mixer on medium speed until they turn slightly opaque.
6. Add the cream of tartar and continue to whisk. The eggs will start to go white and thick. With the mixer running, slowly add the remaining sugar and the eggs will now turn glossy and thicken even more after a few minutes. Finally, add the vanilla and continue to mix for a minute more.
7. Stir ⅓ of the meringue mixture into the cake batter. Then, slowly and carefully using a large metal spoon, fold in another ⅓ of the meringue and, when incorporated, add the final third, again folding, not mixing, so you do not lose the air from the egg whites.