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1. BANANA BLUEBERRY SMASH CAKE



Ingredients

Small amount of vegetable shortening and flour for preparing pans

Cake Batter:

- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 1¼ cups whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons baking powder

¼ teaspoon salt (optional)

2½ teaspoons ground cinnamon

1 cup ground old fashioned oats

Tip: it takes about 1½ cups oats to produce 1 cup of ground oats. Use a small food grinder or food processor to grind the oats.

4 large eggs

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted and cooled

¾ cup apple juice concentrate, thawed and room temperature

2 cups mashed ripe bananas (about 5 to 6 medium)

½ cup blueberries, chopped (use fresh or frozen berries, thawed and drained)

Vanilla Butter cream Frosting (Makes about 6 cups):

6 tablespoons all-purpose flour

2 cups milk

1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

2 cups (4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

2 cups granulated sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare three 6-inch round pans for a first birthday layered "smash cake" or one 9 inch round layer cake pan if you prefer; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: Use cake strips around the pans to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is about 2 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Cake Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine all purpose flour, whole wheat flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon; sift or whisk together to mix. Add the ground oats and whisk to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, add the eggs and beat on low speed about 1 minute or until blended, and then increase the mixer speed to medium-high and beat 2 to 3 minutes or until the eggs become thick and lemon colored.

Reduce mixer speed to medium, slowly pour the melted butter into the eggs in a slow steady stream, and then beat for 1 minute longer. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the apple juice, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and apple juice, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, fold in the mashed bananas and blueberries. Tip: Peel and mash bananas just before adding to cake batter to prevent bananas from turning brown.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon or small offset spatula. Bake 40 to 50 minutes for 6-inch pans or 50 to 60 minutes for a 9-inch pan, or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling before frosting.

Vanilla Buttercream Frosting:

In a medium heavy saucepan, add the flour, and using a wire whisk, slowly whisk in the milk, whisking until the sauce is smooth and free of lumps. Place the pan over medium heat and cook, whisking constantly, until the sauce comes to a boil and thickens, 5 to 10 minutes. Boil and whisk for 1 minute. Remove from the heat, and set aside to cool to room temperature, or a tepid temperature. While cooling, whisk frequently to keep the sauce smooth. Add the vanilla to the cooled mixture and stir until thoroughly combined. Tip: If the sauce is too warm when added to

the creamed butter mixture it will melt the butter. If the sauce is too cold it will not blend smoothly.

Meanwhile, prepare the butter and sugar when the sauce is almost cooled to the right temperature; in a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color.

With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking about 3 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Gradually add the cooled sauce, adding 2 to 3 tablespoons at a time, beating about 20 seconds between each addition, and then continue to beat for another 1 to 2 minutes to thoroughly blend and the frosting is somewhat fluffy.

The frosting should be used immediately, or refrigerate until needed.

Assembly:

The cake shown in the photo was layered and filled with a little of the Vanilla Buttercream Frosting, then crumb coated with the same frosting. Then piped in shades of dusty rose pink for the ombre effect.

Place one of the cake layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread a small amount of the Vanilla Buttercream Frosting on top. Repeat with another layer of cake, and then place the last cake layer on top with the bottom side up to create a flat top.

Crumb coat the cake by covering the sides and top of the cake with a thin layer of buttercream. Refrigerate the cake until the crumb coat is dried to the touch, about 20-30 minutes. Tip: the crumb coat is a thin layer. Don't worry if the cake shows through in places, it will be covered again with the final layer of frosting.

When the crumb coat is set, cover the sides and top of the cake with the remaining buttercream.

Tip: for the ombre effect, I divided the remaining buttercream into 4 portions. Using dusty rose food coloring I tinted one portion the darkest shade for the bottom row, the second portion a paler shade for the next row, the third portion a still paler shade for the next row, and left the fourth portion with no added food coloring for the top of the cake. I used a size 1M decorating tip to pipe the rosettes.

2. BOSTON CREAM PIE



For the Cake Batter:

½ cup cake flour

¼ cup all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

¼ teaspoon salt

3 tablespoons milk (preferably whole milk)

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

5 large eggs

¾ cup granulated sugar

Pastry Cream:

3 tablespoons cornstarch

½ cup granulated sugar, divided

1/4 teaspoon salt

5 large egg yolks

2 cups milk (preferably whole milk)

½ vanilla bean, split and scraped. Or, 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

1 tablespoon unsalted butter, room temperature

Chocolate Glaze:

4 ounces semisweet or bittersweet chocolate, chopped into small pieces

½ cup whipping (heavy) cream

2 tablespoons light corn syrup

¼ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 8-inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Tip: Use cake strips around the pans to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Cake Batter:

In a small mixing bowl, combine cake flour, all-purpose flour, baking powder, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small heavy-bottomed pan over low heat combine milk and butter. Heat until the butter melts. Remove from heat and stir in the vanilla. Cover the pan to keep the mixture warm. Set aside.

Separate 3 of the eggs, placing the egg whites in a medium mixing bowl. Tip: a copper bowl is ideal for beating egg whites. Place the 3 egg yolks along with the remaining 2 whole eggs in a large bowl of an electric mixer.

Beat the egg whites to stiff moist peaks (do not overbeat.) Set aside.

Beat the egg yolks and whole eggs with an electric mixer on low speed about 1 minute to blend, add the sugar and beat another minute to blend the eggs and sugar. Increase the mixer speed to medium-high and beat for 5 to 8 minutes or until the mixture is very thick and drops in ribbons when the beater is lifted. Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold the beaten egg whites into the egg yolk mixture.

Place the flour mixture into a wire mesh strainer and sprinkle 2 to 3 tablespoons at a time over the egg mixture. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, fold the flour mixture into the eggs, using about 3 to 4 turns with each addition of flour, and making sure to reach to the bottom of the bowl as you fold. Do not worry about incorporating all the flour until the last addition, as too much handling will deflate the batter. The flour should be added quickly in about 4 to 5 additions.

Before the last addition of flour, quickly pour the warm milk mixture in a stream over the batter. Immediately sprinkle in the remaining flour mixture, and fold into the batter taking about 12 to 15 more turns to completely incorporate the ingredients, and taking no more than 15 to 20 seconds as the batter can deflate quickly.

Using a rubber spatula, immediately push the batter into the prepared pans. If any butter remains in the bottom of the bowl, do not add to the batter as this could prevent the cake from rising. Smooth the top of the batter with a small offset spatula or the back of a large spoon.

Bake: Tap the pans on the counter to remove air bubbles, and place the pans in the oven. Bake 20 to 23 minutes or until the cake is golden brown, springy to the touch, and has come away from the sides of the pan. Remove the pan from the oven and let stand 10 minutes on a wire cooling rack. Run a thin sharp knife around the edge of the pan to release the cake. Remove cake from

the pan and place on a wire cooling rack to finish cooling. Tip: Lightly grease the cooling rack with vegetable oil or a nonstick cooking spray to prevent the cakes from sticking.

Pastry Cream:

In a small mixing bowl, combine cornstarch, ¼ cup sugar, and salt; whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a medium mixing bowl, whisk the egg yolks, then add the cornstarch mixture and whisk until thoroughly blended. Set aside.

In a medium, non-reactive, heavy-bottomed pan over medium heat, combine the milk, remaining ¼ cup sugar, vanilla bean, and scraped vanilla bean seeds. (If using vanilla extract in place of the vanilla bean do not add to the milk; instead the vanilla extract will be added after the cream has been cooked.) Bring the milk mixture to a simmer, remove from the heat.

Temper the eggs:

Very slowly, in a thin stream, pour about ½ cup of the hot milk mixture into the beaten eggs while quickly whisking the two together with a wire whisk. Return the egg mixture back to the rest of the hot milk, pouring back slowly while quickly whisking the two mixtures together. Return to medium-low heat, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula in a figure eights pattern around the edge of the pan and into the center, making sure to scrape the rubber spatula across the bottom of the pan. Continue to cook until the mixture just comes to a boil. Continue to cook while stirring constantly for an additional 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Tip: A heat-resistant rubber spatula is best for stirring because it can scrape the entire bottom of the pot to help prevent the egg from clumping together and coagulating.

Finishing the Pastry Cream:

Remove and discard the vanilla bean if using. Or, if using vanilla extract, add it now. Also add the butter and stir until melted and completely blended. Let Pastry Cream cool to room temperature, stirring frequently while cooling. Or, Pour the Pastry Cream into a medium-sized bowl and place a piece of plastic wrap directly on the surface while the cream is cooling to prevent a skin from forming. The pastry cream will thicken as it cools.

Place a sheet of plastic firm directly on the surface while the pastry cream is cooling to prevent a skin from forming. Cool to room temperature then refrigerate until completely chilled.

Chocolate Glaze:

Place the chopped chocolate in a medium bowl. Set aside.

In a small heavy saucepan over medium low heat, heat the cream until it is hot and just beginning to steam. Remove from heat and pour over the chocolate, stirring until the chocolate is completely melted. Add Lyle's Golden Syrup and vanilla, stirring until completely mixed.

Let the glaze sit about 10 minutes or until it registers 90 degrees on an instant-read thermometer. Stir the glaze occasionally while cooling. The glaze should be like a soft icing, but thin enough that it will run down over the sides of the cake.

Assembly:

While the chocolate glaze is cooling, place one of the layers on a cake plate. Using an spread the Pastry Cream evenly over the layer to the edge of the cake. Place the second cake layer on top.

Pour the Chocolate Glaze onto the middle of the top layer and let the glaze flow over the top and allow the glaze to drip down the sides. Let the glaze set before serving.

Cover cake loosely and refrigerate until ready to serve. Refrigerate Leftovers.

3. BUTTER PECAN CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 2 cups (204g) Fishers Pecan Halves, chopped into small bits
- 3 Tbsp (42g) unsalted butter, diced into 3 pieces
- 3 cups (424g) all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 cup (226g) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 3/4 cup (375g) granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs

1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract

1 cup buttermilk (235 ml)

1/2 cup milk (120ml)

Cream Cheese Frosting:

1 cup (226g) butter, nearly at room temperature (preferably 1/2 cup salted 1/2 cup unsalted)

12 oz cream cheese, nearly at room temperature

1 tsp vanilla extract

5 cups (620g) powdered sugar

1/2 cup (56g) Fishers Pecan Halves, chopped, for topping

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Melt 3 Tbsp butter in a skillet over medium heat. Once melted add pecans and cook until slightly browned and fragrant, tossing frequently, about 4 minutes. Pour and spread onto a sheet of parchment paper or a baking sheet. Set aside and allow to cool.

Butter and line 3 9-inch round cake pans with parchment paper, butter parchment paper and lightly dust pans with flour shaking out excess. Set pans aside.

In a mixing bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt for 20 seconds, set aside. In the bowl of an electric stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment whip together butter and sugar until very pale and fluffy (if your paddle attachment doesn't constantly scrape bowl then stop mixer and scrape down sides and bottom of bowl occasionally throughout entire mixing process).

Mix in eggs one at a time adding in vanilla with last egg (at this point whisk together buttermilk and milk if you didn't already measure them out in the same measuring cup). Add 1/3 of the flour mixture to the butter mixture and mix on low speed just until combined, and then add in 1/2 of the buttermilk mixture and mix just until combined then repeat process once more. Finish by mixing in remaining 1/3 of the flour mixture and mix just until nearly combined then remove bowl from stand mixer and fold in pecans (fold batter until there's not longer streaks in the batter).

Divide batter evenly among prepared baking pans. Bake in preheated oven 23 - 28 minutes until toothpick inserted into center of cake comes out clean. Remove from oven and cool in cake pans 10 minutes, then run a knife around edges of cake to ensure they are loosened and invert onto wire racks to cool completely. Once cool frost with cream cheese frosting and top with pecans. Store in refrigerator in an airtight container. If fully chilled allow to rest at room temperature about 20 - 30 minutes before serving.

For the cream cheese frosting:

In the bowl of an electric stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment whip together butter and cream cheese until smooth. Mix in vanilla and powdered sugar and blend until smooth and fluffy.

4. BLACK FOREST CHERRY TORTE



Chocolate Genoise Batter:

½ cup unsalted butter

¾ cup cake flour

½ cup Dutch-processed cocoa powder

6 large eggs, room temperature

¾ cup granulated sugar

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Poached Cherries:

2 cups (about 1 pound) fresh dark sweet cherries

3 cups water

¾ cup granulated sugar

Sugar Syrup:

1 cup reserved cherry water (from the poached cherries), or 1 cup cherry juice from the jarred cherries

2 tablespoons granulated sugar

2 tablespoons kirshwasser or cherry liquor or cherry brandy

Whipped Cream Filling and Frosting

3 cups chilled whipping (heavy) cream

3/4 cups confectioner's (powdered) sugar

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Garnish:

Reserved poached cherries

Reserved whipped cream

Small block of chocolate (milk chocolate, bittersweet, or semisweet) for chocolate curls

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare one 9 inch round layer cake pan; generously grease the pan with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour. Wrap the outside of the pan with a cake strip to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Tip: Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape. If you don't have a heart shaped cake pan, substitute with a 9-inch round layer cake pan.

Chocolate Genoise Batter:

Melt the butter in a small saucepan over low heat. Remove from heat and set aside to cool. Or, place the butter in a microwave-safe bowl, use 50% power and heat just until the butter is melted; do not overheat. Set aside to cool.

Sift the cake flour and cocoa together 4 times onto a paper towel or piece of parchment paper or wax paper. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, use a wire whisk to whisk together the eggs and sugar just until blended. Place the bowl over a pan of barely simmering water, making sure that the water does not touch the bottom of the bowl, and heat the egg mixture 3 to 5 minutes, whisking constantly, until the mixture is a deep golden color and warm to the touch, between 110 and 120 degrees, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature.

Remove the bowl from the simmering water and dry the bottom. Using an electric mixer with the whisk attachment, beat the egg mixture on medium-high speed until cool and the mixture has tripled in volume and is thick and light in color, about 5 to 6 minutes. Reduce the mixer speed to medium and add the vanilla. Beat 1 minute longer. Remove the bowl from the mixer.

Place the cocoa and flour into a wire mesh strainer and sprinkle 2 to 3 tablespoons at a time over the egg mixture. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, fold the cocoa/flour into the eggs, using about 3 to 4 turns with each addition of cocoa/flour, and making sure to reach to the bottom of the bowl as you fold. Do not worry about incorporating all the flour until the last addition, as too much handling will deflate the batter. The flour should be added quickly in about 5 to 6 additions.

Before the last addition of cocoa/flour, quickly pour the warm butter in a stream over the batter. Immediately sprinkle in the remaining cocoa/flour mixture, and fold into the batter taking about 12 to 15 more turns to completely incorporate the ingredients, and taking no more than 15 to 20 seconds as the batter can deflate quickly.

Using a rubber spatula, immediately push the batter into the prepared pan. If any butter remains in the bottom of the bowl, do not add to the batter as this could prevent the cake from rising. Smooth the top of the batter with a small offset spatula or the back of a large spoon.

Bake: Tap the pan on the counter to remove air bubbles, and place the pan in the oven. Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until the cake is springy to the touch and has completely come away from the sides of the pan. Remove the pan from the oven and let stand 10 minutes on a wire cooling rack. Run a thin sharp knife around the edge of the pan to release the cake. Remove cake from the pan

and place on a wire cooling rack to finish cooling. Tip: Lightly grease the cooling rack with vegetable oil or a nonstick cooking spray to prevent the cake from sticking.

Poached Cherries:

Wash, remove the stems, and pit the cherries. Set aside.

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, bring the water and sugar to a boil. Add the cherries; reduce heat to medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally, until cherries are soft, about 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and let the cherries cool to room temperature. Drain, reserving 1 cup of the cherry water to use for the sugar syrup. Slice each cherry in half. Refrigerate cherries until ready to use.

Sugar Syrup:

In a small saucepan over medium heat, add the reserved cherry water from the poached cherries or the cherry juice if using jarred cherries, and sugar. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and cool to room temperature. When cooled, add the cherry liquor. Set aside and ready to use. Tip: if made in advance, rewarm before using.

Whipped Cream Filling and Frosting:

In a large mixing bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the whipping cream until soft mounds form; gradually add the powdered sugar and vanilla, continue beating until thick and stiff. Tip: the cream will whip easier if the mixing bowl and beaters are first chilled; place in the refrigerator to chill until ready to whip the cream.

Place about ½ cup of the whipped cream in a pastry bag fitted with a large fluted tip. Set aside in the refrigerator until ready to use.

Assembly:

Set aside 12 cherry halves to use for the garnish. Place cherries, cut side down, on a paper towel to drain.

Use a long kitchen knife to split each cake into 3 horizontal layers. Place the first layer cut side up on a cake plate. Using a pastry brush, brush about ½ of the sugar syrup over the cake layer. Using an offset spatula spread about ½ inch layer of the whipped cream over the top. Sprinkle ½ of the sliced cherries over the whipped cream.

Place the middle layer over the first and brush with ½ of the sugar syrup, spread ½ inch layer of whipped cream over the top and sprinkle with the remaining sliced cherries.

Moisten the cut side of the third layer with the remainder sugar syrup and place the cut side down on top of the cake. Frost the sides and top with the remaining whipped cream.

Garnish:

Coat the sides of the cake with chocolate curls. Use the offset spatula to lift the curls and gently touch them to the sides of the cake. Reserve some of the curls for the top of the cake.

Remove the filled pastry bag from the refrigerator. Pipe 12 rosettes around the top of the cake. Place a reserved cherry between each rosette. Sprinkle remainder of chocolate curls around the top perimeter of the cake.

After garnishing cake, refrigerate, uncovered, 2 to 4 hours before serving. Cover and refrigerate leftovers.

Chocolate Curls:

Place a small block of chocolate (milk chocolate, bittersweet, or semisweet) wrapped in a paper towel, in the microwave oven. Microwave for 10 seconds on the defrost cycle. Turn the block over and microwave again for 10 seconds.

Handle the chocolate with a piece of paper towel so that it doesn't touch your hands (the heat from your hand will melt the chocolate.) Scrape a vegetable peeler along the bar; scrape towards you, shaving the chocolate off into curls. If the chocolate seems too cold and hard and is not

forming curls, return the chocolate to the microwave for a few seconds longer. Tip: the curls are fragile and will break easily if you pick them up with your fingers. Instead, use a thin spatula or toothpick to lift the curls and gently place them on the cake.

5. CARAMEL APPLE CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 4 cups all purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1½ cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2½ cups granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs

4 cups sweetened applesauce

Caramel Sauce:

1½ cups granulated sugar

½ cup water

¼ cup light corn syrup

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature

1½ cups whipping (heavy) cream, room temperature

Caramel Buttercream:

1½ cups granulated sugar

⅓ cup all-purpose flour

1½ cups milk (preferably whole milk)

⅓ cup Whipping (heavy) cream

1½ cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

⅓ cup caramel sauce

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Prepare three 8 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, allspice, and cloves; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the applesauce, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and applesauce, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Caramel Sauce:

In a medium size heavy-bottomed pan combine sugar, water, and corn syrup. Heat over medium heat, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, until the sugar is completely dissolved. Stir gently to avoid splashing the mixture onto the sides of the pan. Use a pastry brush to wash down the sides of the pan to remove any stray granules of sugar. Increase the heat to medium high and bring to a boil, without stirring, until the syrup reaches a temperature of 300 degrees F, a hard crack stage, using a candy thermometer to gauge the temperature. While the syrup is cooking, wash away any sugar crystals that form on the sides of the pan by wiping upwards with a damp pastry brush so the sugar crystals don't fall back into the syrup.

Immediately remove pan from the heat. Let stand about 1 minute to let the bubbling subside. Be careful, the caramel is extremely hot and will cause serious burns if you touch it.

Add the butter and whipping cream and stir until combined. Tip: if any caramel mixture is stuck to the bottom of the pan, place the pan on low heat and stir until the caramel liquefies and blends with the butter and cream. Remove from the heat.

Let cool completely. Store tightly covered in the refrigerator until ready to use.

Caramel Buttercream:

In a medium size heavy-bottomed pan add sugar and flour; whisk together to mix. Add the milk and whipping cream and whisk together until thoroughly combined. Cook over medium heat, whisking constantly, until the mixture comes to a boil; boil and whisk for another minute. Remove from pan from the heat.

Transfer the hot sugar mixture to a large bowl of an electric mixer. Using the paddle attachment beat the mixture at high speed, about 5 to 8 minutes, or until the mixture cools. **Tip:** Touch the mixture and make sure it has cooled to room temperature. Also the outside of the bowl should feel cool to the touch.

Reduce the mixer to medium speed and add the butter, about 2 tablespoons at a time and mixing 20 to 30 seconds after each addition. While adding the butter, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly. The Buttercream may look curdled after the butter is added, but it will become smooth as you continue to beat it. Add the vanilla and continue beating until the Buttercream is thick and smooth, about another 3 to 5 minutes. Slowly drizzle in the caramel sauce and continue beating another minute.

Assembly:

Place one of the layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread about 1 cup of the frosting on top. Repeat with the second layer. Place the last cake layer on top. Cover the sides and top of the cake with the remaining frosting.

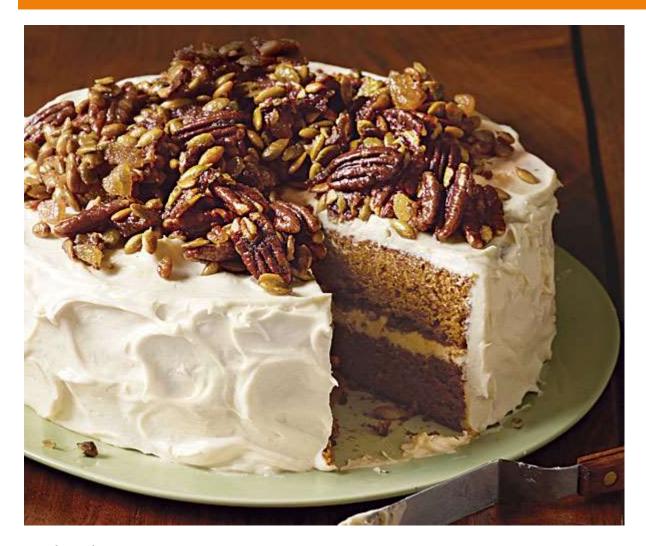
Place 2 to 3 tablespoons of caramel sauce in a small plastic freezer bag. Put a little piece of tape on corner to reinforce the tip, and then roll over top of bag to keep neater. (You could also use a plastic squeeze bottle with a tip available in decorating stores or a pastry bag with a small

decorating tip), Twist the top of the bag to create some pressure to make easier to squeeze out. Cut a tiny corner off the tip of the bag.

Drizzle the caramel sauce over the top of the cake. To make the web design, drizzle the caramel in circles, starting in the center of the cake and moving to the outside edge of the cake. Use a wooden toothpick and drag the tip of the toothpick from the center of the cake to the outside edge like a spoke.

Refrigerate the cake 30 minutes before serving to firm the frosting and caramel before serving. Refrigerate leftovers.

6. BROWN BUTTER PUMPKIN CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter

2 cups all-purpose flour

1½ teaspoons baking soda

¾ teaspoon salt

1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon

1 teaspoon ground ginger

¼ teaspoon ground cloves

¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

1½ cups fresh pumpkin puree or canned pumpkin

1½ cups granulated sugar

¾ cup firmly packed light brown sugar

2 large eggs

⅓ cup buttermilk

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Topping:

3 tablespoons unsalted butter

1½ cups pecan halves

1 cup unsalted, raw, hulled pepitas

¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon firmly packed light brown sugar

½ teaspoon salt

3 tablespoons finely minced crystallized ginger

Brown Butter Cream Cheese Frosting:

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter

11 ounces cream cheese, room temperature

2 tablespoons milk

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 9 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

To brown the butter for the cake batter, cut the butter into 1 inch pieces and place in a medium heavy saucepan over low heat to melt. Once melted, increase the heat to medium. Cook the butter until it begins to simmer, and then continue cooking, swirling the pan frequently, until the butter turns a nutty golden brown, about 4 minutes. As soon as the butter turns a golden brown immediately remove the pan from the heat as it will burn quickly at this point. Pour the hot butter into a small bowl, leaving as much of the browned solids in the saucepan as possible. Set the bowl of butter aside to cool, about 15 minutes. Discard the browned solids left in the saucepan.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, and nutmeg; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, combine pumpkin, granulated sugar, brown sugar, eggs, buttermilk, and vanilla; using a wire whisk, whisk together to thoroughly mix. Add the flour mixture, whisk until thoroughly mixed. Add the cooled butter, gently whisk until completely incorporated.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 25 to 28 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Topping:

Place the butter in a large cast iron skillet or other heavy skillet over low heat to melt. Add the pecans and pepitas; increase the heat to medium and cook about 2 to 5 minutes, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon so the mixture toasts evenly and until the pecans are lightly browned and the pepitas brown and begin to pop. Sprinkle the brown sugar

and salt over the top and stir until the sugar melts and the pecans and pepitas are glazed, about 2 minutes. Stir in the ginger. Remove the pan from the heat and set aside to let the mixture cool to room temperature. Tip: if making the topping in advance, place cooled mixture in an airtight container until ready to use.

Frosting:

To brown the butter for the frosting, cut the butter into 1 inch pieces and place in a medium heavy saucepan over low heat to melt. Once melted, increase the heat to medium. Cook the butter until it begins to simmer, and then continue cooking, swirling the pan frequently, until the butter turns a nutty golden brown, about 4 minutes. As soon as the butter turns a golden brown immediately remove the pan from the heat as it will burn quickly at this point. Pour the hot butter into a small bowl, leaving as much of the browned solids in the saucepan as possible. Discard the browned solids left in the saucepan. Set the bowl of butter aside to cool to room temperature, then place the bowl in the refrigerator or freezer and cool just until slightly firm but not hard.

Using a spoon, carefully scrape the cooled butter from the bowl, leaving any browned solids at the bottom; discard the browned solids.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine browned butter, cream cheese, milk vanilla, and brown sugar; use an electric hand mixer or wooden spoon and beat together until mixture is smooth and the brown sugar has dissolved, about 2 minutes. Add powdered sugar; beat until frosting is smooth, creamy, and fluffy, about 2 to 3 minutes.

Assembly:

Using a long kitchen knife, split each cake into 2 horizontal layers.

Place one of the layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread ½ cup of the frosting on the layer and sprinkle ½ cup of the topping evenly over the frosting. Repeat with the second and third layers. Place the last cake layer on top. Cover the sides and top of the cake with the remaining frosting.

Garnish with some of the pecans around the side of the cake if desired and sprinkle the remaining topping around the top edge of the cake.

Cover cake and refrigerate until ready to serve. Refrigerate leftovers.

7. CHOCOLATE BROWNIE CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 4 1-ounce squares unsweetened baking chocolate, chopped into small pieces
- ¾ cup unsalted butter
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Whipped Cream Filling:

- 1 cup whipping (heavy) cream
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar

½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Topping:

8 ounces white chocolate chips, chopped into small pieces

⅓ cup whipping (heavy) cream

2 to 3 ounces semisweet chocolate

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 9-inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper.

Batter:

In a small mixing bowl, combine flour and baking powder; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In top of a double boiler over hot water, Melt chocolate and butter; stir with a wooden spoon or rubber spatula to combine. Remove from heat. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Turn the heat off and place a stainless steel, ceramic, or glass bowl on top of the simmering water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

Transfer chocolate mixture to a large bowl of an electric mixer, or use a hand mixer. Add sugar; beat on medium speed until mixed. Add the eggs and vanilla and beat until thoroughly combined, 1 to 2 minutes. Add the flour mixture; beat until well blended, about 1 more minute.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 20 to 25 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Whipped Cream Filling:

In a medium mixing bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the whipping cream until soft mounds form; gradually add the sugar and vanilla, continue beating until thick and stiff. Tip: the cream will whip easier if the mixing bowl and beaters are first chilled; place in the refrigerator to chill until ready to whip the cream.

Place whipped cream in the refrigerator until you are ready to assemble the cake.

Topping:

In top of a double boiler over hot water, combine white chocolate and cream; stir until chocolate has melted and mixture is smooth. Remove from heat. Set aside to cool to room temperature. As the mixture cools it will thicken and become spreadable. Tip: to cool and thicken faster, place the bowl in a larger bowl filled with ice water. Stir as it cools until it reaches a good spreading consistency. It should be like a thick frosting. If not thick enough it will run off the top of the cake.

Place the semisweet chocolate in another small bowl, place on top of a double boiler over hot water, stir until chocolate has melted and mixture is smooth. Place the melted chocolate in a small paper piping bag, seal the end, and snip off the tip to make a ½ inch diameter hole. Set aside.

Tip: Use a pastry bag with a decorating tip for piping. In place of a pastry bag, you can also use a plastic bag with a ziplock top; after the plastic bag is filled, cut a very small piece off one corner to pipe the chocolate out. To fill the pastry or plastic bag, place the bag, tip side down, in a glass, fold the top down over the edge of the glass. Spoon the chocolate into the bag, filling it no more than $\frac{7}{2}$ full, unfold the top and secure with the ziplock top or with a twist tie. Keep the tip covered with a damp cloth when not using to prevent it from clogging.

Assembly:

Place one cake layer on a serving plate, and spread the whipped cream filling over the top. Place the second cake layer on top of the whipped cream filling.

Spread the cooled white chocolate topping over the top cake layer.

Pipe the semisweet chocolate on top of the white chocolate in circles, starting in the center of the cake and moving to the outside edge of the cake. Working quickly before the chocolate hardens, use a wooden toothpick or skewer and drag the tip of the toothpick from the center of the cake to the outside edge like a spoke. Alternate the direction of each spoke, first from the edge to the center of the cake, then from the center to the edge. Continue around the top of the cake, alternating the direction of each spoke to make a feather design.

Loosely cover to protect the feather design and refrigerate before serving. Refrigerate leftovers.

8. CHOCOLATE BUTTERMILK CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2½ cups granulated sugar
- 4½ teaspoons baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1⅓ cups vegetable or canola oil
- 1½ cups buttermilk
- 3 large eggs
- 1½ cups freshly brewed, extra-strong hot coffee

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Ganache:

12 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped into small pieces

1½ cups whipping (heavy) cream

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 9-inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking soda, salt, and cocoa powder; sift or whisk together to mix. Using an electric mixer on low speed, add oil, buttermilk and eggs; mix well. Add hot coffee in a thin stream, pouring down the side of the bowl. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly. Add vanilla and mix until batter is smooth.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Ganache:

In top of a double boiler, combine chocolate and cream. Place pan over simmering water (the upper pan should not touch the water.) Heat and stir the chocolate and cream together until the chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. Remove from heat; cool to room temperature and ganache becomes thick enough to easily spread. Tip: Place bowl in a larger bowl of ice water to speed cooling and thickening, stirring Ganache as it cools. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and heat to simmering. Place a stainless steel, ceramic, or glass bowl on top of the simmering water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

Using an offset spatula, spread ganache between layers and over top and sides of cake.

9. CHOCOLATE MALT CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1¼ cups sugar
- 3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1½ teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk (preferably whole milk)
- 1 cup malted milk powder

1 cup vegetable oil

3 large eggs

1 cup sour cream

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Chocolate Malt Frosting:

1 cup unsweetened butter, room temperature

½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder

34 cup whipping (heavy) cream

½ cup malted milk powder

5 cups confectioners (powdered) sugar

Garnish:

Malted Milk Balls, optional

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare three 9-inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking soda, baking powder, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small bowl, combine milk and malted milk powder, stirring to dissolve.

Add milk mixture, vegetable oil, and eggs to flour mixture; use an electric mixer or wooden spoon and beat until smooth. Add sour cream and vanilla; beat just until mixture is combined.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 20 to 25 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Chocolate Malt Frosting:

In a large bowl, beat butter and cocoa powder until creamy.

In a small bowl, combine whipping cream and malted milk powder, stirring to dissolve. Add cream mixture to butter mixture, use an electric hand mixer or wooden spoon and beat until combined. Gradually beat in confectioner's sugar until smooth. Use an offset spatula to spread frosting between layers and over top and sides of cake.

Garnish (optional):

Garnish with malted milk balls

10. CHOCOLATE CHIP CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 3/4 cup Dutch-processed cocoa powder
- 1 tablespoon instant espresso coffee (espresso powder)
- ¾ cup hot water
- ¾ cup buttermilk
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt

- 1½ cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 8 ounces (1¼ cups) mini semi-sweet chocolate chips

Coffee and Vanilla Buttercream Frosting:

- 4 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon instant espresso coffee (espresso powder)
- 11/3 cups milk (preferably whole milk)
- 11/3 cups unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1⅓ cups granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Spotted Chocolate Collar:

Clear acetate plastic strip or parchment paper

- 2 ounces white chocolate
- 2 ounces milk chocolate
- 6 ounces dark or, bittersweet chocolate

Garnish:

About ¼ cup mini semi-sweet chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 9 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the bottom and sides of the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier

to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a small mixing bowl, combine the cocoa powder, instant espresso coffee, and hot water. Stir until smooth, and then blend in the buttermilk. Add vanilla; stir until thoroughly blended and smooth. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until light and fluffy.

Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the granulated sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 5 minutes to add all of the sugar, then add the brown sugar, taking an additional 3 to 4 minutes, beating until the butter and sugars are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light color with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugars, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed.

Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the cocoa mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and cocoa mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, fold in the mini chocolate chips.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with a small offset spatula or the back of a large spoon. Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Coffee and Vanilla Buttercream Frosting:

In a medium heavy saucepan, add the flour and instant espresso coffee, and using a wire whisk, slowly whisk in the milk, whisking until the sauce is smooth and free of lumps. Place the pan over medium heat and cook, whisking constantly, until the sauce comes to a boil and thickens, 5 to 10 minutes. Boil and whisk for 1 minute. Remove from the heat, and set aside to cool to room temperature, or a tepid temperature. While cooling, whisk frequently to keep the sauce smooth. **Tip:** If the sauce is too warm when added to the creamed butter mixture it will melt the butter. If the sauce is too cold it will not blend smoothly.

Meanwhile, prepare the butter and sugar when the sauce is almost cooled to the right temperature, in a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.

Gradually add the cooled sauce, adding 2 to 3 tablespoons at a time, beating about 20 seconds between each addition. Add the vanilla and continue to beat for another 1 to 2 minutes to thoroughly blend and the frosting is somewhat fluffy. The frosting should be used immediately, or refrigerate until needed.

Place one of the cake layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread frosting about ¼ inch thick over the layer. Place the 2nd cake layer on top. Cover the sides and top of the cake with the remaining frosting. Refrigerate frosted cake to set the frosting while preparing the Chocolate Collar.

Spotted Chocolate Collar:

Cut the acetate the same height as the finished cake, or a little higher if desired, and long enough to wrap around the outside of the cake with about ½ inch extra for overlap. Lay the strip on a

large piece of parchment or waxed paper to make cleanup easy. Tip: parchment paper may be used in place of acetate strips; acetate strips are a little easier to work with as they are flexible and form easily around the cake sides.

Melt white and milk chocolates separately in top of a double boiler over hot water. Or, place the chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl, use 50% power and stir frequently just until the chocolate is melted; do not overheat as chocolate will burn easily. Twist Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Turn the heat off and place a stainless steel, ceramic, or glass bowl on top of the hot water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

Spoon melted white and milk chocolates into separate small plastic freezer bags. Twist the top of the bag to create some pressure to make easier to squeeze out. Cut a tiny corner off the tip of the bag. Pipe dots of the white and milk chocolates randomly over the acetate. Flatten the dots a bit with your finger or small spatula. Let the dots set. Tip: Don't worry if the dots aren't completely flat, the tops will be hidden once wrapped around the cake. The flatter the dots are, the easier to spread the dark chocolate over them.

Melt the dark or bittersweet chocolate. Working quickly before the dark chocolate starts setting up, use a rubber spatula or offset spatula to spread evenly over the entire strip of plastic to cover the dots. Make sure and cover all the edges of the plastic, spreading a bit onto the parchment or wax paper underneath. Tip: don't worry if some of the dark chocolate is thicker in some areas than others, it's more important to fill in all the empty spaces. Be careful not to press too hard or the dots may lift off the surface or move around.

Let the chocolate strip set until the chocolate loses some of its gloss, about 1 minute; it is now ready to wrap around the cake. Carefully lift up the acetate strip from the parchment or waxed paper you placed underneath and quickly wrap the strip around the cake with the chocolate on the inside and overlapping the edge. Use a small piece of tape to secure the edge. Let the chocolate completely set and harden either at room temperature or in the refrigerator in warm weather.

Serving and Garnish:

When ready to serve, un-tape the edge and gently peel away the plastic. Sprinkle mini chocolate chips over the top of the cake.

When cutting the cake the chocolate collar may tend to break apart, especially if the chocolate has been refrigerated. If you use a sharp kitchen knife and use a gentle sawing motion against the chocolate you can get a fairly clean cut edge.

Serve cake either at room temperature or chilled. When serving chilled the cake is dense and fudgy.

11. CHOCOLATE COFFEE CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder

1¼ cups hot water

¾ cup sour cream

1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

2¾ cup all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

1 teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon salt

1¼ cups (2½ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 3 large eggs

Coffee Buttercream:

- 1 tablespoon instant espresso coffee (espresso powder)
- 1 teaspoon boiling water
- 2 tablespoons coffee liqueur, such as Tia Maria
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- ⅓ cup all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups milk (preferably whole milk)
- ⅓ cup Whipping (heavy) cream
- 1½ cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

Chocolate Glaze:

- 8 ounces bittersweet or, dark chocolate, chopped into small pieces
- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon light corn syrup

Decoration:

Chocolate covered espresso beans.

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Prepare three 8 inches round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. **Tip:** to make baked cake easier to remove from pan,

lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Tip: Use cake strips around the pans to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine the cocoa powder and hot water. Stir until smooth. Let cool, then add the sour cream and vanilla; stir until smooth. Set aside.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until light and fluffy. **Tip:** To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the granulated sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 5 minutes to add all of the sugar, then add the brown sugar, taking an additional 3 to 4 minutes, beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugars, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. **Tip:** For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the cocoa mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and cocoa mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Coffee Buttercream:

In a small bowl, stir together the instant espresso coffee and boiling water. Let cool, then add the coffee liqueur and vanilla; stir to combine. Set aside.

In a medium size heavy saucepan; add sugar and flour; whisk together to mix. Add the milk and whipping cream and whisk together until thoroughly combined. Cook over medium heat, whisking constantly, until the mixture comes to a boil; boil and whisk for another minute. Remove from pan from the heat.

Transfer the hot sugar mixture to a large bowl of an electric mixer. Using the paddle attachment, beat the mixture at high speed, about 5 to 8 minutes, or until the mixture is cool. Tip: Touch the mixture and make sure it has cooled to room temperature. Also the outside of the bowl should feel cool to the touch.

Reduce the mixer to medium speed and add the butter, about 2 tablespoons at a time and mixing 20 to 30 seconds after each addition. While adding the butter, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly. The Buttercream may look curdled after the butter is added, but it will become smooth as you continue to beat it. Add the cooled espresso mixture and continue beating until the Buttercream is thick and smooth, about another 3 to 5 minutes.

Assembly:

Place one of the layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread about 1 cup of the Buttercream on top. Repeat with the second layer. Place the last cake layer on top. Cover the sides and top of the cake with the remaining Buttercream. Spread the Buttercream as smooth as possible over the top and sides.

Refrigerate the cake at least 30 minutes to firm the Buttercream before glazing.

Chocolate Glaze:

In top of a double boiler over hot water, combine chocolate, butter, and corn syrup. Heat and stir until melted and combined. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Turn the heat off and place a stainless steel, ceramic, or glass bowl on top of the hot water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

Pour the chocolate mixture into a pitcher, or liquid measuring cup with a pouring spout and let chocolate glaze cool for 10 minutes. Do not let the glaze sit longer than 10 minutes because it will thicken and become difficult to pour over the cake.

Slowly pour the glaze over the cake. Cover the top of the cake entirely, letting some of the glaze drizzle down the sides, allowing the Buttercream to show through the drizzles around the side of the cake. Tip: If the glaze doesn't flow easily it means it has cooled and thickened too much. Either slightly reheat the glaze in a saucepan over low heat, or add an extra one or two tablespoons of corn Syrup.

Decoration:

Place chocolate covered espresso beans on top of cake.

Refrigerate the cake until the glaze is set and the Buttercream is firm, 30 to 60 minutes. Refrigerate leftovers.

12. CHOCOLATE PECAN TORTE



For the Cake Batter:

- 1½ cups ground pecans
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup water, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 8 large eggs, room temperature, separated
- 1½ cups granulated sugar, divided

Whipped Cream Filling and Frosting:

1½ cups confectioners' (powdered) sugar

½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder

3 cups whipping (heavy) cream

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Chocolate Glaze:

4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped into small pieces

½ cup whipping (heavy) cream

¼ cup Lyle's Golden Syrup

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Garnish (optional):

Pecan halves

Small block of chocolate (milk chocolate, bittersweet, or semisweet) for chocolate curls

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Prepare two 9 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine ground pecans, flour, cocoa, baking soda, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small mixing bowl, stir the water and vanilla together. Set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, with an electric mixer beat the egg yolks on medium-high speed for 5 minutes, until they are thick and pale colored.

With the mixer on medium speed, slowly add 1 cup of sugar to the egg yolks, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 3 to 5 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the eggs and sugar are fully incorporated.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the water mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and water mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended. Set aside.

In another large mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until soft peaks form. Gradually add the remaining ½ cup sugar; continue beating until stiff peaks form. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold about ¼ of the beaten egg whites into the batter to lighten the batter, and then fold the remaining egg whites in.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until the cake springs back when lightly touched, or a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling. (While baking the cake rises, and then collapses while cooling.)

Whipped Cream Filling and Frosting:

In a small mixing bowl, stir the confectioners' sugar and cocoa together. Set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the whipping cream until soft mounds form; gradually add the sugar and cocoa, and vanilla, continue beating until thick and stiff. Tip: the cream will whip easier if the mixing bowl and beaters are first chilled; place in the refrigerator to chill until ready to whip the cream.

Use a long kitchen knife to split each cake into 2 horizontal layers. Place one cake layer on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread about ½ inch layer of the whipped cream over the top. Top with the remaining cake layers, coating the top of each with the whipped cream, and then

covering the sides and top of the cake. Spread the cream as smooth as possible over the top and sides.

Refrigerate the cake at least one hour to stabilize the whipped cream before glazing.

Chocolate Glaze:

Place the chopped chocolate in a medium bowl. Set aside.

In a small heavy saucepan over medium low heat, heat the cream until it is hot and just beginning to steam. Remove from heat and pour over the chocolate, stirring until the chocolate is completely melted. Add Lyle's Golden Syrup and vanilla, stirring until completely mixed.

Pour the chocolate mixture into a small pitcher, or liquid measuring cup with a pouring spout and let chocolate glaze cool for 10 minutes. Do not let the glaze sit longer than 10 minutes because it will thicken and become difficult to pour over the cake.

Slowly pour the glaze over the cake. Cover the top of the cake entirely, letting some of the glaze drizzle down the sides, and allowing some of the whipped cream to show through the drizzles around the side of the cake. Tip: If the glaze doesn't flow easily it means it has cooled and thickened too much. Slightly reheat the glaze in a saucepan over low heat.

Refrigerate the cake, uncovered, until the glaze is set and the whipped cream frosting is firm, at least one hour.

Garnish (optional):

Before serving, sprinkle top of cake with pecan halves and chocolate curls. Slice the cake with a long serrated knife, cleaning the knife between each slice. Cover and refrigerate leftovers.

Chocolate Curls (optional):

Place a small block of chocolate (milk chocolate, bittersweet, or semisweet) wrapped in a paper towel, in the microwave oven. Microwave for 10 seconds on the defrost cycle. Turn the block over and microwave again for 10 seconds.

Handle the chocolate with a piece of paper towel so that it doesn't touch your hands (the heat from your hand will melt the chocolate.) Scrape a vegetable peeler along the bar; scrape towards you, shaving the chocolate off into curls. If the chocolate seems too cold and hard and is not forming curls, return the chocolate to the microwave for a few seconds longer. Tip: the curls are fragile and will break easily if you pick them up with your fingers. Instead, use a thin spatula or toothpick to lift the curls and gently place them on the cake.

13. CHOCOLATE PEPPERMINT CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- ¾ cup Dutch-processed cocoa powder
- ¾ cup hot water
- ½ cup cold water
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt

1½ cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

1 cup granulated sugar

1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar

4 large eggs

Frosting:

1¾ cups (about 70 whole candies) finely ground peppermint candies, divided

8 ounces white chocolate, melted and cooled

2 cups (4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

1 cup confectioners' (powdered) sugar

1/4 teaspoon salt

¼ cup whipping (heavy) cream

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Garnish:

6 whole peppermint candies

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare three 8 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the bottom and sides of the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust with flour.

Tip: Use cake strips around the pans to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Batter:

In a small mixing bowl, combine the cocoa powder and hot water. Stir until smooth, and then blend in the cold water. Add vanilla; stir until thoroughly blended and smooth. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the granulated sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 5 minutes to add all of the sugar, then add the brown sugar, taking an additional 3 to 4 minutes, beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugars, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the cocoa mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and cocoa mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

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Peppermint candies can be finely ground using a food processor or a small food grinder, or place in a heavy duty plastic bag with a resealable top and crush the candies with a hard implement such as a rolling pin, wooden spoon, hammer, etc. Set aside.

In top of a double boiler over hot water, melt white chocolate. Or, place the chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl, use 50% power and stir frequently just until the chocolate is melted; do not overheat as chocolate will burn easily. Set aside to cool. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Turn the heat off and place a stainless steel, ceramic, or glass bowl on top of the hot water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

In a large bowl of an electric stand mixer beat the butter on medium high speed about 1 minute until it is smooth. Add confectioners' sugar and salt, beat at medium speed until thoroughly combined and smooth, about 1 minute. Add whipping cream and vanilla and beat at medium speed until well mixed, then increase the speed to medium high and beat until light and fluffy, 4 to 5 minutes. Stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Transfer one-half of the frosting to a medium size mixing bowl; stir in the melted and cooled white chocolate. Stir ¾ cup of the ground peppermint candies into the other one-half frosting.

Assembly:

Place one of the layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread ½ of the peppermint candy frosting on top. Place the second layer on top and spread the remaining peppermint candy frosting over the top. Place the last cake layer on top.

Reserve about \(\frac{3}{2} \) cup of the white chocolate frosting for the garnish.

Crumb coat the cake by covering the sides and top of the cake with a thin layer of white chocolate frosting. Let the cake sit, or refrigerate, until the crumb coat is dried to the touch. At this point you can cover the cake in plastic wrap and refrigerate to firm the layers, about one hour or overnight. Tip: the crumb coat is a thin layer. Don't worry if the cake shows through in places, it will be covered again with the final layer of frosting.

When the crumb coat is set, cover the sides and top of the cake with the remaining white chocolate frosting.

Gently press the remaining 1 cup of crushed peppermint candies around the sides of the cake. Optional: Leave the top of the cake plain, or sprinkle peppermint candies over the top.

Garnish:

Re-whip reserved frosting, if necessary to make fluffy, and place reserved white chocolate frosting into a pastry bag fitted with a round decorating tip (I used a #12 tip.) Pipe a ring of dots around the base of the cake, and pipe 6 medium sized swirls onto top of cake; lean 1 whole peppermint candy against each swirl. Tip: if frosting to be used for piping seems too soft, beat in some extra confectioners' sugar, about ¼ to ½ cup, or if seems to thick beat in about 1 tablespoon of whipping cream.

14. CHOCOLATE ROSE FONDANT CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 3⅓ cups all-purpose flour
- 2¼ teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 1 cup sliced almonds, unblanched (about 3½ ounces), toasted and finely ground
- 1⅓ cups sour cream
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon Grand Marnier liqueur

1⅓ cups (3⅓ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

3 tablespoons freshly grated orange zest (about 1½ oranges)

1⅓ cup granulated sugar

5 large eggs

34 cup mini semi-sweet chocolate chips

Frosting:

5 large egg whites

1¼ cups granulated sugar

1/16 teaspoon salt

2 cups (4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

2 tablespoons freshly grated orange zest (about 1 orange)

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

2 tablespoons orange liqueur, such as Grand Marnier, Cointreau, or Triple Sec

Fondant:

6¼ cups sifted confectioner's (powdered) sugar

2 cups plus 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder

⅓ cup cold water

1 tablespoon unflavored gelatin

¾ cup light corn syrup

1 tablespoon glycerin

1/4 cup vegetable shortening, plus additional for work surface

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Cake:

Prepare Grand Marnier Cake through step 13. When cooled, the layers may be covered in plastic wrap and refrigerated until ready to use.

Frosting:

Prepare Swiss Meringue Orange Buttercream.

Assemble Cake Layers and Crumb Coat:

Using a long serrated kitchen knife, split each cake into 2 horizontal layers. Tip: Cut one of the cake layers so that the bottom half is thicker than the top half, and use the thicker bottom half as the 1st layer to provide a good base to support the upper layers.

Secure the thicker bottom half of the layers to a cake board or cake plate; place about a tablespoon of Buttercream in the middle of the board or plate, center the cake and press the cake lightly into the Buttercream to adhere. Using an offset spatula spread about 1 cup of the Buttercream on top, about ¼ inch thick. Repeat with the next two layers. Place the last cake layer on top. Tip: Use a cake lifter to easily pick up and move the layers onto the cake board or cake plate.

Crumb coat the cake by covering the sides and top of the cake with a thin layer of Buttercream. Let the cake sit until the crumb coat is dried to the touch. At this point you can cover the cake in plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. Tip: the crumb coat is a thin layer. Don't worry if the cake shows through in places, it will be covered again with another layer of Buttercream.

Cover remaining Buttercream tightly with plastic wrap until ready to continue with cake, or cover tightly and refrigerate if completing the following day.

Finish Frosting:

The finish frosting of the cake should be applied just prior to covering the cake with rolled fondant. If the remaining Buttercream has been refrigerated, let it warm to room temperature and whip to bring it back to a fluffy texture. Cover the sides and top of the cake with the remaining Buttercream. Spread the Buttercream as smooth as possible over the top and sides. The finish frosting layer will provide a sticky surface for the fondant to stick to.

Rolled Fondant:

While the Buttercream is still fresh and soft, cover the cake with chocolate rolled fondant. Decorate with fondant decorations.

Serve cake at room temperature. Cover loosely or place in a cardboard box with a cover, such as a cake box from a bakery. Store in a cool dry place. Cake may also be covered in plastic wrap and refrigerated until ready to serve.

Day one:

Make the fondant. Shape the fondant into a thick disk and rub a thin coating of shortening over the entire surface to keep the fondant from drying out. Wrap the fondant disc tightly in at least two layers of plastic wrap and then place in a resealable plastic bag or airtight container and store at room temperature to cure overnight.

I made 1½ batches of Chocolate Rolled Fondant to cover the cake and make the decorations.

Prepare Grand Marnier Cake through step 13. After the cake is cooled, cover and refrigerate overnight to tighten the crumb and firm up the cake.

Day two:

Prepare the Buttercream. Split and fill the cake layers with Buttercream and apply the Buttercream crumb coat. Let the crumb coat sit until dry and firm to the touch, at least 30 minutes, or place in the refrigerator to speed up the drying. Cover remaining Buttercream tightly with plastic wrap or place in an airtight container until ready to continue with cake.

Remove the cured fondant from the plastic and knead for several minutes to warm the fondant until it is pliable and smooth. You probably won't need any vegetable shortening on the rolling surface for this kneading, however if it starts to stick use a little shortening on the rolling surface and your hands. If the fondant is stiff and difficult to knead, microwave for about 15 seconds to

warm it up. If the fondant seems too dry you can knead a small amount of vegetable shortening in. Cover until ready to use.

Cover the cake with the finish frosting layer of Buttercream just prior to covering the cake with rolled fondant.

Roll the fondant with a smooth rolling pin that is free of nicks between two sheets of plastic wrap on a clean and smooth countertop, marble board, pastry board, or non-stick pastry mat. Roll the fondant in a circle that is large enough to cover the cake and sides along with a little excess that will be trimmed off at the end. Roll the fondant at least ¼ thick and up to ¼ inch thick for covering cakes as it will be easiest to handle.

Remove the top piece of plastic wrap and place the cake to be covered right next to the rolled fondant. Lift the plastic wrap by the two edges farthest from the cake and quickly but carefully flip the fondant over and on top of the cake. Trim excess fondant with a pizza cutter or sharp knife.

Keep leftover fondant tightly covered to prevent drying out.

Cover the fondant covered cake loosely or place in a cardboard box with a cover, such as a cake box from a bakery. Store cake in a cool dry place. The cake may also be covered in plastic wrap and refrigerated until ready to finish decorating.

Day three:

Use leftover fondant to make cutout flowers and leaves, or form into fondant roses. If desired, brush a small amount of luster dust over the flower petals and flower centers.

Use a small artist paintbrush to brush a small dab of melted chocolate on the back of the flowers and leaves to gently attach around the cake, press very gently to the cake to adhere.

15. CHRISTMAS FOREST CAKE



Chocolate Carrot Cake Batter:

- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 4 large eggs
- 2 cups granulated sugar

1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

3 cups grated raw carrots

Vanilla Butter Frosting:

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

1 cup vegetable shortening

2 teaspoons clear vanilla extract

8 cups (2 pounds) sifted confectioner's sugar

3 to 4 tablespoons milk

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare three 9 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Use cake strips around the pan to help ensure the cake rises evenly for a fondant covered cake. Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Chocolate Carrot Cake Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a bowl with a pourable spout, a 2 cup liquid measuring cup works well, combine the melted butter and vegetable oil; stir to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, add eggs; beat on medium-high speed for 2 minutes. With the mixer still on medium-high speed, slowly add the sugar to the eggs, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking 3 to 4 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the eggs and sugar are fully incorporated, and the mixture looks light in color and thickened.

Add the vanilla and mix about another 30 seconds. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Reduce mixer speed to medium, slowly pour the butter and oil mixture into the batter in a slow steady stream, and then beat for 1 minute longer.

Reduce mixer speed to medium-low, and blend in the flour mixture all at once, mixing just until incorporated.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, fold in the carrots.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 30 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cakes on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Vanilla Butter Frosting:

In a large bowl, combine the butter and shortening; beat with an electric mixer on medium speed until creamy. Add vanilla and beat until well mixed. Gradually add the sugar, one cup at a time, beating well after each addition. After all the sugar has been added the mixture will appear dry. Add 3 tablespoons of milk and beat until frosting is smooth, creamy, and fluffy. Add additional milk if necessary to make a good spreading consistency.

Assemble Cake layers and First Crumb Coat:

Trim and level each cake layer. For the top layer, slice off a small amount of the sharp edge to make a rounded edge for the fondant. Secure the bottom layer of the cake to a cake board or cake plate; place about a tablespoon of frosting in the middle of the board or plate, center the cake and press the cake lightly into the frosting to adhere. Tip: Use a cake lifter to easily pick up and move the layers onto the cake board or cake plate.

Using an offset spatula spread frosting about ¼ inch thick on the bottom layer. Repeat with the second layer. Place the last cake layer on top. Crumb coat the cake by covering the sides and top of the cake with a thin layer of frosting. Let the cake sit until the crumb coat is dried to the touch. At this point you can cover the cake in plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. Tip: the crumb coat

is a thin layer. Don't worry if the cake shows through in places, it will be covered again with another crumb coat layer.

Cover remaining frosting tightly with plastic wrap until ready to continue with cake, or cover tightly and refrigerate if completing the following day.

Second Crumb Coat:

The second crumb coat should be applied just prior to covering the cake with rolled fondant. Rewhip frosting to bring it back to a fluffy texture, adding a small amount of milk if necessary. Apply a second crumb coat by covering the sides and top of the cake with a thin layer of frosting over the first crumb coat. The second crumb coat will provide a sticky surface for the fondant to stick to.

Rolled Fondant:

While the second crumb coat is still fresh and soft, cover the cake with rolled fondant. Decorate with cutout fondant decorations.

Serve cake at room temperature. Cover loosely or place in a cardboard box with a cover, such as a cake box from a bakery. Store in a cool dry place.

Decorating List and Timeline:

I used the following decorating items and timeline to assemble and decorate the Christmas Forest Cake:

Decorating: Cake board Cake plate Cake lifter 6 pounds rolled fondant Various 3½ or 4½ inch tree shaped cookie cutters 1½ inch tree shaped cookie cutter 1¼ inch star shaped cookie cutter ½ inch star shaped cookie cutter Pale green food coloring, such as leaf green Light green sugar sprinkles or sanding sugar Dark green sugar sprinkles or sanding sugar Green edible glitter White edible glitter Gold edible glitter Gold luster dust Clear alcohol such as vodka or gin or irschwasser Dragees in assorted colors

Small artist paintbrush (for applying alcohol)

Day one:

Make the fondant. Shape the fondant into a thick disk and rub a thin coating of shortening over the entire surface to keep the fondant from drying out. Wrap the fondant disc tightly in at least two layers of plastic wrap and then place in a resealable plastic bag or airtight container and store at room temperature to cure overnight.

I made two batches of fondant for this cake, about 6 pounds total. Make one batch to use for covering the cake, and make a second batch for the cutout decorations. I used about 4 pounds total, a little less than 2 pounds to cover the cake and about 2 pounds for the cutout decorations.

Leftover fondant can be wrapped tightly and stored for a future project. I recommend making two full batches even though you probably won't use it all. You would rather have too much than too little.

Bake the cake. After the cake is cooled, cover and refrigerate overnight to tighten the crumb and firm up the cake.

Day two:

Prepare the frosting. Assemble and fill the cake layers with frosting and apply the first frosting crumb coat. Let the crumb coat dry and then cover the cake tightly with plastic wrap or foil and refrigerate overnight. Cover remaining frosting tightly with plastic wrap or place in an airtight container and refrigerate until ready to continue with cake.

Remove the cured fondant from the plastic and knead for several minutes to warm the fondant until it is pliable and smooth. You probably won't need any vegetable shortening on the rolling surface for this kneading, however if it starts to stick use a little shortening on the rolling surface and your hands. If the fondant is stiff and difficult to knead, microwave for about 15 seconds to warm it up. If the fondant seems too dry you can knead a small amount of vegetable shortening in, or if it seems too sticky knead a small amount of powdered sugar or cornstarch in. Cover until ready to use.

Using one batch of fondant for the cutout decorations, tint about ¾ of this batch with pale green food coloring. Roll the green fondant about ¼ inch thick and cut out several tree shapes; 16 to 18 large trees 3½ to 4½ inches high and 10 to 15 small 1½ inch trees. I used a total of four different cookie cutter tree shapes, but you can use just one tree shape; the trees can look any way you desire. Use a small artist paintbrush to brush a very thin layer of clear alcohol such as gin or vodka over the top of each tree. I used clear kirschwasser. Sprinkle the trees with green sugar sprinkles and green edible glitter.

Roll the remaining ½ white fondant about ¼ inch thick and cut out about 6 large trees and 6 small trees. Brush the top of each tree with a thin layer of clear alcohol and sprinkle with white and gold edible glitter. I used a tree shaped cookie cutter with a star top for one of the white trees and decorated this tree with colored dragees and painted the star gold with an alcohol and luster dust mixture. Cut out several, 20 to 25, small ½ inch stars from the remaining white fondant

scraps. In a small dish stir a small amount of clear alcohol and gold luster dust together; use this mixture to paint the top of the stars.

Set all decorations aside to dry at room temperature until ready to use. Tightly wrap fondant scraps with 2 or 3 layers of plastic wrap and store in a resealable plastic bag or airtight container.

Day three:

Apply the second crumb coat.

Using one whole batch of fondant, roll the fondant ¼ inch thick and cover the cake. Tightly wrap fondant scraps with 2 or 3 layers of plastic wrap and store in a resealable plastic bag or airtight container.

Make about 8 star imprints around the outer top edge of the fondant; use a 1½ inch star cookie cutter and gently press the cookie cutter into the fondant just deep enough to leave an imprint. In a small dish stir a small amount of clear alcohol and gold luster dust together; use this mixture to paint around the star outlines.

Place a small dab of frosting on the back of the green trees and gently attach the trees around the cake, press the trees very gently to the cake to adhere.

Cover the cake loosely with plastic wrap and set aside on the countertop or in a cool place (do not refrigerate) until ready to finish the following day.

Day four:

Rewhip remaining frosting to bring it back to a fluffy texture, adding a small amount of milk if necessary. Place about 1 cup of frosting in the center of the cake, spreading a little bit over the surface inside the ring of imprinted stars. Use a small offset spatula to make swirls to resemble drifts of snow.

Stand the white decorated star tree in the middle of the snow drift. Stand the additional large white and small white trees randomly in the snow drift around the star tree. If the trees start to lean, place some additional frosting behind the trees as support.

Place a small dab of frosting on the bottom of each ½ inch star and place randomly around the top of the cake.

Sprinkle a little white edible glitter over the snow drifts.

Stand back and admire your creation. Making this cake seems like a lot of work, but the finished cake is well worth the time and effort; you will thrill your family and guests and be extremely proud of this beautiful holiday dessert.										

16. COCONUT CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1½ teaspoons pure almond extract
- 1½ cups unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 5 large eggs

1 cup shredded or flaked sweetened coconut

Seven Minute Frosting:

3 large egg whites

1½ cup granulated sugar

1 tablespoon light corn syrup

⅓ cup water

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Topping:

1 cup shredded or flaked sweetened coconut

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 9-inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, add flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small mixing bowl, stir the coconut milk, vanilla extract and almond extract together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle

and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the coconut milk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and coconut milk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended. Gently fold the coconut into the batter.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Seven Minute Frosting:

In top of a double boiler, combine egg whites, sugar, corn syrup, and water. Beat on high speed 1 minute with an electric hand mixer. Place pan over simmering water (the upper pan should not touch the water.) Cook, beating constantly with mixer on high speed about seven minutes or until stiff peaks form. Remove from heat; add vanilla. Beat 2 to 3 minutes longer or until frosting is thick. Using an offset spatula, spread frosting between layers and over top and sides of cake. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Place a copper, stainless steel, ceramic, or glass bowl on top of the simmering water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

Topping:

Sprinkle the top of the cake with coconut and lightly press more coconut onto the sides.

17. COCONUT CUSTARD CAKE



For the Coconut Batter:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup sweetened cream of coconut such as Coco Lopez, (not coconut milk) stirred well before using
- 1/4 cup milk (preferably whole milk)

- 1 teaspoon coconut extract
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- ½ cup unsweetened coconut
- 1 cup granulated sugar, divided
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2 large eggs, separated
- 4 large egg whites
- ½ teaspoon cream of tartar

Coconut Custard:

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 cup milk (preferably whole milk)
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup shredded or flaked sweetened coconut
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Swiss Meringue Coconut Buttercream:

- 5 large egg whites
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/16 teaspoon (pinch) salt
- 2 cups (4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

¼ cup sweetened cream of coconut such as Coco Lopez, (not coconut milk) stirred well before using

- 1 teaspoon coconut extract
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Garnish:

About 2 cups shredded or flaked sweetened coconut, lightly toasted if desired

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare three 8 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Tip: Use cake strips around the pans to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Coconut Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small bowl, stir the cream of coconut, milk, coconut extract, and vanilla extract together. Set aside.

In a food processor or small food grinder, process the unsweetened coconut and ¼ cup sugar until the coconut is finely ground. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, remaining ¾ cup sugar, and sugar-coconut mixture until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the ¾ cup sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, then add the sugar-coconut mixture, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugars, and beating until the butter and sugars are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture.

While adding the sugars, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add the 2 egg yolks, beating until thoroughly mixed.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the milk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and milk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended. Remove bowl from mixer and Set aside.

In another large mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the 6 egg whites with an electric mixer until foamy, add the cream of tartar, and continue beating until stiff peaks form. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold about ¼ of the beaten egg whites into the batter to lighten the batter, and then fold in the remaining egg whites.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with a small offset spatula or the back of a large spoon. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Coconut Custard:

In a medium size heavy saucepan over medium heat, combine sugar, flour, milk, and eggs. Cook, whisking constantly with a wire whisk until mixture is bubbly and thick, or reaches 170 degrees, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature, about 15 minutes. Remove pan from heat; stir in coconut and vanilla. Set aside to cool to room temperature. Tip: Coconut custard can be made the day before and refrigerated until ready to use.

Swiss Meringue Coconut Buttercream:

In a small bowl, stir the cream of coconut, coconut extract, and vanilla extract together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric stand mixer combine egg whites, sugar, and salt; place the bowl over a pan of simmering water. Using a wire whisk, whisk constantly by hand until the mixture is hot, about 3 to 5 minutes. Tip: the mixture should reach about 130 degrees, using a candy or instant

read thermometer to gauge the temperature, or feel completely smooth when rubbed between your fingertips. Remove from heat.

Attach the bowl to the electric stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Whisk on medium high speed for 5 to 7 minutes or until the mixture forms a thick fluffy meringue and is cool. Tip: Touch the meringue and make sure it has cooled to room temperature. Also the outside of the bowl should feel cool to the touch.

Stop the mixer, remove the whisk and attach the paddle. With the mixer on medium speed add the butter, about 2 tablespoons at a time and mixing 20 to 30 seconds after each addition. While adding the butter, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly. Slowly drizzle in the cream of coconut mixture and continue beating until the Buttercream is thick and smooth, about another 2 to 3 minutes.

Buttercream should be used immediately, or refrigerate until needed.

Assembly:

Using a long serrated kitchen knife, split each cake into 2 horizontal layers.

Tip: Cut one of the cake layers so that the bottom half is thicker than the top half, and use the thicker bottom half as the 1st layer to provide a good base to support the upper layers.

Place the thicker bottom half of the layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread about ¾ cup Coconut Buttercream over the layer. Place another cake layer on top and spread about ¾ cup Coconut Custard over the layer. Place another cake layer on top and spread about ¾ cup Coconut Buttercream over the layer then place another cake layer and spread with remaining Coconut Custard. Place the fifth cake layer on top and spread with about ¾ cup Coconut Buttercream. Place the last cake layer on top. Cover the sides and top of the cake with the remaining frosting. Spread the frosting as smooth as possible over the top and sides.

Garnish:

To toast coconut: spread coconut on a rimmed baking sheet and place in the oven. Stir every 2 to 3 minutes for about 10 minutes or until the coconut is lightly browned. Remove from oven. Let cool before using. Tip: Coconut can be toasted the day before and covered until ready to use.

Gently press coconut around the sides and over top of the cake.

Refrigerate the ca Refrigerate leftove	least	30	minutes	before	serving	to	firm	the	frosting	before	serving.

18. DEVIL'S FOOD WHITE-OUT CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

1⅓ cups all-purpose flour

½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder

¾ teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon baking powder

¼ teaspoon salt

½ cup milk (preferably whole milk)

½ cup water

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

½ cup plus 2 tablespoons (1¼ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

½ cup granulated sugar

½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar

3 large eggs

2 ounces bittersweet chocolate, melted and cooled

¾ cup mini semi-sweet chocolate chips

Marshmallow Frosting:

1 cup granulated sugar

¾ teaspoon cream of tartar

1 cup water

4 large egg whites

1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 8 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, baking powder, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small mixing bowl, stir the milk, water, and vanilla together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the granulated sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 5 minutes to add all of the

sugar, then add the brown sugar, taking an additional 3 to 4 minutes, beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugars, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add the melted bittersweet chocolate and mix until blended.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the milk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and milk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold the mini semi-sweet chocolate chips into the batter.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Marshmallow Frosting:

In a small heavy saucepan, stir together the sugar, cream of tartar, and water. Heat, stirring gently to prevent as much splashing as possible onto the sides of the saucepan, until the sugar dissolves and the syrup is bubbling. Turn down the heat to the lowest setting while egg whites are prepared.

In a large mixing bowl, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until stiff peaks form. Set aside.

Raise the heat to medium-high with the sugar mixture and continue to cook the sugar mixture, without stirring, until it reaches a temperature of 242 degrees, a firm ball stage, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature. Remove from the heat. Immediately start

pouring the hot sugar mixture, in a thin steady stream, into the beaten egg whites, while beating egg whites with an electric mixer at high speed. Continue beating until egg whites are cool and thick, about 5 minutes. Tip: To keep syrup from splattering onto the sides of the bowl, do not allow the syrup to fall directly on the beaters, pour between the beaters and sides of the bowl.

Assembly:

Using a long kitchen knife split each cake into 2 horizontal layers.

Place one of the layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread frosting about ½ inch thick over the layer. Repeat with the second layer. Place the last cake layer on top. Cover the sides and top of the cake with the remaining frosting.

Crumble the remaining cake layer and press the crumbs into the sides of the cake. Also sprinkle crumbs over the top of the cake or leave some of the top frosting exposed.

Refrigerate cake about 1 hour before serving.

19. DOBOS TORTE



For the Cake Batter:

1½ cups sifted cake flour

¼ teaspoon salt

9 large eggs, separated

21/4 cups confectioners' (powdered) sugar, divided

1½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Classic French Chocolate Buttercream:

8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, melted and slightly cooled

3 large eggs

3 large egg yolks

1½ cup granulated sugar

¾ cup water

2½ cup (5 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

1½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Garnish:

1 cup hazelnuts, toasted, skins removed, coarsely chopped

24 whole hazelnuts, toasted, skins removed

Caramel Sauce:

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

¼ cup water

½ teaspoon lemon juice

1½ cups granulated sugar

Small amount of semisweet or bittersweet chocolate, melted (about 1 ounce) for chocolate drizzle (optional)

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Cut 8 sheets of parchment paper, each about 12 inches squares. Draw 9-inch circles on each sheet using a 9-inch cardboard cake board or cake pan as a guide. Make sure the circles are drawn dark enough tosee when the paper is turned over. Turn the sheets over and lightly grease the area of the circle and lightly dust with flour. Pick up the sheets and tap off excess flour to leave just a light dusting. Set the sheets aside.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, add the egg yolks and beat 3 to 5 minutes on medium-high speed until the egg yolk foam becomes thick and lemon colored. With the mixer on medium speed, slowly add 1 cup of the confectioners' sugar to the eggs, eitherone tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 2 to 3 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the eggs and sugar are fully incorporated. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl

with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly. The mixture will be thick and a pale yellow color. Add the vanilla and continue mixing for another 1 minute until well blended. Remove the bowl from the mixer.

In another large mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until soft peaks form. Gradually add the remaining 1½ cups confectioners' sugar; continue beating until stiff peaks form.

Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold about ¼ of the beaten egg whites into the egg yolk batter to lighten the batter.

Place the flour mixture into a wire mesh strainer and sprinkle about one-third over the egg mixture. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, fold the flour mixture into the eggs, using about 3 to 4 turns with each addition of flour, and making sure to reach to the bottom of the bowl as you fold. Do not worry about incorporating all the flour until the last addition, as too much handling will deflate the batter. Then fold about one-third of the remaining egg whites into the batter using about 3 to 4 turns with each addition of egg whites. Alternate with adding the flour and egg whites taking about 12 to 15 more turns to completely incorporate the ingredients, and taking no more than 15 to 20 seconds as the batter can deflate quickly

Bake: Spoon the batter onto the prepared parchment sheets, dividing the batter evenly between the 8 circles. Gently spread the batter over the circle with a small offset spatula or the back of a large spoon, covering the circles completely and spreading the mixture evenly. When ready to bake, slip each sheet onto a large baking sheet and bake 6 to 8 minutes or until the layers are golden brown and the cake springs backwhen lightly touched. Bake the layers as promptly as possible, one after the other. The layers must be baked promptly because the batter will lose volume and begin to weep if allowed to stand too long. Remove layers from the baking sheets as soon as they come out of the oven; slide the parchment and cake layer onto a wire cooling rack to cool completely. Cool without removing the parchment paper.

Classic French Chocolate Buttercream:

In top of a double boiler over hot water, melt chocolate. Or, place the chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl, use 50% power and stir frequently just until the chocolate is melted; do not overheat as chocolate will burn easily. Set aside to cool slightly. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Turn the heat off and place a stainless steel, ceramic, or glass bowl on top of the hot water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

In a large bowl of an electric stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment combine eggs and egg yolks. Whisk on medium high speed for 5 to 8 minutes until the eggs become thick and lemon colored and drop in ribbons when the beater is lifted. Tip: continue beating the eggs until the sugar syrup is cooked.

Meanwhile, in a medium size heavy saucepan, preferably non-stick, combine sugar and water. Heat over medium heat, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, until the sugar is completely dissolved. Stir gently to avoid splashing the mixture onto the sides of the pan.

When the syrup looks clear, increase the heat to medium high and bring to a boil, without stirring, until the syrup reaches a temperature of 238 degrees F, a soft-ball stage, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature. While the syrup is cooking, wash away any sugar crystals that form on the sides of the pan by wiping upwards with a damp pastry brush so the sugar crystals don't fall back into the syrup. Immediately remove pan from the heat. Tip: As soon as the syrup reaches 238 degrees F. immediately remove from the heat and pour the syrup into a glass measuring cup to stop the cooking.

Quickly, as soon at the sugar syrup is done cooking, stop the mixer, pour a small amount of syrup into the beaten egg yolks, immediately turn the mixer on to high speed and beat for 5 to 10 seconds still using the whisk attachment. Turn the mixer off again, pour a little larger amount of syrup in the eggs, and immediately turn the mixer on to high speed for 5 to 10 seconds. Continue with the remaining syrup. Tip: You want to work quickly as the sugar starts to harden and thicken pretty quickly. Don't allow any syrup to pour onto the whisk as it will spin the syrup around the sides of the bowl.

Once all the sugar has been added to the eggs, continue beating the mixture at high speed, about 5 minutes longer, or until the mixture is cool. Tip: Touch the mixture and make sure it has cooled to room temperature. Also the outside of the bowl should feel cool to the touch.

Stop the mixer, remove the whisk and attach the paddle. With the mixer on medium speed add the butter, about 2 tablespoons at a time and mixing 20 to 30 seconds after each addition. While adding the butter, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly. The Buttercream may look curdled after the butter is added, but it will become smooth as you continue to beat it. Add the vanilla and chocolate and continue beating until the Buttercream is thick and smooth, about another 3 to 5 minutes. Buttercream should be used immediately, or refrigerate until needed.

Assembly:

Gently peel off the paper from one of the layers and flip the layer upside down on a cake plate. Spread Buttercream about ¼ inch thick over the layer, using about ¾ cup of Buttercream. Gently peel the paper from another layer and place the layer on top, lining up the layers so the edges are even, and spread about ¾ cup of Buttercream over the top.Repeat with the next four layers. Place the 7th cake layer on top. Reserve the 8th layer for the caramel top.

When the 7 layers are completed, use a long sharp kitchen knife to trim off the edge of the layers to make the sides straight.

Reserve about ½ cup of the Buttercream for the rosettes. Frost the sides and top of the cake with the remaining Buttercream.

Garnish:

Place reserved ½ cup Buttercream into a pastry bag fitted with a star decorating tip (I used a #16 tip.) Pipe 12 small rosettes about ½ inch from the edge, around the top of the cake. Place 2 whole hazelnuts in the top of each Buttercream rosette. Gently press the chopped hazelnuts around the sides of the cake.

Place frosted cake in refrigerator to firm up the Buttercream.

Gently peel the parchment paper from the reserved cake layer and flip the layer upside down on a lightly greased flat work surface, such as a wooden or marble pastry board. Set aside while making the caramel sauce.

Caramel Sauce:

In a medium heavy saucepan, preferably non-stick, combine butter, water, lemon juice, and sugar. Heat on low heat until the butter is melted and sugar dissolves, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon. Stir gently to avoid splashing the mixture onto the sides of the pan. Cover the saucepan with a lid and increase the heat to medium for 4 minutes. Tip: Covering the pan will help to wash down the sides of the pan removing any stray sugar crystals.

Remove the lid and increase the heat to medium high and bring to a boil, without stirring, until the syrup reaches a temperature of 320 degrees F, a light caramel stage, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature. While the syrup is cooking, wash away any sugar crystals that form on the sides of the pan by wiping upwards with a damp pastry brush so the sugar crystals don't fall back into the syrup. Immediately remove pan from the heat. Tip: Lower

the heat when the temperature reaches 300 degrees to slow the cooking because at this point it will quickly reach 320 degrees. In addition, remove the pan from the heat just before the syrup reaches 320 degrees to prevent it from going over 320 degrees. F.

Let the hot caramel sit and cool to 300 degrees F, about 5 minutes. The caramel should be thick like molasses.

Carefully scoop out about ½ of the caramel using a large spoon and spoon the caramel onto the reserved cake layer and immediately spread over the layer with a buttered icing spatula or offset spatula. The caramel will soak into the cake; let the caramel cake layer sit a few minutes until caramel is slightly firm. Be careful, the caramel is extremely hot and will burn your skin if you touch it. Tip: keep remaining caramel over low heat to keep it fluid until ready to use.

Spoon the remaining caramel over the cake layer and immediately spread the caramel with a buttered icing spatula or offset spatula, allowing the caramel to flow over the sides to cover the edges of the cake. Use the buttered spatula to push any caramel that flows away from the edges back onto the cake. You can also use the buttered spatula to smooth the edges of the caramel as it sets.

While the caramel is still warm, use a buttered large, sharp kitchen knife to score the caramel into 12 equal size triangle wedges, then cut the caramel cake layer all the way though to separate the wedges. Let sit to cool and harden.

Spoon melted chocolate into a pastry bag with a small round decorating tip or a small plastic bag with a ziplock top. If using a plastic bag, cut off a very small corner of the bag.

Push the wedges back together to form a circle. Drizzle the chocolate over the top of the caramel wedges in a spiral, starting in the center and moving to the outside edge. Let sit or refrigerate wedges until the chocolate is hardened.

Arrange the caramel wedges on top of the cake with the small ends meeting in the middle, tipping the edge of each one so it lays against the Buttercream rosette and whole hazelnuts. The caramel wedges will look similar to a fan-blade.

Refrigerate cake until ready to serve. Refrigerate leftovers.

20. FRESH STRAWBERRY CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 3 cups sifted cake flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup buttermilk
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1¾ cups granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 2 cups pureed fresh strawberries

Strawberry Cream Frosting:

3 ounces cream cheese, room temperature

¼ cup unsalted butter, room temperature

1teaspoon pure vanilla extract

½ cup pureed fresh strawberries

4½ to 5 cups confectioners' (powdered) sugar

Garnish:

Fresh strawberries, optional

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare three 9 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small mixing bowl, stir the buttermilk and vanilla together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy

texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the buttermilk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and buttermilk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold the strawberries into the batter.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Strawberry Cream Frosting:

In a medium bowl, combine cream cheese, butter, and vanilla; use an electric hand mixer or wooden spoon and beat together until mixture is smooth. Stir in pureed strawberries. Add 4½ cups powdered sugar; beat until frosting is smooth and creamy. Add additional ½ cup powdered sugar if necessary to make frosting a good spreading consistency. Use an offset spatula to spread frosting between layers and over top and sides of cake.

Garnish:

Optional: Garnish cake with fresh strawberries.

Cover frosted cake and refrigerate until ready to serve. Refrigerate Leftovers.

21. GERMAN CHOCOLATE CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 4 ounces German Sweet Chocolate
- ½ cup water
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs, separated

Coconut-Pecan Topping:

4 large egg yolks

1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk

1½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract

1½ cups granulated sugar

34 cup unsalted butter

2% cups shredded or flaked sweetened coconut

1½ cups pecans, coarsely chopped

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare three 9-inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

Combine chocolate and hot water in the top of a double boiler over hot water; stir and heat just until the chocolate is melted. Remove from heat and set aside to cool slightly. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Place a stainless steel, ceramic, or glass bowl on top of the simmering water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking soda, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small mixing bowl, stir the buttermilk and vanilla together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter

and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add egg yolks one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the buttermilk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and buttermilk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold the melted chocolate into the batter.

In a medium mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the egg whites until the peaks hold their shape. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula gently fold the egg whites into the batter.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Coconut-Pecan Topping:

In a medium heavy-bottomed pan over low heat, combine egg yolks, evaporated milk, and vanilla; whisk together until well blended. Add sugar and butter; cook on medium heat just to a boil, stirring constantly so mixture does not burn. Remove from heat and stir in coconut and pecans. Cool to room temperature.

Spread Coconut-Pecan Topping between cake layers and onto top of cake.

22. GRAND MARNIER CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 3⅓ cups all-purpose flour
- 2¼ teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 1 cup sliced almonds, unblanched (about 31/3 ounces), toasted and finely ground
- 1⅓ cups sour cream
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon Grand Marnier liqueur
- 1⅓ cups (3⅓ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 3 tablespoons freshly grated orange zest (about 1½ oranges)
- 1¾ cup granulated sugar

5 large eggs

¾ cup mini semi-sweet chocolate chips

Grand Marnier Syrup:

¾ cup granulated sugar

¼ cup freshly squeezed orange juice

⅓ cup Grand Marnier liqueur

Swiss Meringue Orange Buttercream:

5 large egg whites

1¼ cups granulated sugar

1/16 teaspoon salt

2 cups (4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

2 tablespoons freshly grated orange zest (about 1 orange)

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

2 tablespoons orange liqueur, such as Grand Marnier, Cointreau, or Triple Sec

Garnish (optional):

Candy Orange Slices

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 9 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust with flour.

Use cake strips around the pans to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Prepare two flat supporting surfaces at least 9 inches in diameter for unmolding the cakes after baking, such as cardboard cake rounds, baking sheets with an open side, or the loose bottoms of tart pans. Cover the surface with plastic wrap or aluminum foil and coat lightly with nonstick cooking spray, vegetable oil, or vegetable shortening.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Add the toasted and finely ground almonds, mix well. Set aside.

In a small mixing bowl, stir the sour cream, vanilla, and Grand Marnier together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, orange zest, and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter and orange zest in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter and orange zest about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the sour cream mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and sour cream mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, fold in the mini chocolate chips.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with a small offset spatula or the back of a large spoon. Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean. The cakes should just begin to come away from the sides of the pans.

Shortly before the cakes are finished baking prepare the Grand Marnier syrup.

Remove the cakes from the oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack. With a fork or thin skewer, poke holes at ½ inch intervals over the top of the cake layers. Using a pastry brush, brush the hot cakes with half of the Grand Marnier syrup. Reserve the remaining half of syrup to use after the cakes are unmolded.

Let the cakes cool in the pans for 20 minutes before unmolding. Run a small metal spatula around the side of the pan to loosen the cakes. Set the prepared supporting surface on top of the cake and invert the cake onto it. Remove the pan and poke the bottom of the cake all over with the fork or skewer. Brush the bottom of the cakes with the remaining Grand Marnier syrup. Let the cakes cool completely. Tip: the cakes are best prepared at least one day before assembling to allow the syrup to evenly moisten the cake and the crumb to become firm enough before splitting and frosting. When cooled, the layers may be covered in plastic wrap and refrigerated overnight.

Grand Marnier Syrup:

Meanwhile, while the cake is baking, prepare the Grand Marnier syrup. In a small saucepan over low heat, combine the sugar and orange juice, heat and stir until sugar is dissolved; do not boil. Remove pan from heat and stir in the Grand Marnier. Set aside until the cakes are finished baking.

Swiss Meringue Orange Buttercream:

In a large bowl of an electric stand mixer combine egg whites, sugar, and salt; place the bowl over a pan of simmering water. Using a wire whisk, whisk constantly by hand until the mixture is hot, about 3 to 5 minutes. Tip: the mixture should reach about 130 degrees using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature, or feel completely smooth when rubbed between your fingertips. Remove from heat.

Attach the bowl to the electric stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Whisk on medium high speed for 5 to 7 minutes or until the mixture forms a thick fluffy meringue and is

cool. Tip: Touch the meringue and make sure it has cooled to room temperature. Also the outside of the bowl should feel cool to the touch.

Stop the mixer, remove the whisk and attach the paddle. With the mixer on medium speed add the butter, about 2 tablespoons at a time and mixing 20 to 30 seconds after each addition. Add the orange zest with the first butter addition. While adding the butter, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly. Add the vanilla and orange liqueur and continue beating until the Buttercream is thick and smooth, about another 2 to 3 minutes.

Buttercream should be used immediately, or refrigerate or freeze until needed.

Assembly:

Using a long serrated kitchen knife, split each cake into 2 horizontal layers. Tip: Cut one of the cake layers so that the bottom half is thicker than the top half, and use the thicker bottom half as the 1st layer to provide a good base to support the upper layers.

Place the thicker bottom half of the layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread about 1 cup of the Buttercream on top, about ¼ inch thick. Repeat with the next two layers. Place the last cake layer on top. Cover the sides and top of the cake with the remaining Buttercream.

Garnish (optional):

Place candy orange slices around the bottom edge of the cake.

23. HUMMINGBIRD CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup pecans, toasted, and finely chopped
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten

¾ cup vegetable oil

1½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract

1 8-ounce can crushed pineapple, un-drained

2 cups mashed ripe bananas

Pecan Cream Cheese Frosting:

8 ounces cream cheese, room temperature

½ cup unsalted butter, room temperature

2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

4 cups confectioners' (powdered) sugar

½ cup toasted pecans, finely chopped

Preheat oven to 3500 degrees F. Prepare three 9-inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, and pecans; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In another large mixing bowl, combine eggs, vegetable oil, vanilla, pineapple, and bananas; whisk together to mix.

Add the egg and fruit mixture to the flour mixture and stir with a wooden spoon or rubber spatula until well mixed.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool

for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Pecan Cream Cheese Frosting:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine cream cheese, butter, and vanilla; use an electric hand mixer or wooden spoon and beat together until mixture is smooth. Add powdered sugar; beat until frosting is smooth and creamy. Stir in pecans. Using an offset spatula, spread frosting between layers and over top and sides of cake.

Cover cake and refrigerate until ready to serve. Refrigerate leftovers.

24. LADY BALTIMORE CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 3 cups sifted cake flour
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup buttermilk, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon pure almond extract
- 1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 5 large egg whites

Fruit and Nut Filling:

¾ cup golden raisins

½ cup dried cranberries

½ cup dried figs, chopped into ¼ inch pieces

2 tablespoons orange flavored liqueur, such as Grand Marnier or Triple Sec

½ cup pecans, broken by hand into ¼ inch pieces

Meringue Frosting:

6 large egg whites

1¾ cups granulated sugar

¼ cup water

2 tablespoons light corn syrup

Garnish:

¼ cup dried cranberries

¼ cup golden raisins

1 teaspoon granulated sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare three 9-inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small mixing bowl, stir the buttermilk, vanilla extract, and almond extract together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the buttermilk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and buttermilk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended. Set aside.

In a medium mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until stiff peaks form. Using a balloon type wire whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold about ¼ of the beaten egg whites into the batter to lighten the batter, and then fold in the remaining egg whites.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 20 to 22 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Fruit and Nut Filling:

In a medium bowl, combine raisins, cranberries, figs, and liqueur. Set aside to let the fruit soak for 20 minutes.

By hand, bread the pecans into ¼ inch pieces. Set aside.

Meringue Frosting:

In a large mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until stiff peaks form. Set aside.

In a small heavy-bottomed pan combine sugar, water, and corn syrup to create syrup. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until sugar has dissolved and syrup is clear. Increase heat to high and bring syrup to a boil. Boil without stirring until syrup reaches 248 degrees, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat.

With the mixer at medium-high speed, pour the hot syrup slowly, in a thin steady stream into the beaten egg whites. Continue beating until the mixture is cool, thick, and shiny, 10 to 12 minutes. Frosting must be used immediately.

Add about 2 cups of the Meringue Frosting to the fruit mixture, stir in the nuts. Using an offset spatula, spread the fruit and nut filling evenly between the cake layers. Spread remaining frosting on sides and top of cake. Refrigerate leftovers.

Garnish:

In a small bowl, combine cranberries and golden raisins. Toss with sugar to coat. Arrange around base of frosted cake.

25. LANE CAKE



For the Filling:

- 12 large egg yolks
- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, melted, then cooled
- 1½ cups toasted pecans, finely chopped
- 1½ cups raisins, finely chopped
- 1½ cups shredded or flaked sweetened coconut
- ½ cup bourbon
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

For the Cake Batter:

3½ cups all-purpose flour

1 tablespoon baking powder

½ teaspoon salt

1 cup milk, room temperature (preferably whole milk)

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

2 cups granulated sugar

8 large egg whites

Seven Minute Frosting:

3 large egg whites

1½ cup granulated sugar

1 tablespoon light corn syrup

½ teaspoon cream of tartar

⅓ cup water

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Filling:

Place egg yolks in a large bowl of an electric mixer; beat on medium high speed about 3 minutes. Gradually add the sugar and beat for 5 to 8 minutes or until the mixture is very thick and drops in ribbons when the beater is lifted. Reduce the mixer to low, gradually stream in the melted butter while continuing to beat until the mixture is blended.

Place the bowl with the beaten egg yolks in top of a double boiler over simmering water. Cook the egg yolk mixture, whisking constantly with a wire whisk until mixture reaches 170 degrees, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature, about 15 minutes. Remove pan from heat.

Stir in pecans, raisins, and coconut. Let mixture cool, then add the bourbon and vanilla; stir until thoroughly combined.

Refrigerate until completely chilled, at least 6 hours or overnight. Tip: Plan on making the filling at least one day in advance to give yourself enough time to prepare the cake.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare three 8 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small mixing bowl, stir the milk and vanilla extract together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the milk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and milk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended. Set aside.

In a large mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until stiff peaks form. Using a balloon type wire whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold about ¼ of the beaten egg whites into the batter to lighten the batter, and then fold in the remaining egg whites.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Assembly:

Using a long serrated kitchen knife, split each cake into 2 horizontal layers. Tip: Cut one of the cake layers so that the bottom half is thicker than the top half, and use the thicker bottom half as the 1st layer to provide a good base to support the upper layers.

Place the thicker bottom half of the layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread about $\frac{2}{3}$ cup filling over the layer. Repeat with the next four layers. Place the last cake layer on top. And spread remaining filling over the top layer.

Refrigerate the cake at least one hour to stabilize the cake and filling before frosting.

Seven Minute Frosting:

In top of a double boiler, combine egg whites, sugar, corn syrup, cream of tartar, and water. Beat on high speed 1 minute with a hand-held electric mixer. Place pan over simmering water (the upper pan should not touch the water.) Cook, beating constantly with mixer on high speed about seven minutes or until stiff peaks form. Remove from heat; add vanilla. Beat 1 minute longer to thoroughly combine. Frosting should be used immediately. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Place a stainless steel, ceramic, or glass bowl on top of the simmering water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

Using an offset spatula spread the frosting thickly onto the sides of the chilled cake. Tip: You don't have to use all the frosting, but this is the type of frosting most people love and will appreciate the thick layer.

Refrigerate the cake 30 minutes before serving to firm the frosting before serving. Refrigerate leftovers.

26. LEMON DAFFODIL CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 10 large egg whites, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1⅓ cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 4 large egg yolks

¼ teaspoon pure almond extract

Lemon Filling and Topping:

- 1 cup whipping (heavy) cream
- 1 tablespoon unflavored gelatin
- ¾ cup cold water, divided
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 4 large egg yolks, beaten
- ⅓ cup unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons grated lemon zest
- ½ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice

Place oven rack in the lowest position. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. The cake will be baked in one ungreased, 10 inch Angel Food cake pan, preferably with a removable bottom.

Batter:

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, beat the egg whites on medium speed until frothy. Add the cream of tartar and salt and increase speed to medium high. When the whites form soft peaks, slowly add the sugar one tablespoon at a time or in a low steady stream. Continue beating 1 to 2 minutes longer or until the egg whites are a stiff glossy meringue.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Place the flour in a sifter and sift the flour over the egg white meringue, ¼ at a time, and gently fold each addition of flour into the egg whites with a large balloon type whisk or rubber spatula. The dry ingredients to not need to be fully incorporated after each addition; do not overmix and do not stir as this will deflate the batter.

Divide the batter in half, placing one half into a separate medium bowl. Fold vanilla extract into one portion; set aside.

In a medium mixing bowl, add the egg yolks and almond extract. Beat 3 to 5 minutes on medium-high speed until the egg yolk foam becomes thick and lemon colored and drops in ribbons when the beater is lifted. Gently fold the egg yolk mixture into the unflavored egg white batter.

Alternately spoon the vanilla flavored batter and the almond flavored batter into an ungreased 10 Angel Food cake pan. Gently cut through the batter with a knife or rubber spatula to swirl.

Bake: Bake 50 to 60 minutes or until the top is golden brown and springs back when lightly touched. Remove from oven and immediately invert pan. Let the cake cool completely in the pan, upside down. Tip: If your angel food cake pan doesn't have legs, invert it over the neck of a long-necked bottle, such as a wine or soda bottle.

To remove cake from a pan with a removable bottom, run a thin bladed kitchen knife around the side of the pan to loosen the cake, and then run the knife around the center tube. Holding the center tube, lift the cake and remove it from the outer rim. Run the knife under the cake to loosen it from the pan bottom. Invert the cake and remove the tube section. Transfer to a cake platter top side up.

Lemon Filling and Topping:

In a medium bowl, using an electric mixer beat the whipping cream until firm peaks form. Do not over-whip until it is grainy, as it will not fold as easily. Set aside in the refrigerator.

In a small bowl, combine unflavored gelatin and ¼ cup cold water. Let stand for one minute to soften gelatin.

In a medium heavy saucepan, combine sugar, cornstarch, and ½ cup cold water; stir until mixture is smooth. Bring to a boil over medium heat; cook and stir 2 minutes longer. Remove from heat.

In a small bowl, whisk the egg yolks with a wire whisk 1 to 2 minutes until a light color.

Temper the eggs: very slowly, in a thin stream, pour about ½ cup of the hot sugar mixture into the beaten eggs while quickly whisking the two together. Tip: The technique used to blend uncooked eggs with a hot liquid is called tempering. Tempering slowly warms the eggs so they are closer to the temperature of the liquid they will be added to, preventing the eggs from scrambling. If you simply poured the eggs into the hot sugar mixture they would immediately start cooking and you would have chunks of cooked egg in the mixture.

Return the egg mixture back to the rest of the hot sugar mixture, return to medium heat and heat until it gently boils, stirring constantly so the mixture does not burn. Cook and stir 2 minutes

longer. Remove from heat. Add butter and lemon zest; stir to mix. Add lemon juice and softened gelatin; stir until gelatin is dissolved.

Cool mixture to room temperature. Fold in whipped cream. Refrigerate about 1 hour or until mixture is a good spreading consistency.

Assembly:

Use a long kitchen knife to split the cake into 3 horizontal layers. Spread $\frac{1}{2}$ of filling between each layer. Spread the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ over top of cake.

Cover cake and refrigerate until ready to serve. Refrigerate leftovers.

27. LEMON LAYER CAKE



Lemon Curd:

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter

¾ cup granulated sugar

3 tablespoons freshly grated lemon zest (about 3 lemons)

½ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice (about 3 lemons)

1/4 teaspoon salt

6 large egg yolks

Batter:

1½ cups cake flour, sifted

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour, sifted
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk, room temperature (preferably whole milk)
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2 tablespoons freshly grated lemon zest (about 2 lemons)
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 5 large egg whites
- ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar

Mascarpone Cheese Frosting:

- 16 ounces mascarpone cheese
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- ¾ cup confectioners' (powdered) sugar
- 1½ cups whipping (heavy) cream

Decoration (optional):

Fresh lemon slices

Lemon Curd (make in advance):

In a medium heavy saucepan over medium-low heat, combine butter, sugar, lemon zest, lemon juice, salt, and egg yolks.Cook and stir with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon until butter is

melted and mixture is thickened, about 7 to 10 minutes. Do not allow mixture to boil or the egg yolks will curdle. Remove pan from heat.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 9 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Tip: Use cake strips around the pans to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine cake flour, all purpose flour, baking powder, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small mixing bowl, stir the milk and lemon juice together. Set aside. Tip: Don't worry if the milk appears to curdle.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, lemon zest, and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter and lemon zest in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter and lemon zest about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the milk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and milk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended. Set aside.

In another large mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until foamy, add the cream of tartar, and continue beating until stiff peaks form. Using a balloon

type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold about ¼ of the beaten egg whites into the batter to lighten the batter, and then fold the remaining egg whites in.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Mascarpone Cheese Frosting:

In a large bowl, combine mascarpone cheese, vanilla, confectioners' sugar, and whipping cream; use an electric mixer and beat together until mixture is smooth and stiff peaks form, about 2 to 4 minutes. Do not overbeat.

Mascarpone frosting should be used immediately, or refrigerate until needed.

Assembly:

Use a long serrated kitchen knife to split each cake layer into 2 horizontal layers.

Place one of the split cake layers on a serving plate; spread ½ of the chilled lemon curd (about ½ cup) over the layer leaving about ½ inch border all around. Repeat with the second and third layers. Place the last cake layer on top.

Use an offset spatula to spread Mascarpone Cheese Frosting over top and sides of cake. If desired, reserve about 1½ cups frosting to decorate top using a pastry bag and pastry tip and use a pastry comb around the side of the cake

Decoration (optional):

Place fresh lemon slices, cut in half, on top of cake.

Cover and refrigerate before serving. Refrigerate leftovers.

Immediately pour the hot mixture through a fine-mesh sieve to strain out the lemon zest pieces and any bits of egg that may have curdled. Pour into an airtight container and refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight. The curd will continue to thicken as it cools.

28. ORANGE MARMALADE CAKE



Batter:

- 3 cups cake flour
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup buttermilk, room temperature
- 1½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1 tablespoon grated orange zest
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 3 large eggs, room temperature

Orange Syrup:

1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice

¼ cup granulated sugar

Filling:

1 cup orange marmalade

Whipped Cream Topping:

2 cups whipping (heavy) cream

3 tablespoons sugar

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Prepare two 9-inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking soda, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small mixing bowl, stir the buttermilk and vanilla together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, orange zest, and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter and orange zest in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter and orange zest about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the buttermilk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and buttermilk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 45 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean. Cool in the pans on a wire cooling rack for 20 minutes. Loosen and remove the cake from the pans (to prevent the cake from sticking to the pans after the orange syrup has been added,) and then place the cake back in the pans.

Orange Syrup:

In a small bowl, stir the orange juice and sugar together until the sugar is dissolved.

With a fork, poke holes at ½ inch intervals over the top of the cake layers. Spoon the orange syrup over each layer, allowing the syrup to soak in the cake.

Let cake finish cooling completely, then remove the cake from the pans.

Filling and Whipped Cream Topping:

In a medium bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the whipping cream until soft mounds form; gradually add the sugar and vanilla, continue beating until thick and stiff.

Place one of the layers on a cake plate, carefully remove the parchment paper, and then spread % cup marmalade over the top. Place the second layer on top of the first layer, carefully remove the parchment paper. Spoon the remaining marmalade in the center, spread to within 2 inches of the edge.

Using an offset spatula spread the Whipped Cream Topping around the sides of the cake, and over the top edge of the cake, leaving the marmalade on top of the cake exposed. Or if you prefer, frost the entire cake, adding the marmalade as a garnish on top.

Cover cake and refrigerate until ready to serve. Refrigerate leftovers.

29. PRINCESS CAKE



Marzipan:

2 cups granulated sugar

¾ cup water

¼ teaspoon cream of tartar

4 cups blanched, finely ground almonds

2 large egg whites, lightly beaten

Green and Pink food coloring

Pastry Cream:

3 tablespoons cornstarch

½ cup granulated sugar, divided

1/4 teaspoon salt

5 large egg yolks

2 cups milk (preferably whole milk)

½ vanilla bean, split and scraped. Or, 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

1 tablespoon unsalted butter, room temperature

Raspberry Filling:

12 ounces (about 2 heaping cups) fresh raspberries

½ cup plus 1 Tablespoon water, divided

½ cup granulated sugar

1 tablespoon cornstarch

Sponge Cake:

½ cup cake flour

¼ cup all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

¼ teaspoon salt

3 tablespoons milk (preferably whole milk)

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

5 large eggs

¾ cup granulated sugar

Whipped Cream:

2½ cups whipping (heavy) cream

½ cup confectioner's' (powdered) sugar

Chocolate Decoration:

About 2 ounces dark or bittersweet chocolate

Marzipan:

In a large-size heavy-bottomed pan, combine sugar and water. Heat over medium heat, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, until the sugar is completely dissolved. Stir gently to avoid splashing the mixture Marzipan-Ladybugsonto the sides of the pan. Stir in the cream of tartar. When the mixture begins to simmer, cover the pan tightly with a lid for 3 to 4 minutes to allow condensation to form and run down the inside of the pan to help wash away stray sugar crystals.

Remove the lid, and return the pan to medium high heat and bring the syrup to a boil, without stirring, until the syrup reaches a temperature of 240 degrees F, a soft-ball stage, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature. While the syrup is cooking, wash away any sugar crystals that form on the sides of the pan by wiping upwards with a damp pastry brush so the sugar crystals don't fall back into the syrup. Remove pan from the heat. Be careful, the sugar is extremely hot and will burn your skin if you touch it. Tip: Lower the heat when the temperature reaches about 235 degrees to slow the cooking because at this point it will quickly reach 240 degrees. In addition, remove the pan from the heat just before the syrup reaches 240 degrees to prevent it from going over 240 degrees.

Dip the bottom of the saucepan in a large bowl of cold water, and beat the syrup with a wooden spoon until the syrup cools and becomes thick and creamy and starts turning white.

Stir in the ground almonds and egg whites; the mixture may seem dry and crumbly at this point. Place the pan over low heat and stir for 2 to 3 minutes or until the mixture is well mixed. The heat will help to soften the mixture making it easier to mix.

Refrigerate until ready to assemble cake.

Pastry Cream:

In a small mixing bowl, combine cornstarch, ¼ cup sugar, and salt; whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a medium mixing bowl, whisk the egg yolks, then add the cornstarch mixture and whisk until thoroughly blended. Set aside.

In a medium, non-reactive, heavy-bottomed pan over medium heat, combine the milk, remaining ¼ cup sugar, vanilla bean, and scraped vanilla bean seeds. (If using vanilla extract in place of the vanilla bean do not add to the milk; instead the vanilla extract will be added after the cream has been cooked.) Bring the milk mixture to a simmer stirring constantly with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, remove from the heat.

Temper the eggs: Very slowly, in a thin stream, pour about ½ cup of the hot milk mixture into the beaten eggs while quickly whisking the two together with a wire whisk. Return the egg mixture back to the rest of the hot milk, pouring back slowly while quickly whisking the two mixtures together. Return to medium-low heat, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula in a figure eights pattern around the edge of the pan and into the center, making sure to scrape the rubber spatula across the bottom of the pan. Continue to cook until the mixture just comes to a boil. Continue to cook while stirring constantly for an additional 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Tip: A heat-resistant rubber spatula is best for stirring because it can scrape the entire bottom of the pot to help prevent the egg from clumping together and coagulating.

Finishing the pastry cream: Remove and discard the vanilla bean if using. Or, if using vanilla extract, add it now. Also add the butter and stir until melted and completely blended. Let Pastry Cream cool to room temperature, stirring frequently while cooling. Or, Pour the Pastry Cream into a medium-sized bowl and place a piece of plastic wrap directly on the surface while the cream is cooling to prevent a skin from forming. The pastry cream will thicken as it cools.

The pastry cream can be used immediately or cooled to room temperature and refrigerated for up to 3 days.

Refrigerate until ready to assemble cake.

Raspberry Filling:

I recommend making the Raspberry Filling the day before final cake assembly. In a medium size, heavy-bottomed pan over medium heat, combine the raspberries, ½ cup water, and sugar. Bring to a boil, and then reduce the heat and simmer uncovered, stirring occasionally with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, about 15 minutes or until the raspberries have broken down. Remove from the heat.

Immediately pour the hot mixture through a fine-mesh sieve to strain out the raspberry seeds. You should have about 1 to 1½ cups of raspberry mixture. Return the strained raspberry mixture to the pan.

In a small bowl stir the remaining 1 tablespoon water and cornstarch together to dissolve the cornstarch. Add the cornstarch mixture to the raspberry mixture and stir to combine. Bring the raspberry mixture back to a boil, and then reduce the heat and simmer uncovered, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, 3 to 5 minutes or until thick. Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature.

Pour raspberry filling into a bowl, cover and refrigerate until completely chilled, at least 4 hours or overnight and ready to assemble the cake

Cake Batter:

Preheat oven to 3500 degrees F. Prepare one 9-inch springform pan with 3 inch sides; lightly grease the pan with shortening, line the bottom of the pan with a round of parchment paper, and then dust the pan with flour.

In a small mixing bowl, combine cake flour, all-purpose flour, baking powder, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small heavy-bottomed pan over low heat combine milk and butter. Heat until the butter melts. Remove from heat and stir in the vanilla. Cover the pan to keep the mixture warm. Set aside.

Separate 3 of the eggs, placing the egg whites in a medium mixing bowl. Tip: a copper bowl is ideal for beating egg whites. Place the 3 egg yolks along with the remaining 2 whole eggs in a large bowl of an electric mixer.

Beat the egg whites to stiff moist peaks (do not overbeat.) Set aside.

Beat the egg yolks and whole eggs with an electric mixer on low speed about 1 minute to blend, add the sugar and beat another minute to blend the eggs and sugar. Increase the mixer speed to medium-high and beat for 5 to 8 minutes or until the mixture is very thick and drops in ribbons when the beater is lifted. Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold the beaten egg whites into the egg yolk mixture.

Place the flour mixture into a wire mesh strainer and sprinkle 2 to 3 tablespoons at a time over the egg mixture. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, fold the flour mixture into the eggs, using about 3 to 4 turns with each addition of flour, and making sure to reach to the bottom of the bowl as you fold. Do not worry about incorporating all the flour until the last addition, as too much handling will deflate the batter. The flour should be added quickly in about 4 to 5 additions.

Before the last addition of flour, quickly pour the warm milk mixture in a stream over the batter. Immediately sprinkle in the remaining flour mixture, and fold into the batter taking about 12 to 15 more turns to completely incorporate the ingredients, and taking no more than 15 to 20 seconds as the batter can deflate quickly.

Using a rubber spatula, immediately push the batter into the prepared pan. If any butter remains in the bottom of the bowl, do not add to the batter as this could prevent the cake from rising. Smooth the top of the batter with a small offset spatula or the back of a large spoon.

Bake: Tap the pan on the counter to remove air bubbles, and place the pan in the oven. Bake 23 to 25 minutes or until the cake is golden brown, springy to the touch, and has come away from the sides of the pan. Remove the pan from the oven and let stand 10 minutes on a wire cooling rack. Run a thin sharp knife around the edge of the pan to release the cake. Remove cake from the pan and place on a wire cooling rack to finish cooling. Tip: Lightly grease the cooling rack with vegetable oil or a nonstick cooking spray to prevent the cake from sticking.

Whipped Cream:

In a large mixing bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the whipping cream until soft mounds form; gradually add the powdered sugar, continue beating until thick and stiff. Tip: the cream will whip easier if the mixing bowl and beaters are first chilled; place in the refrigerator to chill until ready to whip the cream. Set the whipped cream aside in the refrigerator until ready to use.

Assembly:

Using a long serrated kitchen knife, split the sponge cake into 3 horizontal layers. Place the bottom cake layer on a cake plate.

Bottom Layer: Using an offset spatula spread a thin layer of the chilled Pastry Cream over the bottom cake layer.

Spoon about one quarter of the remaining Pastry Cream into a pastry bag fitted with a ½ inch plain tip, or simply insert a standard ½ inch diameter coupler into the bag and pipe without using a metal tip. Pipe a border of Pastry Cream around the top edge of the bottom cake layer to contain the Raspberry Filling. Push any remaining Pastry Cream out of the pastry bag and back with the unused Pastry Cream.

Give the chilled Raspberry Filling a quick stir to loosen it, and then spoon the filling over the bottom cake layer and spread evenly with an offset spatula within the piped Pastry Cream border.

Using a large rubber spatula or wire whisk, fold one half of the Whipped Cream into the remaining Pastry Cream.

Spread about one third of the Pastry Cream/Whipped Cream mixture over the Raspberry Filling.

Middle Layer: Place the middle layer of the sponge cake on top. Spread the remaining Pastry Cream/Whipped Cream mixture over the top.

Top Layer: Place the top layer of the sponge cake on top. Spoon the remaining one half of Whipped Cream onto the top layer. Use an offset spatula to spread some of the Whipped Cream to cover the sides of the cake, spreading the cream as smooth as possible. Smooth the top into a dome shape.

Refrigerate the cake at least one hour to stabilize the whipped cream before covering with Marzipan.

Marzipan:

Remove a 2-inch ball of marzipan and set aside for the flower and leaf decoration.

Use green food coloring to tint the remaining marzipan a pastel green color.

Sprinkle a large marble board, or large pastry mat with powdered sugar. Using a rolling pin, roll out the marzipan to about a 16 inch circle, or large enough to cover the cake.

Gently drape the marzipan over the top of the cake and using your hands, shape the marzipan around the sides of the cake to get a smooth finish. If the marzipan is folded or creased, gently stretch it flat. Using a sharp kitchen knife, trim the marzipan even with the bottom of the cake.

Chocolate Decoration:

In top of a double boiler over hot water, melt chocolate, gently stirring with a rubber spatula until melted. Set aside to cool. Or, place the chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl, use 50% power and stir frequently just until the chocolate is melted; do not overheat as chocolate will burn easily. Set aside to cool slightly. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Turn the heat off and place a glass bowl, stainless steel bowl, or ceramic bowl on top of the hot water; the upper pan should not touch the water.

Spoon melted chocolate into a pastry bag with a small round decorating tip or a small plastic bag with a ziplock top. If using a plastic bag, cut off a very small corner of the bag.

Pipe the chocolate in a decorative pattern over the top of the cake.

Flower and Leaf Decoration:

Divide the reserved 2-inch ball of marzipan in half. Use pink food coloring to tint one of the halves pink for the flower. Roll the pink marzipan into about 10 small balls and flatten each ball with your fingers to form the petals. Roll the first petal up like a sausage to form the bud, and then wrap the remaining petals around the bud to make a rose. Bend and curl the edges of the petals to make them look more realistic. Place the marzipan flower on top of the cake. Tip: brush a small bit of corn syrup on the bottom of the rose to adhere to the cake.

Tint the remaining marzipan with green for the leaves. Roll out the leaf marzipan to about a 1/16 inch thickness and cut three leaf shapes. Score the leaves with a knife to create veins. Bend each leaf slightly to look more realistic. Place the leaves around the flower. Tip: brush a small bit of corn syrup on the bottom of each leaf to adhere to the cake.

Optional: Use the marzipan trimmed from the bottom of the cake to make additional leaves and place around the bottom edge. I brushed these leaves with a bit of gold disco dust.

Cover cake loosely and refrigerate until ready to serve. Refrigerate Leftovers.

30. PUMPKIN CARROT CAKE



Candied Nuts (optional):

- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/16 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 cup hazelnuts, pecans, walnuts, or almonds, coarsely chopped (or use a combination of nuts)
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon water

½ teaspoon salt

Batter:

- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- ½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 3 large eggs, separated
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1¼ cups fresh pumpkin puree or canned pumpkin
- 2 cups grated raw carrots

Cream Cheese Frosting:

- 2 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese, room temperature
- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 6 cups confectioners' (powdered) sugar

Candied Nuts (optional):

Lightly butter a baking sheet or line with a nonstick baking mat. Set aside.

In a small bowl, combine the cinnamon, ginger, cardamom, and nutmeg; stir together to mix. Set aside.

In a large skillet, toast the nuts over medium heat until golden brown and fragrant, stirring frequently. Remove from heat. Set aside.

In a medium heavy-bottomed pan over medium low heat, combine sugar, butter, water, and salt. Heat and stir until the butter is melted. Increase heat to medium and bring mixture to a boil, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon or rubber spatula. Raise the heat to medium-high, and continue to boil without stirring until the sugar mixture turns a caramel color or reaches a temperature of 325 degrees F., taking from 10 to 12 minutes, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature. Immediately remove pan from heat. Stir in the spice mixture, and then add the nuts, stirring until the nuts are evenly coated.

Immediately pour nut mixture onto the baking sheet, spreading the mixture with the spoon as best as you can. The mixture hardens quickly so you need to work fast. Be careful, the sugar is extremely hot and will burn your skin if you touch it.

As soon as the nuts are cool enough to handle break apart with your hands. Set aside to cool completely.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare three 8 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Tip: Use cake strips around the pans to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, and nutmeg; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the granulated sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 5 minutes to add all of the sugar, then add the brown sugar, taking an additional 3 to 4 minutes, beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugars, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add egg yolks one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Add the vanilla along with the last egg yolk.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the pumpkin, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and pumpkin, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, fold in the grated carrots.

In a medium mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat egg whites with an electric mixer until stiff peaks form. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold the beaten egg whites into the batter.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Cream Cheese Frosting:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine cream cheese, butter, and vanilla; use an electric hand mixer or wooden spoon and beat together until mixture is smooth. Add powdered sugar; beat until frosting is smooth and creamy.

Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. Using an offset spatula, spread frosting between layers and over top and sides of cake. Decorate cake as desired.

Assembly:

Using a long serrated kitchen knife, split each cake into 2 horizontal layers. Tip: Cut one of the cake layers so that the bottom half is thicker than the top half, and use the thicker bottom half as the 1st layer to provide a good base to support the upper layers.

Place the thicker bottom half of the layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread about ¾ cup frosting over the layer. Repeat with the next four layers. Place the last cake layer on top. Cover the sides and top of the cake with the remaining frosting.

Sprinkle the candied nuts around the top and sides of the cake, pressing lightly into the frosting.

Refrigerate cake 1 to 4 hours before serving. Refrigerate leftovers.

31. RED VELVET CAKE



Batter:

- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons Dutch-processed cocoa powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons (1 ounce) liquid red food coloring
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

2 cups granulated sugar

2 large eggs

1½ teaspoons baking soda

1 tablespoon cider vinegar or white vinegar

Vanilla Buttercream Frosting:

6 tablespoons all-purpose flour

2 cups milk

2 cups (4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

2 cups granulated sugar

1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

Topping (optional):

About 1 cup shredded or flaked sweetened coconut

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 9 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Tip: Use cake strips around the pans to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, cocoa, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small mixing bowl, stir the buttermilk, vanilla, and liquid red food coloring together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the buttermilk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and buttermilk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Vanilla Buttercream Frosting:

In a medium heavy saucepan, add the flour, and using a wire whisk, slowly whisk in the milk, whisking until the sauce is smooth and free of lumps. Place the pan over medium heat and cook, whisking constantly, until the sauce comes to a boil and thickens, 5 to 10 minutes. Boil and whisk for 1 minute. Remove from the heat, and set aside to cool to room temperature, or a tepid temperature. While cooling, whisk frequently to keep the sauce smooth. Tip: If the sauce is too warm when added to the creamed butter mixture it will melt the butter. If the sauce is too cold it will not blend smoothly.

Meanwhile, prepare the butter and sugar when the sauce is almost cooled to the right temperature. In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.

Gradually add the cooled sauce, adding 2 to 3 tablespoons at a time, beating about 20 seconds between each addition. Add the vanilla and continue to beat for another 1 to 2 minutes to thoroughly blend and the frosting is somewhat fluffy.

The frosting should be used immediately, or refrigerate until needed.

Assembly:

Using a long serrated kitchen knife, split each cake into 2 horizontal layers. Reserve any crumbs that occur from slicing to sprinkle on top of the frosted cake, if desired. Tip: Cut one of the cake layers so that the bottom half is thicker than the top half, and use the thicker bottom half as the 1st layer to provide a good base to support the upper layers.

Place the thicker bottom half of the layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread about 1 cup frosting over the layer. Repeat with the next two layers. Place the last cake layer on top. Cover the sides and top of the cake with the remaining frosting. Spread the frosting as smooth as possible over the top and sides.

Topping (optional):

Gently press coconut around the sides of the cake. Sprinkle the top of the cake with cake crumbs, if desired.

32. SACHER TORTE



Small amount of vegetable shortening and flour for preparing pan

Chocolate Genoise Batter:

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter

¾ cup sifted cake flour

½ cup Dutch-processed cocoa powder

6 large eggs, room temperature

¾ cup granulated sugar

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Apricot Glaze:

½ cup granulated sugar

¼ cup water

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

⅔ cup apricot preserves

Boiled Chocolate Icing:

4 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped into small pieces

1¼ cups granulated sugar

½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder

¾ cup water

Apricot Roses (optional):

Dried apricots (about 10, or more if desired)

Green spice drops (about 6, or more if desired)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare one 9 inch round springform pan; generously grease the pan with shortening and dust with flour.

Wrap the outside of the pan with a cake strip to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Tip: Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Chocolate Genoise Batter:

Melt the butter in a small saucepan over low heat. Remove from heat and set aside to cool. Or, place the butter in a microwave-safe bowl, use 50% power and heat just until the butter is melted; do not overheat. Set aside to cool.

Sift the cake flour and cocoa together 4 times onto a piece of parchment paper or wax paper. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, use a wire whisk to whisk together the eggs and sugar just until blended. Place the bowl over a pan of barely simmering water, making sure that the water does not touch the bottom of the bowl. Heat the egg mixture 3 to 5 minutes, whisking constantly, until the mixture is a deep golden color and warm to the touch, between 110 and 120 degrees, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature.

Remove the bowl from the simmering water and dry the bottom. Using an electric mixer with the whisk attachment, beat the egg mixture on medium-high speed until cool and the mixture has tripled in volume and is thick and light in color, about 5 to 6 minutes. Reduce the mixer speed to medium and add the vanilla. Beat 1 minute longer. Remove the bowl from the mixer.

Place the cocoa and flour into a wire mesh strainer and sprinkle 2 to 3 tablespoons at a time over the egg mixture. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, fold the cocoa/flour into the eggs, using about 3 to 4 turns with each addition of cocoa/flour, and making sure to reach to the bottom of the bowl as you fold. Do not worry about incorporating all the flour until the last addition, as too much handling will deflate the batter. The flour should be added quickly in about 5 to 6 additions.

Before the last addition of cocoa/flour, quickly pour the warm butter in a stream over the batter. Immediately sprinkle in the remaining cocoa/flour mixture, and fold into the batter taking about 12 to 15 more turns to completely incorporate the ingredients, and taking no more than 15 to 20 seconds as the batter can deflate quickly.

Using a rubber spatula, immediately push the batter into the prepared pan. If any butter remains in the bottom of the bowl, do not add to the batter as this could prevent the cake from rising. Smooth the top of the batter with a small offset spatula or the back of a large spoon.

Bake: Tap the pan on the counter to remove air bubbles, and place the pan in the oven. Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until the cake is springy to the touch and has completely come away from the sides of the pan. Remove the pan from the oven and let stand 10 minutes on a wire cooling rack. Run a thin sharp knife around the edge of the pan to release the cake. Remove cake from the pan

and place on a wire cooling rack to finish cooling. Tip: Lightly grease the cooling rack with vegetable oil or a nonstick cooking spray to prevent the cake from sticking.

Apricot Glaze:

Sugar Syrup: In a small heavy-bottomed pan, combine granulated sugar, water, and lemon juice. Heat over medium-low heat stirring with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon until the sugar is completely dissolved. Stir gently to avoid splashing the mixture onto the sides of the pan. Increase the heat to medium high and bring to a boil, without stirring. Boil for 3 minutes. Remove from the heat.

Apricot: In a separate medium heavy-bottomed pan, add the apricot preserves and stir in the hot sugar syrup. Heat over medium heat, stirring, and bring to a boil. Boil and stir for 3 minutes. Remove from the heat. Pour hot mixture through a fine-mesh sieve to strain out the solid pieces. Discard solids. Be careful, the apricot mixture is extremely hot and will cause serious burns if you touch it. Set aside.

Assembly:

Use a long serrated kitchen knife to split the cake into 2 horizontal layers. Place the first layer cut side up on a plate or wire rack. Using a pastry brush, brush about ½ of the warm apricot glaze over the cake layer. Tip: re-warm the apricot glaze briefly over low heat or in a microwave safe bowl in the microwave if necessary to make apricot glaze spreadable.

Place the second cake layer on top with the cut side down and the flat bottom side up. Brush the remaining warm apricot glaze over the top and sides of the cake. Set aside while preparing the Boiled Chocolate Icing.

Boiled Chocolate Icing:

In a medium heavy-bottomed pan, combine semisweet chocolate, sugar, cocoa, and water. Heat over low heat stirring with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon until the sugar is completely dissolved and semisweet chocolate pieces are melted. Increase the heat to medium and bring to a boil, stirring constantly, until the mixture reaches a temperature of 220 degrees F, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature. Remove from the heat.

Pour the hot icing into a large bowl. Stir icing vigorously with a wooden spoon or rubber spatula to cool the icing down to about 90 degrees F. Stirring makes the icing thick and glossy.

Place the cake on a wire rack set over a piece of parchment or wax paper. Pour chocolate icing over the top of the cake letting it flow down over the sides. Use an offset spatula to spread the icing over the top and sides of the cake. Scrape icing drippings off the paper and place into a pastry bag to use later for decoration, if desired.

Use a cake lifter to pick up and move the iced cake onto a cake plate. Let cake stand at room temperature or in a cool place, but not refrigerated, about two hours to let icing set.

After icing has set, pipe the name Sacher over the top of the iced cake using the icing drippings in the pastry bag.

Apricot Roses (optional):

Place one of the dried apricot halves between two pieces of wax paper. Use a rolling pin to roll the apricot to a thin circle. Cut in half. For the center of rose, roll one half-circle into a cone shape. For petals, press as many half-circles around the center as desired, curving the rounded edges outward and overlapping the petals. Press the base of the flower to hold the flower intact, the apricots are normally sticky enough to hold together.

Roll the green spice drops into thin circles to use as leaves.

Place roses and leaves around cake as desired.

33. SIMNEL CAKE



Batter:

- 2 cups currants
- 1 cup raisins
- 2 tablespoons orange liqueur
- 2⅓ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves

⅓ cup blanched almonds, finely ground

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

2 tablespoons freshly grated orange zest (about 1 orange)

1 tablespoon freshly grated lemon zest (about 1 lemon)

1 cup granulated sugar

6 large eggs

Marzipan:

2 cups granulated sugar

¾ cup water

1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar

4 cups blanched, finely ground almonds

2 large egg whites, lightly beaten

Apricot Glaze:

¼ cup granulated sugar

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

⅓ cup apricot jam

Vanilla Buttercream Frosting:

4 tablespoons all-purpose flour

11/3 cups milk (preferably whole milk)

11/3 cups unsalted butter, room temperature

1⅓ cups granulated sugar

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Decoration:

Jordan Almonds

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 9 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine currants, raisins, and orange liqueur; stir to thoroughly mix the fruit and liqueur. Set aside.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, allspice, nutmeg, cloves, and ground almonds; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, orange zest, lemon zest, and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter, orange zest, and lemon zest in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter and zests about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. The batter may be curdled but this will be corrected when the flour is added.

With the mixer on low speed, gradually add about half of the flour mixture, mix just until blended, and then add the remaining half, mix just until blended.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a large rubber spatula, gently fold the raisin and currant mixture into the batter.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Marzipan:

In a large-size heavy-bottomed pan, combine sugar and water. Heat over medium heat, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, until the sugar is completely dissolved. Stir gently to avoid splashing the mixture Marzipan-Ladybugsonto the sides of the pan. Stir in the cream of tartar. When the mixture begins to simmer, cover the pan tightly with a lid for 3 to 4 minutes to allow condensation to form and run down the inside of the pan to help wash away stray sugar crystals.

Remove the lid, and return the pan to medium high heat and bring the syrup to a boil, without stirring, until the syrup reaches a temperature of 240 degrees F, a soft-ball stage, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature. While the syrup is cooking, wash away any sugar crystals that form on the sides of the pan by wiping upwards with a damp pastry brush so the sugar crystals don't fall back into the syrup. Remove pan from the heat. Be careful, the sugar is extremely hot and will burn your skin if you touch it. Tip: Lower the heat when the temperature reaches about 235 degrees to slow the cooking because at this point it will quickly reach 240 degrees. In addition, remove the pan from the heat just before the syrup reaches 240 degrees to prevent it from going over 240 degrees.

Dip the bottom of the saucepan in a large bowl of cold water, and beat the syrup with a wooden spoon until the syrup cools and becomes thick and creamy and starts turning white.

Stir in the ground almonds and egg whites; the mixture may seem dry and crumbly at this point. Place the pan over low heat and stir for 2 to 3 minutes or until the mixture is well mixed. The heat will help to soften the mixture making it easier to mix.

Divide the marzipan into thirds. On a pastry board sprinkled with a small amount of confectioners' sugar (to keep from sticking) roll two of the portions into 8 inch circles.

Use remaining marzipan to form 11 balls about 1 inch in diameter. Change the oven temperature to broil. Place marzipan balls on a baking sheet and place in the oven to brown under the broiler for 30 to 60 seconds or until the marzipan is golden brown, watching carefully to prevent the marzipan from burning. Remove from oven and place baking sheet on a wire cooling rack to cool. Or, Lightly toast the marzipan balls with a kitchen torch. Hold a small kitchen torch 3 to 4 inches from the marzipan and wave it back and forth until the marzipan is lightly browned all over. Tightly wrap and refrigerate any remaining marzipan for another project.

Apricot Glaze:

In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine sugar, lemon juice, and apricot jam. Heat until the sugar dissolves, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, Increase the heat to medium high and bring the mixture to a full rolling boil. Remove from heat and set aside to cool slightly.

Vanilla Buttercream Frosting:

In a medium heavy saucepan, add the flour, and using a wire whisk, slowly whisk in the milk, whisking until the sauce is smooth and free of lumps. Place the pan over medium heat and cook, whisking constantly, until the sauce comes to a boil and thickens, 5 to 10 minutes. Boil and whisk for 1 minute. Remove from the heat, and set aside to cool to room temperature, or a tepid temperature. While cooling, whisk frequently to keep the sauce smooth. Tip: If the sauce is too warm when added to the creamed butter mixture it will melt the butter. If the sauce is too cold it will not blend smoothly.

Meanwhile, prepare the butter and sugar when the sauce is almost cooled to the right temperature, in a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.

Gradually add the cooled sauce, adding 2 to 3 tablespoons at a time, beating about 20 seconds between each addition. Add the vanilla and continue to beat for another 1 to 2 minutes to

thoroughly blend and the frosting in somewhat fluffy. The frosting should be used immediately, or refrigerate until needed.

Assembly:

Place one cake layer on a cake plate. Using a pastry brush, brush about ½ of the still warm apricot glaze over the cake. Place one of the marzipan circles on top of the apricot glaze. Place the second cake layer on top, brush with remaining glaze, and cover with the second marzipan circle.

Frost sized and top of cake with Vanilla Buttercream Frosting. Arrange the marzipan balls around the top edge of the cake, and decorate with Jordan almonds.

34. STARRY NIGHT CAKE



Torte:

1¼ cups dried apricots

⅓ cup dark rum

6 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped into small pieces

1½ cups pecan halves

1 tablespoon all-purpose flour

¾ cup graham cracker crumbs (about 12 whole crackers)

¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

1 cup granulated sugar

5 large eggs

1½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Fondant Stars:

Small amount of rolled fondant

Various sizes of star shaped cookie cutters

Any clear alcohol such as vodka or gin or kirschwasser

Gold and Silver Luster dust

Small artist paintbrush

Chocolate Glaze:

6 ounces (about ¾ cup) semisweet chocolate

½ cup whipping (heavy) cream

3 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 tablespoon light corn syrup

Decorations:

Chocolate Sprinkles

Gold and Silver Dragees

Prepare Chocolate Apricot Pecan Torte. Let cool completely before glazing and decorating. If time allows it is best to make the Torte ahead and refrigerate for a few hours or overnight tightly covered. The Torte can also be made up to 2 weeks ahead, tightly wrapped and frozen, then thaw before ready to decorate.

Fondant Stars:

Roll the fondant about ¼ inch thick and cut out 15 to 20 various size stars using the star shaped cookie cutters. In a small dish stir a small amount of clear alcohol and gold luster dust together; use this mixture to paint the top of about half the stars using the small artist paintbrush. In a separate small dish stir a small amount of clear alcohol and silver luster dust together and paint the tops of the remaining stars. Set stars aside to dry at room temperature until ready to use. Tip: The fondant stars can be made several days in advance.

Chocolate Glaze:

In top of a double boiler over hot water, melt semisweet chocolate. Or, place the chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl, use 50% power and stir frequently just until the chocolate is melted; do not overheat as chocolate will burn easily. Set aside to cool slightly. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Turn the heat off and place a stainless steel, ceramic, or glass bowl on top of the simmering water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

In a small heavy saucepan over medium low heat, heat the whipping cream, butter, and corn syrup until the butter is melted and the mixture it is hot and just beginning to steam. Remove from heat and pour over the melted chocolate, whisking or stirring until mixture is completely smooth.

Pour the chocolate mixture into a pitcher, or liquid measuring cup with a pouring spout and let chocolate glaze cool for 10 minutes or cool to approximately 100 degrees on an instant read thermometer. Do not let the glaze sit longer because it will thicken and become difficult to pour over the cake.

Place the Torte on a wire cooling rack and set on a rimmed baking sheet or place wax or parchment paper under the cooling rack to catch drips.

Pour or ladle the glaze around the top edge of the cake, allowing the glaze to run down the sides. Use an offset spatula to spread the glaze around the sides if necessary to cover completely. Pour the remaining glaze on top and use the offset spatula to gently spread the glaze to cover the entire cake. Tip: If the glaze doesn't flow easily it means it has cooled and thickened too much. Either slightly reheat the glaze in a saucepan over low heat, or add an extra one or two tablespoons of corn syrup.

Decorations:

Before the glaze has set, press chocolate sprinkles around the bottom sides of the cake. Transfer torte to a cake plate. Arrange the stars on to top of the cake in an arc. Sprinkle dragees over the stars. Let the torte sit until the glaze is set.

35. TRIPLE CHOCOLATE PECAN CAKE



Batter:

- 8 1-ounce squares semisweet chocolate
- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- 6 large eggs
- ⅓ cup brandy or cognac
- 1½ cups toasted pecans, finely chopped

Tip: See Toasting Nuts and Seeds. Use standard measuring cups and spoons or scales for accurate measuring.

Glaze:

5 1-ounce squares bittersweet chocolate

4 tablespoons unsalted butter

2 tablespoons whipping (heavy) cream

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

½ cup toasted pecans, finely chopped

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare one 9 inch round layer cake pan; lightly grease the pan with shortening, line with wax or parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the paper.

Batter:

In top of a double boiler over hot water, Melt the semi-sweet chocolate and butter; stir to combine. Set aside to cool. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Turn the heat off and place a stainless steel, ceramic, or glass bowl on top of the simmering water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the cocoa powder and sugar. In a medium mixing bowl, combine the eggs and brandy; whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the eggs. Add the egg mixture to the sugar mixture and stir to combine. Pour in the melted chocolate mixture and stir until completely combined. Stir in the chopped pecans.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Set the pan into a much larger pan with sides and set both pans in the oven. Make a bain-marie (water bath) by pouring about 1 inch of very hot water into the larger pan. Tip: A large roasting pan works well for the outer pan.

Bake: Bake 45 minutes, or until the cake is firm to the touch. Remove the 9 inch pan from the water bath and place on a wire cooling rack to cool for 15 minutes then remove cake from the pan and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Cover the cake with plastic wrap and refrigerate until completely chilled, at least 6 hours.

Glaze:

In top of a double boiler over hot water, combine the bittersweet chocolate, butter, whipping cream, and vanilla. Stir until melted and completely combined. Remove from heat and let cool about 5 minutes.

Place a piece of wax paper under the chilled cake, and then drizzle spoonfuls of glaze along the edge of the cake, allowing the glaze to drip down and coat the sides. Pour the remaining glaze on top of the cake.

Cover the sides of the cake with ½ cup chopped pecans, gently pressing them on with your hand. Let the cake sit, uncovered, at room temperature or in the refrigerator until the glaze is set. Transfer cake to a serving plate.

Cover cake and refrigerate until ready to serve. Refrigerate Leftovers.

36. TUXEDO CAKE



Small amount of vegetable shortening and flour for preparing pans

Batter:

- 4 cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter

1 cup canola or vegetable oil

2 cups water

4 large eggs

Whipped Cream Filling and Frosting

4 cups chilled whipping (heavy) cream

1¼ cups confectioner's (powdered) sugar

Chocolate Glaze:

4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped into small pieces

½ cup whipping (heavy) cream

¼ cup Lyle's Golden Syrup

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare three 9-inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar, cocoa, flour, baking soda, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small bowl, combine buttermilk and vanilla. Set aside.

In a medium heavy saucepan combine butter, oil, and water. Heat over low heat until the butter is melted, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon or rubber spatula.

Pour the butter mixture into the sugar mixture. Using an electric mixer on low speed, or a wire whisk, stir or whisk until combined and smooth. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly

Crack the eggs into a small mixing bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the eggs, and then add the eggs to the batter, stirring until thoroughly combined. Add the buttermilk mixture, stir until com—bined.

Bake: Pour the batter into the prepared pans. Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling. Cool completely before frosting.

Whipped Cream Filling and Frosting:

In a large mixing bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the whipping cream until soft mounds form; gradually add the powdered sugar, continue beating until thick and stiff. Tip: the cream will whip easier if the mixing bowl and beaters are first chilled; place in the refrigerator to chill until ready to whip the cream.

Place one cake layer on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula thickly spread some of the whipped cream over the top. Top with the remaining cake layers, coating the top of each with the whipped cream, and then covering the sides of the cake. Spread the cream as smooth as possible over the top and sides.

Refrigerate the cake at least one hour to stabilize the whipped cream before glazing.

Chocolate Glaze:

Place the chopped chocolate in a medium bowl. Set aside.

In a small heavy saucepan over medium low heat, heat the cream until it is hot and just beginning to steam. Remove from heat and pour over the chocolate, stirring until the chocolate is completely melted. Add Lyle's Golden Syrup and vanilla, stirring until completely mixed.

Pour the chocolate mixture into a pitcher, or liquid measuring cup with a pouring spout and let chocolate glaze cool for 10 minutes. Do not let the glaze sit longer than 10 minutes because it will thicken and become difficult to pour over the cake.

Slowly pour the glaze over the cake. Cover the top of the cake entirely, letting some of the glaze drizzle down the sides, and allowing some of the whipped cream show through the drizzles around the side of the cake. Tip: If the glaze doesn't flow easily it means it has cooled and thickened too much. Slightly reheat the glaze in a saucepan over low heat.

Refrigerate the cake until the glaze is set and the whipped cream frosting is firm, at least one hour. Refrigerate Leftovers.
To serve, slice the cake with a long serrated knife, cleaning the knife between each slice.

37. ALMOND APPLE GATEU



Cake Batter:

1 cup all-purpose flour

⅓ cup corn starch

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg

¼ teaspoon ground allspice

¼ teaspoon ground cloves

6 tablespoons unsalted butter (to clarify)

- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 medium sized Granny Smith baking apple
- 1 medium sized sweet apple (such as Braeburn or Fuji)
- 2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 5 large eggs
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon freshly grated lemon zest (about 1 lemon)
- 2 ounces finely ground blanched almonds (about ½ cup)

Marzipan:

- 2 cups granulated sugar
- ¾ cup water
- 1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 4 cups blanched, finely ground almonds
- 2 large egg whites, lightly beaten
- About ½ cup confectioner's (powdered) sugar (for kneading)

Filling:

½ cup apricot jam

Whipped Cream Topping:

1½ cups whipping (heavy) cream

1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons confectioners' (powdered) sugar

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

2 ounces finely ground blanched almonds (about ½ cup)

Garnish:

About 1 cup sliced almonds, toasted

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/16 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1/16 teaspoon ground allspice

1/16 teaspoon ground cloves

Marzipan Apples:

About 12 ounces marzipan for marzipan apples

Whole cloves

Food Coloring

Clear alcohol such as vodka or gin or kirschwasser

Small artist paintbrush

Edible glitter (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F., Prepare one 9 inch round layer cake pan; lightly grease the pan with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Wrap the outside of the pan with a cake strip to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Tip: Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap.

Fold the strip lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Cake Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, corn starch, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, and cloves; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

Clarify Butter: Melt and simmer the butter in a saucepan over low heat for a few minutes. Skim off and discard the white layer that forms on top. Let the butter sit and cool for about 5 minutes to allow the milk solids to sink to the bottom of the pan. Carefully spoon out the clear (clarified) butter into a small bowl. If you think you've accidentally scooped out some of the milk solids from the bottom, strain the clarified butter through a piece of cheesecloth to remove the solids. Discard the milk solids.

Measure ¼ cup clarified butter to use, discarding any remaining butter or save for another project. Stir in vanilla extract. Set aside.

Peel, core, and coarsely grate the apples, Sprinkle 2 teaspoons lemon juice over the grated apples, stir until well mixed. Place apples in a colander and place in your kitchen sink to let apples juices drain out while preparing the rest of the batter.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, use a wire whisk to whisk together the eggs, sugar, salt, and one tablespoon lemon juice just until blended. Place the bowl over a pan of barely simmering water, making sure that the water does not touch the bottom of the bowl, and heat the egg mixture 3 to 5 minutes, whisking constantly, until the mixture is a deep golden color and warm to the touch, 115 to 120 degrees on an instant-read thermometer. Tip: it is important to whisk constantly while heating the mixture so the eggs don't start cooking, creating scrambled eggs.

Remove the bowl from the simmering water and dry the bottom. Using an electric mixer with the whisk attachment, beat the egg mixture on medium-high speed until cool and the mixture has tripled in volume and is thick and light in color, about 5 to 6 minutes. Remove the bowl from the mixer.

Place the flour mixture into a wire mesh strainer and sprinkle 2 to 3 tablespoons at a time over the egg mixture. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, fold the flour mixture into the eggs, using about 3 to 4 turns with each addition of flour, and making sure to reach to the

bottom of the bowl as you fold. Do not worry about incorporating all the flour until the last addition, as too much handling will deflate the batter. The flour should be added quickly in about 5 to 6 additions.

Before the last addition of flour, quickly pour the warm butter in a stream over the batter. Immediately sprinkle in the remaining flour mixture, and fold into the batter using another 3 to 4 turns. Gently add the grated apples and ground almonds and fold into the batter taking about 12 to 15 more turns to completely incorporate the ingredients, and taking no more than 15 to 20 seconds as the batter can deflate quickly.

Using a rubber spatula, immediately push the batter into the prepared pan. If any butter remains in the bottom of the bowl, do not add to the batter as this could prevent the cake from rising. Smooth the top of the batter with a small offset spatula or the back of a large spoon.

Bake: Tap the pan on the counter to remove air bubbles, and place the pan in the oven. Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until the cake is springy to the touch and has come away from the sides of the pan. Remove the pan from the oven and let stand 10 minutes on a wire cooling rack. Run a thin sharp knife around the edge of the pan to release the cake. Remove cake from the pan and place on a wire cooling rack to finish cooling. Tip: Lightly grease the cooling rack with vegetable oil or a nonstick cooking spray to prevent the cake from sticking.

Marzipan:

In a large size heavy saucepan, preferably non-stick, combine sugar and water. Heat over medium heat, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, until the sugar is completely dissolved. Add the cream of tartar, increase the heat to medium-high and bring to a boil. Cover the pan and boil for 3 minutes.

Remove the lid, and return the pan to medium high heat. Bring the syrup to a boil, without stirring, until the syrup reaches a temperature of 240 degrees F, a soft-ball stage, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature. While the syrup is cooking, wash away any sugar crystals that form on the sides of the pan by wiping upwards with a damp pastry brush so the sugar crystals don't fall back into the syrup. Remove pan from the heat.

Dip the bottom of the saucepan in a large bowl of cold water, and beat the syrup with a wooden spoon until the syrup cools and becomes thick and creamy and starts turning white.

Stir in the ground almonds and egg whites; the mixture may seem dry and crumbly at this point. Place the pan over low heat and stir for 2 to 3 minutes or until the mixture is well mixed. The heat will help to soften the mixture making it easier to mix.

Kneading: Sprinkle a large marble board, or large pastry mat with powdered sugar. Turn the marzipan mixture out onto the board.

Using a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, begin lifting and folding the edges of the marzipan into the center until it is cool enough to handle with your hands.

Gather the entire mixture up with your hands or dough scraper into a ball and begin kneading until the marzipan becomes smooth and pliable, 5 to 6 minutes, adding additional powdered sugar 1 tablespoon at a time if the marzipan is too sticky. You will probably knead the entire ½ cup powdered sugar into the marzipan; however it is ok to add additional powdered sugar if needed.

The marzipan can be used immediately, or wrap in plastic wrap and place in a resealable plastic bag or airtight container and store in a cool place or refrigerate until ready to use.

This recipe makes about 2 pounds of marzipan; 1 pound is used to assemble the cake, and a portion of the other pound is used to make the marzipan apples.

Assembly and Filling:

Divide 1 pound of marzipan in half. Sprinkle a large marble board, or large pastry mat with powdered sugar. Using a rolling pin, roll out each of the ½ pound portions of marzipan into a 9 inch circle, about ½ inch thick. Set aside.

Use a long serrated kitchen knife to split the cake into 3 horizontal layers. Place the first layer cut side up on a cake plate. Using a pastry brush, brush ¼ cup of the apricot jam over the cake layer. Lay one of the rolled marzipan circles on the apricot jam. Tip: The marzipan layer should be the same size as the cake layer. If the marzipan is larger you can gently press in on the edges of the marzipan until it is even with the cake layer.

Place the middle layer over the first and brush ¼ cup of the apricot jam over the cake layer. Lay the remaining rolled marzipan circle on the apricot jam, making sure the edges of the marzipan are even with the cake layer.

Place the third layer cut side down on top of the cake. Refrigerate while preparing the Whipped Cream Topping.

Whipped Cream Topping:

In a large mixing bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the whipping cream until soft mounds form; gradually add the powdered sugar and vanilla, continue beating until thick and stiff. Remove bowl from the mixer and use a rubber spatula to gently fold in the ground almonds. Tip: the cream will whip easier if the mixing bowl and beaters are first chilled; place in the refrigerator to chill until ready to whip the cream.

Remove the cake from the refrigerator. Frost the sides and top of the cake with the whipped cream topping.

Garnish:

Gently press the toasted sliced almonds around the sides of the cake, covering the sides completely.

Use the back of a large kitchen knife to press lines into the top of the cake, marking the cake into 16 portions.

In a small bowl, combine the cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, and cloves. Use a fine-mesh sieve to dust the top of cake with the spice mixture. Tip: you don't need to use all the spice mixture, just a light sprinkling is best.

Refrigerate the cake at least one hour to stabilize the whipped cream before serving.

Arrange the marzipan apples around the top of the cake just before serving.

Marzipan Apples:

Use about 12 ounces of the remaining marzipan to make about 25 marzipan apples, or use the whole remaining 1 pound portion to add extra apples when serving.

Use about ½ ounce of marzipan for each apple, and form into a small ball about ¾ to 1 inch in diameter.

Use a sharp pair of kitchen scissors and cut off the round end of a clove and press into the marzipan ball for the apple's sepal. Press the stem of the clove into the opposite side of the marzipan ball to make the apple stem.

Use a small artist paintbrush to paint the apples with diluted red and green food color mixed with clear alcohol, then sprinkle[/url] with edible glitter, if desired. Tip: I painted the apples with a thin coat of electric green food color diluted with the clear alcohol and let dry. Then I lightly brushed a reddish color over parts of the apples, made with red, pink, and terracotta food color diluted with the clear alcohol. Before the apples were completely dry I lightly dusted a small amount of ruby red disco dust, or edible glitter, onto the red portions of the apples. Let sit to dry completely.

38. ANGEL FOOD CAKE



For the batter:

- 1 cup sifted cake flour
- 1½ cups superfine sugar, divided
- 12 large egg whites
- 1 tablespoon warm water
- 1½ teaspoons cream of tartar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon pure almond extract

Place oven rack in the lowest position. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. The cake will be baked in one ungreased, 10 inch Angel Food cake pan, preferably with a removable bottom.

Batter:

In a medium size mixing bowl, or on a piece of wax paper, use a sifter to sift together the cake flour and ¾ cup superfine sugar 4 times. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, beat the egg whites and warm water on medium speed until frothy. Add the cream of tartar, salt, vanilla extract, and almond extract and increase speed to medium high. When the whites form soft peaks, slowly add the remaining ¾ cup superfine sugar one tablespoon at a time or in a low steady stream. Continue beating 1 to 2 minutes longer or until the egg whites are a stiff glossy meringue.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Place the flour and sugar mixture in a sifter and sift the flour over the egg white meringue, ¼ at a time, and gently fold each addition of flour into the egg whites with a large balloon type whisk or rubber spatula. The dry ingredients to not need to be fully incorporated after each addition; do not over mix and do not stir as this will deflate the batter.

Gently spoon the batter into the ungreased Angel Food cake pan. Gently cut through the batter with a knife or rubber spatula to remove any air bubbles.

Bake: Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until the top is golden brown and springs back when lightly touched. Remove from oven and immediately invert pan. Let the cake cool completely in the pan, upside down. Tip: If your angel food cake pan doesn't have legs, invert it over the neck of a long-necked bottle, such as a wine or soda bottle.

To remove cake from a pan with a removable bottom, run a thin bladed kitchen knife around the side of the pan to loosen the cake, and then run the knife around the center tube. Holding the center tube, lift the cake and remove it from the outer rim. Run the knife under the cake to loosen it from the pan bottom. Invert the cake and remove the tube section. Transfer to a cake platter top side up.

To serve, slice with a serrated knife using a sawing motion or use an angel food cake cutter.

39. BACARDI RUM CAKE



For the batter:

- 1 cup walnuts or pecans, coarsely chopped
- 1 (18 ounces) packaged yellow cake mix with pudding in the mix
- 4 large eggs
- ½ cup cold water
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- ½ cup light or dark rum

Glaze:

½ cup unsalted butter

¼ cup water

1 cup granulated sugar

½ cup light or dark rum

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F., Prepare one 9 or 10 inch fluted tube pan; generously grease the pan with shortening and dust with flour.

Batter:

Sprinkle the nuts over the bottom of the prepared pan.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, combine cake mix, eggs, water, vegetable oil, and rum; beat until thoroughly mixed. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly. Spoon the batter over the nuts and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon.

Bake: Bake 1 hour or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pan on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 or 15 minutes then remove cake from the pan and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Glaze:

In a small heavy saucepan over low heat, melt the butter. Stir in water and sugar; bring to a boil and boil for 5 minutes stirring constantly so mixture does not burn. Remove from heat. Stir in the rum.

Use a long toothpick or skewer to poke several small holes in the top of the cake. Spoon the still warm glaze over the top of the cake and allow to soak in. Repeat until the glaze is used up.

40. CARIBBEAN COCONUT CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 4 large eggs, separated
- 3 tablespoons warm water
- ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 1½ teaspoons grated lemon zest

Syrup:

3 tablespoons coconut milk

¼ cup granulated sugar

1 tablespoon rum

Filling and Topping:

3 large eggs, separated

1 cup plus 1 tablespoon coconut milk, divided

¼ cup cornstarch

1 cup granulated sugar, divided

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

21/3 cup shredded or flaked sweetened coconut, divided

12 candied cherries

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Prepare a 9 inch round springform pan; Grease only the inside bottom of the pan with shortening.

Batter:

In a small mixing bowl, add flour, cornstarch, and baking powder; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, combine egg yolks, water, sugar and lemon zest; beat with an electric mixer until mixture is pale and creamy, about 5 to 10 minutes.

In a medium mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat egg whites until stiff. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, fold the egg whites into the egg yolk mixture, and then fold in the flour mixture.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pan on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pan and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Syrup:

In a small heavy-bottomed pan over medium heat, combine coconut milk and sugar; stir constantly until boiling and sugar is completely dissolved. Remove from heat and stir in rum. Set aside to cool.

Filling and Topping:

In a medium bowl, beat the egg yolks, 4 tablespoons coconut milk, and cornstarch together with a wire whisk 1 to 2 minutes until a light color. Set aside.

In a medium heavy saucepan over low heat, combine remaining coconut milk and 6 tablespoons sugar; heat and stir constantly until almost boiling. Remove from heat.

Temper the eggs: very slowly, in a thin stream, pour about ½ of the hot milk mixture into the beaten eggs while quickly whisking the two together. Tip: The technique used to blend uncooked eggs with a hot liquid is called tempering. Tempering slowly warms the eggs so they are closer to the temperature of the liquid they will be added to, preventing the eggs from scrambling. If you simply poured the eggs into the hot milk they would immediately start cooking and you would have chunks of cooked egg in the mixture.

Return the egg mixture back to the rest of the hot milk, return to medium heat and heat until it gently boils, stirring constantly so the mixture does not burn. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla. Set aside to partially cool.

In a medium bowl and using clean beaters, beat egg whites with an electric mixer until stiff peaks form. Fold remaining sugar into the egg whites. Fold egg whites into the partially cooled egg mixture, and then fold in 1½ cups coconut. Set aside to cool to room temperature.

Assembly:

Using a long kitchen knife, split cooled cake horizontally into 3 layers. Tip: place toothpicks around the cake to mark where to cut.

Spread about ¼ of the filling over the bottom layer. Place the second layer on top, sprinkle with half of the syrup; let soak in and then spread with ¼ of the filling. Place the 3rd layer on top, sprinkle with the remaining syrup and let soak in. Spread top and sides of cake with remaining filling.

Sprinkle the top and sides of the cake with 1 cup coconut. Decorate top of cake with candied cherries.

Cover and Refrigerate until ready to serve. Refrigerate Leftovers.

41. CARROT CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 1 cup raisins
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 4 large eggs

2 cups granulated sugar
1 cup vegetable oil
3 cups grated raw carrots
¾ cups walnuts or pecans, coarsely chopped (optional)
Cream Cheese Frosting: (For 8 or 9 inch 2 layer cake or a 13 by 9 inch cake)
8 ounces cream cheese, room temperature
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
2½ cups confectioner's (powdered) sugar
Or:
Cream Cheese Frosting: (For 8 or 9 inch 6 layer cake)
2 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese, room temperature
¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
6 cups confectioners' (powdered) sugar
Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare three 9-inch round layer cake pans or one 9x13x2 inch oblong pan; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.
Batter:

Plump the raisins by steaming in a colander in a double boiler; steam the raisins about 1 minute or until softened. Thoroughly drain, or spread the raisins on paper toweling to dry. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Place the fruit in a steamer or plastic or wire mesh colander on top of the simmering water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

In a medium mixing bowl, add flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, add eggs; beat on medium-high speed for 2 minutes or until they are a light yellow color and thickened. With the mixer still on medium-high speed, slowly add the sugar to the eggs, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking 3 to 4 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the eggs and sugar are fully incorporated, and the mixture looks light in color and thickened. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Reduce mixer speed to medium, slowly pour the oil into the batter in a slow steady stream, and then beat for 1 minute longer.

Reduce mixer speed to medium-low, and blend in the flour mixture all at once, mixing just until incorporated.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, fold in the drained raisins, carrots, and nuts

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean. Place baking pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes. If using round cake pans, remove cake from pans and place directly on wire racks to finish cooling. If using 13x9 inch pan you can leave the cake in the baking pan to finish cooling and cut into squares to serve.

Cream Cheese Frosting:

In a medium bowl, combine cream cheese, butter, and vanilla; use an electric hand mixer or wooden spoon and beat together until mixture is smooth. Add powdered sugar; beat until

frosting is smooth and creamy. Use an offset spatula to spread frosting between layers and over										
top and sides of cake. Cover frosted cake and refrigerate until ready to serve. Refrigerate Leftovers.										
Cover mosted cake and remigerate until ready to serve. Remigerate Lentovers.										

42. CHERRY KUCHEN CAKE



Streusel:

½ cup all-purpose flour

¼ teaspoon baking powder

2 tablespoons firmly packed light brown sugar

½ cup pecans, finely chopped

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

For the Cake Batter:

1 pound (about 3 cups) dark sweet cherries

1 cup all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

¼ teaspoon salt

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature

¾ cup granulated sugar

3 large eggs

½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare one 9 inch spring form pan; generously grease the pan with shortening or butter.

Streusel:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, brown sugar, pecans, and melted butter. Stir to mix. Sprinkle ¼ of the streusel mixture evenly on the bottom of the pan, press down lightly to form a bottom crust. Set aside. Reserve the remaining ¾ of the streusel for the topping.

Batter:

Wash the cherries, remove the pits with a cherry pitter and place on paper toweling to drain and dry. Set aside.

In a medium mixing bowl, add flour, baking powder, and salt; whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 3 to 4 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Add the vanilla along with the last egg. **Tip:** For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each

egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, gradually add about ½ of the flour mixture, mix just until blended, and then add the remaining half, mix just until blended, scraping down the side of the bowl as needed.

Carefully spread the batter over the streusel crumb layer in the pan and arrange the cherries in rings on top. Use about 20 cherries for the outer circle, working inward with 15, 10, and then 3 cherries in the center. Sprinkle the reserved streusel mixture on top of the cherries.

Bake: Place the pan on a baking sheet, and bake 60 to 65 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean and the top is golden brown. Remove from oven and place pan on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes. Slide a small kitchen knife around the edge of the cake to loosen it and remove the sides of the springform pan. Place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

43. CHOCOLATE APRICOT PECAN TORTE



For the Cake Batter:

1¼ cups dried apricots

⅓ cup dark rum

6 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped into small pieces

1½ cups pecan halves

1 tablespoon all-purpose flour

¾ cup graham cracker crumbs (about 12 whole crackers)

¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

1 cup granulated sugar

5 large eggs

1½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Topping (Optional):

1 or 2 tablespoons confectioner's (powdered) sugar

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine apricots and rum; stir to mix. Cover tightly and set aside for at least one hour or up to overnight to marinate. Stir occasionally to ensure the rum is evenly distributed throughout the fruit. Tip: Place the mixture in a resealable plastic bag to marinate. Turn the bag over occasionally to disburse the rum evenly throughout the fruit.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare one 9-inch round springform pan; lightly grease the pan with shortening, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

In top of a double boiler over hot water, melt semisweet chocolate. Or, place the chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl, use 50% power and stir frequently just until the chocolate is melted; do not overheat as chocolate will burn easily. Set aside to cool slightly. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Turn the heat off and place a stainless steel, ceramic, or glass bowl on top of the simmering water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

Place the pecans and flour in the bowl of a food processor fitted with a steel blade and process until pecans are finely chopped. Remove the pecan mixture from the processor and set aside.

Place the grahams crackers in the food processor bowl and process until the crackers are fine crumbs. Remove the crumbs from the processor and set aside.

Place the marinated apricots and rum in the food processor bowl and pulse until apricots are chopped medium fine. Remove the apricot mixture from the processor and set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very

slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Add the vanilla along with the last egg. Don't worry if the mixture looks curdled. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add the melted and cooled chocolate, pecan mixture, and graham cracker crumbs, mix until blended.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a large rubber spatula, gently fold the apricot mixture into the batter.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 45 to 50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center has just a few moist crumbs that cling to the toothpick. Remove from oven and place pan on a wire cooling rack to cool completely. When cooled, remove cake from pan.

Topping (Optional):

When cooled the cake can be served plain, dusted with powdered sugar, or decorated any way you wish.

44. CHOCOLATE PUMPKIN CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup buttermilk
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1 large egg yolk

Spiced Cocoa Frosting:

6 ounces cream cheese, room temperature

2¼ cups confectioners' (powdered) sugar, divided

2¼ teaspoons unsweetened cocoa powder

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

¾ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1½ cups whipping (heavy) cream

¼ teaspoon orange food color

Chocolate Glaze:

- 4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped into small pieces
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- ½ cup whipping (heavy) cream
- 3 tablespoons light corn syrup

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 8 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the bottom and sides of the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small bowl, combine buttermilk, pumpkin, and vanilla; stir together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the granulated sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 5 minutes to add all of the sugar, then add the brown sugar, taking an additional 3 to 4 minutes, beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugars, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs and egg yolk one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the buttermilk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and buttermilk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 35 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Spiced Cocoa Frosting:

In a medium size bowl, add cream cheese, beat with an electric hand mixer or wooden spoon until smooth and fluffy. Add 1½ cups powdered sugar, cocoa, cinnamon, and vanilla; beat until well mixed.

In another medium bowl, using an electric mixer with clean beaters, beat the whipping cream until soft mounds form; add ¾ cup powdered sugar and orange food coloring, continue beating until thick and stiff.

Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold the whipped cream into the cream cheese mixture.

Place one cooled cake layer on a cake plate. Use an offset spatula to spread about 1½ cups frosting over the top. Top with the remaining cake layer and use the remaining frosting for the top and sides of cake. Spread the frosting as smooth as possible over the top and sides.

Refrigerate the cake at least one hour to stabilize the whipped cream before glazing.

Chocolate Glaze:

Place the chopped chocolate and butter in a medium bowl. Set aside.

In a small heavy saucepan over medium low heat, heat the cream until it is hot and just beginning to steam. Remove from heat and pour over the chocolate, stirring until the chocolate and butter is completely melted. Add corn syrup, stirring until completely mixed.

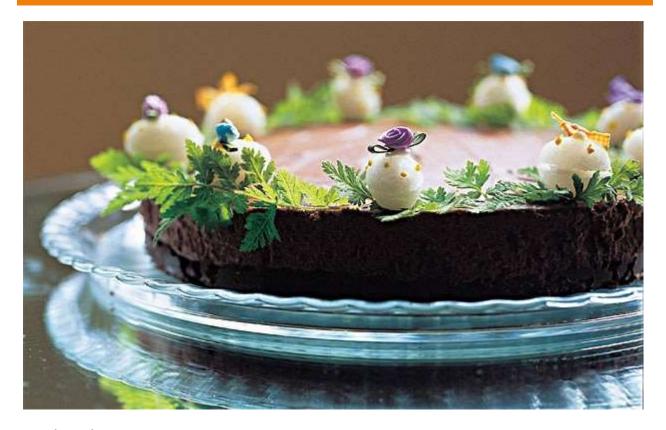
Pour the chocolate mixture into a pitcher, or liquid measuring cup with a pouring spout and let chocolate glaze cool for 10 minutes. Do not let the glaze sit longer than 10 minutes because it will thicken and become difficult to pour over the cake.

Slowly pour the glaze over the cake. Cover the top of the cake entirely, letting some of the glaze drizzle down the sides, and allowing some of the frosting to show through the drizzles around the side of the cake. Tip: If the glaze doesn't flow easily it means it has cooled and thickened too much. Either slightly reheat the glaze in a saucepan over low heat, or add an extra one or two tablespoons of corn Syrup.

Refrigerate the cake until the glaze is set and the frosting is firm, at least one hour.

To serve, slice the cake Refrigerate leftovers.	with	a long	serrated	knife,	cleaning	the	knife	between	each	slice.

45. CHOCOLATE TRUFFLE EASTER CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter

6 ounces semi-sweet chocolate

6 ounces unsweetened baking chocolate

5 large eggs

1¼ cup granulated sugar, divided

1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

½ cup light corn syrup

Cake Decoration (optional):

Sugar Eggs

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare one 9 inch round layer cake pan; lightly grease the pan with shortening, line the bottom with parchment paper, lightly grease the top of the parchment paper, and dust the pan with unsweetened cocoa powder. The cake pan will be placed in a larger pan during baking.

Batter:

In top of a double boiler over hot water, melt butter, semisweet chocolate and unsweetened chocolate. Or, place the butter and chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl, use 50% power and stir frequently just until the chocolate is melted; do not overheat as chocolate will burn easily. Set aside to cool slightly. Tip: Create a double boiler by filling a saucepan with 2 inches of water and bringing it to a simmer. Turn the heat off and place a stainless steel, ceramic, or glass bowl on top of the hot water, the upper pan should not touch the water.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, combine the eggs and ½ cup granulated sugar; using the whisk attachment, beat on low speed about 1 minute or until blended, and then increase the mixer speed to high and beat for 5 to 8 minutes or until the mixture is very thick and drops in ribbons when the beater is lifted. Lower the speed to low and beat in the vanilla until mixed, and then increase the mixer to high and beat another 30 seconds or until it thickens again. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly. Tip: continue beating the eggs until the sugar syrup is cooked.

Meanwhile, in a medium size heavy-bottomed pan combine ¾ cup granulated sugar and corn syrup. Heat over medium heat, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, until the sugar is completely dissolved. Stir gently to avoid splashing the mixture onto the sides of the pan.

Increase the heat to medium high and bring to a boil, without stirring, until the syrup reaches a temperature of 238 degrees F, a soft-ball stage, using a candy or instant read thermometer to gauge the temperature. While the syrup is cooking, wash away any sugar crystals that form on the sides of the pan by wiping upwards with a damp pastry brush so the sugar crystals don't fall back into the syrup. Immediately remove pan from the heat. Tip: As soon as the syrup reaches 238 degrees F. immediately remove from the heat and pour the syrup into a glass measuring cup to stop the cooking.

Quickly, as soon at the sugar syrup is done cooking, stop the mixer, pour a small amount of syrup into the beaten eggs, immediately turn the mixer on to high speed and beat for 5 to 10 seconds

still using the whisk attachment. Turn the mixer off again, pour a little larger amount of syrup in the eggs, and immediately turn the mixer on to high speed for 5 to 10 seconds. Continue with the remaining syrup. Tip: You want to work quickly as the sugar starts to harden and thicken pretty quickly. Don't allow any syrup to pour onto the whisk as it will spin the syrup around the sides of the bowl.

Once all the sugar syrup has been added to the eggs, continue beating the mixture at high speed, about 5 minutes longer, or until the mixture is cool. Tip: Touch the mixture and make sure it has cooled to room temperature. Also the outside of the bowl should feel cool to the touch.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a balloon type wire whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold in the chocolate, one-third at a time. Be sure the chocolate is thoroughly folded through the batter.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Set the pan into a larger pan with sides and set both pans in the oven. Make a bain-marie (water bath) by pouring about 1 inch of very hot water into the larger pan. Tip: A large roasting pan works well for the outer pan.

Bake: Bake 40 minutes. Remove the 9 inch pan from the water bath and place on a wire cooling rack to cool for 20 to 30 minutes then remove cake from the pan and place the cake on a cake plate to finish cooling. Refrigerate 3 to 4 hours or until chilled.

Serve cake at room temperature or chilled.

Cake Decoration (optional):

Before serving, place sugar eggs on top with a small amount of royal icing to hold the eggs in place.

46. CRANBERRY CREAM CHEESE COFFEECAKE



For the Cake Batter:

2 and 1/4 cups all-purpose flour (I used unbleached.)

3/4 cup granulated sugar

3/4 cold unsalted butter, cut into small chunks

1/2 tsp. baking powder

1/2 tsp. baking soda

1/4 tsp. salt (I used coarse kosher.)

1 large egg, lightly beaten

3/4 cup buttermilk, or 3/4 cup plain yogurt that's been thinned with a tablespoon or two of milk

For the cranberry filling:

2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries

1/2 cup fresh orange juice

1/2 cup granulated sugar

1/2 tsp. cinnamon

1/4 tsp. ground ginger

Scant 1/4 tsp. ground cloves

1 Tbsp. corn starch

1 and 1/2 Tbsp. orange juice

For the cream cheese filling:

6 oz. cream cheese, at room temperature

1 large egg, lightly beaten

1/2 cup granulated sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and lightly flour, or coat with baking spray, a 9" or 10" springform pan.

To make the cranberry filling:

In a medium-size heavy saucepan, heat the cranberries, sugar, orange juice, and spices on medium heat, stirring frequently, until the mixture starts to bubble. Turn the heat down and let it simmer until it starts to thicken. In a very small bowl, mix the corn starch with the 1 and 1/2 Tbsp. of cold orange juice; stir until it looks completely smooth. Pour it slowly into the hot

cranberries, stirring constantly. Raise the heat a little and keep stirring slowly until the mixture noticeably thickens up. Cook another minute or two. Take the pot off the heat and set it aside to cool.

To make the cream cheese filling:

Beat the softened cream cheese for a couple of minutes, on low speed, until smooth. Add in the lightly beaten egg. Gradually pour in the sugar, still on low speed; beat for a couple more minutes until completely smooth. Set aside.

To make the cake batter, and assemble the cake:

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour and sugar. Using a hand held pastry blender, cut in the cold butter until the lumps are no larger than small peas. Scoop out 1/2 cup of this mixture and set aside; this will be used for your streusel topping.

Into the large bowl add the baking powder, baking soda, and salt, stirring to distribute evenly. Hollow out a well in the middle of the bowl.

In another small bowl, whisk together lightly the egg, and the buttermilk or thinned yogurt, whichever you're using. Pour this into the dry ingredients, stirring only to moisten and combine. The batter will seem pretty thick.

Spread 2/3 of the batter into the prepared pan, nudging the batter up the sides just a bit to create a rimmed effect (easiest if you use a small offset spatula, or the back of a spoon).

Drizzle half of the cream cheese filling over this.

Spread all of the cranberry filling carefully over that, being careful to keep it away from the sides of the pan.

Drizzle the remaining cream cheese filling over the cranberries, again avoiding the sides of the pan.

Now, gently spread the remaining batter over the top, all the way to the sides, then sprinkle on all of the streusel.

With the pan placed on a cookie sheet, bake the cake at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes or more, until the top looks lightly golden.

Let the cake cool on a rack for at least 15 minutes before attempting to remove the sides of the pan. Let it finish cooling while still on the springform pan's base, placed on a rack.

Stays nice and moist for two days or more if well-covered.

47. CRANBERRY COFFEE CAKE



For the Cranberry Filling:

½ cup granulated sugar

½ cup water

1 cup fresh cranberries

For the Cake Batter:

2 cups all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon salt

½ cup unsalted butter, room temperature

1 cup granulated sugar

2 large eggs

1 teaspoon pure almond extract

1 cup sour cream

½ cup toasted pecans, coarsely chopped

Almond Icing:

1 cup confectioner's (powdered) sugar

½ teaspoon pure almond extract

3 to 4 teaspoons water

Cranberry Filling:

In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine sugar and water; bring to a boil. Add cranberries and return to a boil. Reduce heat and boil gently for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and cool completely to room temperature.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare one 10 inch Angel Food cake pan; generously grease the pan with shortening and dust with flour.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Add the almond extract along with the last egg. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add one half of the sour cream, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and sour cream, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Spoon $\frac{2}{3}$ of the batter evenly in the bottom of the pan; use the back of a large spoon to smooth the top. Spoon the cranberry filling over the batter. Spoon the remaining batter on top and use the back of a large spoon to smooth the top. Sprinkle the pecans evenly over the top of the batter.

Bake: Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until the cake is golden brown on top and begins to come away from the sides of the pan, and a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove the pan from the oven and place on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes. Invert the pan to remove the cake from the pan, place cake top side up on the wire rack to finish cooling.

Almond Icing:

In a small bowl combine powdered sugar, almond extract, and 3 teaspoons of water; stir until smooth. Add additional 1 teaspoon of water if necessary to achieve a drizzling consistency.

Drizzle the icing over the cake, allowing the icing to drip down the sides.

48. CRANBERRY UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE



For the Topping:

¼ cup unsalted butter

3/4 cup firmly packed light brown sugar

3 cups (one 12 ounce bag) fresh or frozen cranberries

Batter:

1½ cups all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

¼ teaspoon salt

½ cup unsalted butter, room temperature

1 cup granulated sugar

2 large eggs, separated

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

½ cup milk (preferably whole milk)

¼ teaspoon cream of tartar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Use a 10 inch cast iron skillet. You can substitute any heavy 10 inch ovenproof skillet with an ovenproof handle, or a 9 inch or 10 inch round or square cake pan, or a 10 inch springform pan with the outside wrapped in heavy duty foil to prevent leakage.

Topping:

In the skillet, melt the butter over low heat. Use a pastry brush to spread a little of the melted butter around the insides of the skillet to help prevent the fruit from sticking after it is baked. When the butter is completely melted, stir in the brown sugar until thoroughly combined; remove from heat. Place the cranberries on top of the brown sugar mixture. Set aside. Tip: if you are using a cake pan or springform pan in place of a skillet, then use a small heavy saucepan to melt the butter, stir in the brown sugar until thoroughly combined, then pour the mixture into the cake pan.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small bowl, stir the milk and vanilla together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle

and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add egg yolks one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the milk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and milk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

In another medium mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until foamy, add the cream of tartar, and continue beating until stiff peaks form. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold the egg whites into the cake batter.

Bake: Spread the batter over the cranberries in the cake pan. Bake 55 to 60 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean. Remove the cake from the oven and run a small kitchen knife around the edges. Let sit for 15 minutes on a wire cooling rack.

Upside-Down: Invert the cake onto a serving platter and let it sit for another 5 minutes to let the sugar topping drip down onto the cake, then remove the pan.

Serve either warm or cooled, either plain or with sweetened whipped cream.

49. CREAM CHEESE POUND CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup unsalted butter, chilled, cut into 1 inch pieces
- 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, chilled, cut into 1 inch pieces
- 2¾ cups granulated sugar
- 6 large eggs, room temperature
- 4 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Topping:

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Prepare one 10 inch Angel Food Cake pan or two 8x4x2¼ inch loaf pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: To make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust the pan with flour.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, cream cheese, and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter and cream cheese in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter and cream cheese about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Add the vanilla along with the last egg. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, gradually add about ½ of the flour mixture, mix just until blended, and then add the remaining half, mix just until blended, scraping down the side of the bowl as needed.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 1 hour 15 minutes to 1½ hours or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool on wire rack for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from pan and place on a wire cooling rack to let cool.

Topping:									
Before serving, use a fine-mesh sieve to dust the top of cake with confectioner's sugar.									

50. CHOCOLATE CAPPUCCINO CHEESECAKE



- 1 cup chocolate cookie crumbs
- 1/4 cup butter, softened
- 2 tablespoons white sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 3 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup white sugar
- 3 eggs
- 8 (1 ounce) squares semisweet chocolate
- 2 tablespoons whipping cream
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons instant coffee granules dissolved in 1/4 cup hot water

1/4 cup coffee flavored liqueur

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

1 cup heavy whipping cream

2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar

2 tablespoons coffee-flavored liqueur

1 (1 ounce) square semisweet chocolate Instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Butter one 9 or 10 inch spring form pan.

Combine the chocolate wafer crumbs, softened butter, 2 tablespoons white sugar, and the cinnamon. Mix well and press mixture into the buttered spring form pan. Set aside.

In a medium sized bowl beat the softened cream cheese until smooth. Gradually add 1 cup white sugar mixing until well blended. Add eggs (one at a time). Beat at low speed until very smooth.

Melt the 8 ounces semisweet chocolate with the 2 tablespoons whipping cream in a pan or bowl. Set over water. Stir until smooth.

Add the chocolate mixture to cream cheese mixture and blend well. Stir in sour cream, salt, coffee, 1/4 cup coffee liqueur and vanilla. Beat until smooth. Pour mixture into the prepared pan.

Bake in the center of oven at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for 45 minutes. Center will be soft but will firm up when chilled. Do not over bake it. Leave the cake in oven with the heat turned off and the door ajar for 45 minutes. Remove the cake from oven and chill for 12 hours. Just before serving, top the cake with mounds of flavored whipped cream and garnish with chocolate leaves.

To Make Flavored Whipped Cream:

Beat whipping cream until soft peaks form, then beat in confectioner's sugar and 2 tablespoons coffee liqueur.

51. FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE ALMOND CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

- 2½ cups blanched almonds, toasted, and finely ground
- 2 tablespoons, plus 1¼ cups granulated sugar, divided
- ½ cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 6 large eggs, room temperature, separated
- 3 squares (1 ounce each) semisweet chocolate, grated
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon instant espresso coffee (espresso powder)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup cold brewed espresso

2 tablespoons freshly squeezed orange juice

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Topping:

2 or 3 tablespoons confectioners (powdered) sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare one 9 inch round springform pan: Lightly grease the pan with shortening.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine ground almonds and 2 tablespoons sugar; set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, combine butter and 1½ cups sugar; cream together until mixture appears light and fluffy. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly. Add egg yolks; beat until thoroughly mixed. Add grated chocolate, cocoa powder, instant espresso, salt, brewed espresso, orange juice, vanilla, and ground almond mixture; stir until thoroughly mixed; set aside.

In a medium bowl, beat egg whites with an electric mixer until stiff peaks form. Gently fold the egg whites into the batter.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Place pan on a baking sheet. Bake 45 to 50 minutes or until the cake springs back when lightly touched in the center. Remove from oven and cool on a wire cooling rack.

When cake is completely cool, slide a small kitchen knife around the edge of the cake to loosen it and remove the sides of the springform pan, and transfer onto a cake plate.

Topping:

Before serving, use a fine-mesh sieve to dust the top of the cake with confectioner's sugar.

52. GOLDEN FRUIT CAKE



For the Cake Batter:

2 cups mixed candied fruit (fruitcake mix), chopped in small pieces

½ cup candied or dried pineapple pieces, chopped in small pieces

1½ cups golden raisins

½ cup dark raisins

2 tablespoons freshly grated orange zest (zest of 1 orange)

½ cup freshly squeezed orange juice (juice of 1 orange)

½ cup brandy

3 cups all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup blanched almonds, coarsely chopped

Decoration (optional):

- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 2 teaspoons hot water

Candied Cherries

Blanched Almonds

Prepare Pan:

Prepare one 9 inch spring form pan that is at least 3 inches deep; lightly grease the pan to adhere the paper. Cut two circles of wax or parchment paper to fit in the bottom of the pan, and cut a strip of paper twice the depth and just larger than the circumference of the pan. Make a 2 inch fold along one long edge of the strip and make angled cuts into the folded edge one or two inches apart. Place one circle in the bottom of the pan, and then line the sides of the pan with the long strip, placing the folded and cut edge around the bottom of the pan. Place the second circle of paper in the pan to cover the fold with the cuts. Lightly grease the paper, both the bottom and sides. Cut two long strips of brown paper the same height as the wax paper lining to fit around the outside of the pan. Tie both strips of brown paper in a double thickness around the outside of the pan. Use cotton string to tie in place Tip:the brown paper helps to keep the cakes from

drying out during the long bake time. Use tape to initially hold the paper, and then tie with cotton string to ensure it holds in place while baking.

Batter:

In a large mixing bowl, combine mixed candied fruit, pineapple, golden raisins, dark raisins, and orange zest; stir to mix. Add orange juice and brandy; mix well. Cover tightly and set aside for several hours or overnight to marinate. Stir occasionally to ensure the orange juice and brandy is evenly distributed throughout the fruits. Tip:Place the mixture in a re-sealable plastic bag to marinate. Turn the bag over occasionally to disburse the orange juice and brandy evenly throughout the fruits.

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and nutmeg; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Add the vanilla along with the last egg. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add the flour mixture in two additions, beating just until mixed.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a large rubber spatula, gently fold the fruit and brandy mixture, along with the almonds, into the batter.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Place a small pan of water on the bottom rack of the oven. Place the fruitcake pan on a baking sheet with ½ inch sides to catch any leakage. Place fruitcake on middle rack and bake 2½ to 3 hours or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and cool completely in pan on a wire cooling rack. When cool, remove the sides of the springform pan. Remove fruitcake from pan, remove paper and discard.

Decoration (optional):

Stir the corn syrup and hot water together in a small bowl.

About 5 to 10 minutes before the end of the baking time, remove the cake from the oven. Using a pastry brush, lightly brush the top of the cake with the corn syrup mixture. Gently press the candied cherries and almonds into the top of the cake. Brush another thin layer of corn syrup mixture over the top.

Return the cake to the oven to finish baking and set the decorations.

Storing and Aging:

Fruitcake can be eaten immediately; however it is best when allowed to age a least 1 to 2 months or longer.

Wrap the cakes in rum, bourbon, or brandy soaked cheesecloth, wrap tightly in plastic wrap or foil, then place in a sealed plastic freezer bag. Store in a dark cool place.

You may want to occasionally sprinkle the cakes with additional rum, bourbon, or brandy, then re-wrap and return to the dark cool storage place. Fruitcake stored they way will keep several months.

53. GOLDEN PEACH CAKE



For the Topping:

½ cup walnuts, chopped to a medium size

1 tablespoon granulated sugar

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Fruit:

3 medium-sized ripe peaches

1 teaspoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

For the Cake Batter:

1¾ cups all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon salt

⅓ cup milk (preferably whole milk)

1½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract

1 teaspoon pure almond extract

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature

34 cup plus 2 tablespoons granulated sugar

2 large eggs

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare one 9 inch round springform pan; lightly grease the pan with shortening and dust with flour.

Topping:

In a small mixing bowl, combine walnuts, sugar, and cinnamon, stir to mix. Set aside.

Fruit:

Peel, pit, and slice the peaches about ½ inches thick. Place in a bowl and sprinkle with lemon juice. Set aside.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small mixing bowl, stir the milk, vanilla extract, and almond extract together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very

slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 6 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

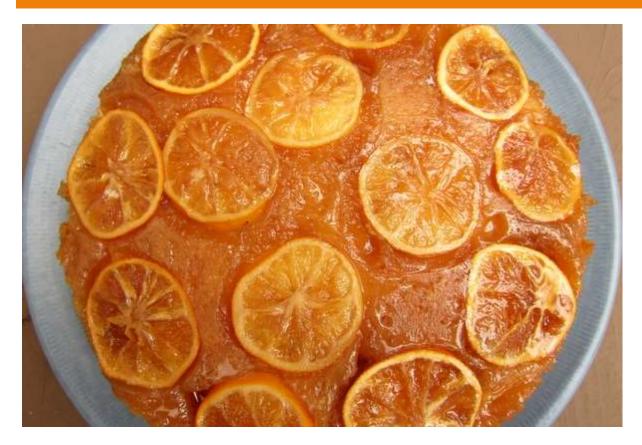
Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the milk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and milk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Arrange the peach slices in circles from the outside toward the center; gently press the peach slices into the batter. Sprinkle the topping evenly over the peaches.

Bake: Place the pan on a baking sheet to catch any leakage from the spring form pan. Bake 55 to 60 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean and the top is golden brown. Remove from oven and place pan on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes. Slide a small kitchen knife around the edge of the cake to loosen it and remove the sides of the spring form pan. Place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

54. LEMON UPSIDE DOWN CAKE



Topping:

2 large or 3 small lemons

¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter

¾ cup firmly packed light brown sugar

Batter:

1½ cups all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

¼ teaspoon salt

½ cup milk (preferably whole milk)

½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature

3 tablespoons freshly grated lemon zest (about 3 lemons)

1 cup granulated sugar

2 large eggs, separated

¼ teaspoon cream of tartar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Use a 10 inch cast iron skillet. You can substitute any heavy 10 inch ovenproof skillet with an ovenproof handle, or a 9 inch or 10 inch round or square cake pan, or a 10 inch springform pan with the outside wrapped in heavy duty foil to prevent leakage.

Topping:

With a sharp knife, slice the lemons thinly, about ¼ inch thick, and discard any seeds. Place the lemon slices on paper towels to absorb excess moisture.

In the skillet, melt the butter over low heat. When the butter is completely melted, stir in the brown sugar until thoroughly combined. Add the lemon slices; increase the heat to medium high to bring to a boil and cook lemon slices for 2 minutes. Remove the skillet from the heat and arrange the lemon slices, slightly overlapping, to cover the bottom of the skillet. Tip: If you are using a cake pan or springform pan in place of a skillet, then use a medium size heavy saucepan to melt the butter, stir in the brown sugar until thoroughly combined, add the lemon slices, bring to a boil and cook the lemon slices for 2 minutes, then pour the mixture into the cake pan, arranging the lemon slices, slightly overlapping, to cover the bottom of the pan.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small bowl, stir the milk and vanilla together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, lemon zest, and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter and lemon zest in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter and lemon zest about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add egg yolks one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Each egg yolk should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg yolk, taking about one minute to blend in each egg yolk.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the milk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and milk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

In another medium mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the egg whites and cream of tartar until stiff peaks form. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold about $\frac{1}{2}$ of the beaten egg whites into the batter to lighten the batter, and then fold in the remaining egg whites.

Pour batter over the fruit in the skillet; use the back of a spoon or rubber spatula to spread the batter evenly and smooth out the top.

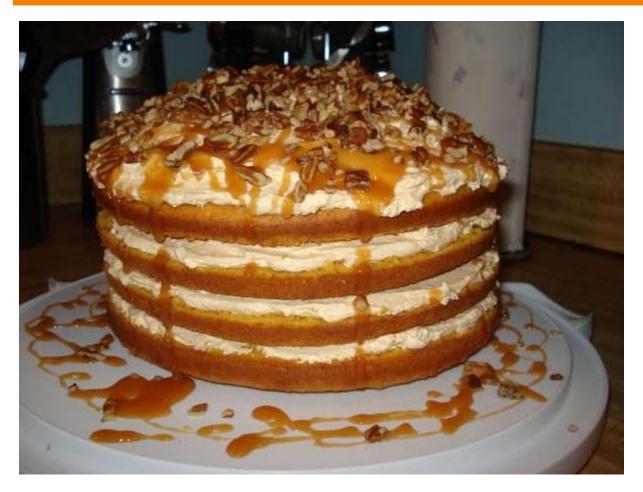
Bake: Bake 35 to 45 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place skillet on a wire cooling rack to cool for 5 minutes.

Upside-Down: Run a thin kitchen knife around the edge of the skillet to loosen the sides. Invert the skillet onto a serving plate. Leave the skillet in place one or two minutes before lifting to let the syrup drip down onto the cake. Carefully lift the skillet off of the cake. If any fruit has stuck to the skillet, remove and place it back on the cake.

Serving Suggestion:

This cake is best when served still warm, along with a dollop of sweetened whipped cream. Use a sharp knife to cut the cake as the lemons are a little difficult to cut cleanly.

55. MAPLE PUMPKIN TORTE



Batter:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 3½ teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ¾ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves

¼ teaspoon ground ginger

1½ cups canned pumpkin

¾ cup milk (preferably whole milk)

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

1½ cups granulated sugar

3 large eggs

Maple Cream Cheese Frosting:

12 ounces cream cheese, room temperature

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature

1/4 cup pure maple syrup, preferably grade B

4 cups confectioners' (powdered) sugar

Garnish (optional):

12 pecan halves

About ¼ cup pecans, toasted, coarsely chopped

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Prepare two 9 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the bottom and sides of the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust with flour.

Tip: Use cake strips around the pans to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip

lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, and ginger; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, combine pumpkin, milk, and vanilla; stir together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the pumpkin mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and pumpkin mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the top of the batter with a small offset spatula or the back of a large spoon. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Maple Cream Cheese Frosting:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine cream cheese, butter, and maple syrup; use an electric hand mixer or wooden spoon and beat together until mixture is smooth. Add powdered sugar; beat until frosting is smooth and creamy. Tip: If frosting seems too soft, refrigerate 30 minutes or longer for the desired consistency, then re-whip to make fluffy.

Assembly:

Using a long serrated kitchen knife, split each cake into 2 horizontal layers. Tip: Cut one of the cake layers so that the bottom half is thicker than the top half, and use the thicker bottom half as the 1st layer to provide a good base to support the upper layers.

Place the thicker bottom half of the layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread 1 cup of frosting over the layer. Place the next layer on top and spread 1 cup frosting over the layer. Repeat with the next layer. Place the last cake layer on top with the flat side up, and top with remainder of frosting.

Garnish (optional):

Garnish with pecan halves around the top of the cake and sprinkle the top with chopped pecans.

Cover cake and refrigerate until ready to serve. Refrigerate leftovers.

56. MUCHAS LECHES CAKE



Batter:

16 ounces (about 4 cups) blanched almonds

1¼ cups plus ½ cup granulated sugar, divided

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ cup all-purpose flour

½ teaspoon baking powder

14 large eggs, separated

Soaking Syrup:

1/4 cup Dulce de Leche (see directions below)

½ cup whipping (heavy) cream

½ cup sweetened cream of coconut such as Coco Lopez, (not coconut milk) stirred well before using,

½ cup sweetened condensed milk

½ cup evaporated milk

1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

Whipped Cream Filling and Topping:

4 cups whipping (heavy) cream

1½ cups confectioner's (powdered) sugar

1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

Sugared Almonds:

4 large egg whites

1 cup granulated sugar

4 cups sliced almonds

Garnish (optional):

1 to 2 tablespoons confectioners (powdered) sugar, for dusting

Fresh fruit or berries

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare one 12x17x1 inch Jelly Roll pan; Line with parchment paper and lightly coat the top of the parchment paper with butter or cooking spray. Tip: Use a large enough piece of parchment paper to allow overhang to make easier to remove after baking. You can substitute three 9 inch round layer cake pans if you prefer.

Batter:

In a food processor, process the blanched almonds, ½ cup sugar, and cinnamon until the almonds are finely ground. Set aside.

In a small size mixing bowl, combine flour and baking powder; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, add the egg yolks and beat on low speed about 1 minute or until blended, and then increase the mixer speed to high and beat for 5 to 8 minutes or until the mixture is very thick and drops in ribbons when the beater is lifted. Lower the speed to medium and slowly add the 1½ cups sugar, continuing to beat another 2 to 3 minutes.

Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold in the ground almond mixture, one-third at a time. Then fold in the flour mixture. Set aside.

In another very large mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until stiff peaks form. Gently fold about ¼ of the beaten egg whites into the batter to lighten the batter, and then fold in the remaining egg whites.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon or large offset spatula. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes or until the top of the cake springs back when lightly touched. Remove from oven and let cool for 5 minutes, then invert the cake onto a wire cooling rack that has been greased with a light coating of cooking spray or butter. Carefully peel off the parchment paper. Let cool completely.

Soaking Syrup:

Dulce de Leche: I recommend making the Dulce de Leche one or several days beforehand and refrigerating until ready to use. Remove the paper wrapper from the can of sweetened condensed milk. Clean the top of the can, and use a can opener to make two small punctures on opposite sides of the top of the can. Set the can of milk in a medium size saucepan, puncture side up, and fill the saucepan with water to reach two-thirds up the sides of the can. Cover the pan and bring the water to a boil, then lower the heat until the water is simmering. A bit of milk will

probably seep out of the small holes you made in the can. With the pan covered, simmer the milk about 1 hour and the milk pooled on top of the can has turned a deep golden brown. Add extra water to the pan if necessary while the water is simmering to keep the water level the same. When done simmering, carefully remove the can from the hot water and let set for several minutes to cool slightly, or just leave the can in the hot water until cooled before removing. Use a can opener to carefully open the can and use a rubber spatula to spoon the cooked milk into a bowl. The milk should have a pudding like consistency. Let cool completely then cover the bowl and refrigerate until ready to use. Tip: Do not simmer the can without first making the punctures in the top of the can. Otherwise the can may explode because the milk expands as it is heated.

In a medium size bowl, combine cooled Dulce de Leche, whipping cream, cream of coconut, sweetened condensed milk, evaporated milk, and vanilla; stir to thoroughly combine. Set aside or cover and refrigerate until ready to use.

Whipped Cream Filling and Topping:

In a very large mixing bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the whipping cream until soft mounds form; gradually add the sugar and vanilla, continue beating until thick and stiff. Tip: the cream will whip easier if the mixing bowl and beaters are first chilled; place in the refrigerator to chill until ready to whip the cream. Set aside or refrigerate until ready to use.

Assembly:

Using a serrated kitchen knife carefully cut the cooled cake in half length-wise and then cut each half in half width-wise. You will have 4 rectangular pieces each about 6 inches x 8½ inches.

Use a large metal spatula or cake lifter to invert one of the cake pieces onto a serving plate. Tip: Use a large flat serving plate, preferably rectangular, that will accommodate the finished cake of about 8 x 10 inches. Inverting the cake pieces will allow the soaking syrup to soak into the cake more easily as the bottom of the cake doesn't form as hard a crust.

Carefully pour about one-fourth of the soaking syrup over the cake piece, spreading with a pastry brush to evenly distribute the syrup. Tip: Use a fork or wooden skewer to poke several holes about ¼ inches apart in the top of each cake if necessary to allow the soaking syrup to soak into the cake, but don't worry if it doesn't all soak in before spreading the whipping cream as it will eventually soak in. Spread whipped cream over the top of this cake piece, using about one generous cup or about 1¼ cups of the whipped cream.

Repeat with the next two layers, inverting each piece, pouring and spreading about one-fourth of the soaking syrup over each piece and then covering each piece with whipping cream. Place the fourth layer on top and pour the remaining soaking syrup over the top and let soak in. Spread top and sides of cake with remaining whipping cream.

Sugared Almonds:

Tip: I recommend making the sugared almonds one or several days beforehand and putting in a covered container until ready to use.

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Line a large baking pan or jelly roll pan with a non-stick baking mat or parchment paper. Set aside.

In a medium size bowl, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until foamy. Add the sugar and stir to mix with a rubber spatula. Add the almonds and stir until the almonds are completely coated.

Bake: Spread the almonds evenly in the prepared pan and bake, stirring occasionally, 40 to 50 minutes or until the almonds are golden brown. Remove from oven and stir or break them up with your hands. Let cool completely then place in a covered bowl until ready to use. Tip: the almonds will seem very wet at first because the ratio of egg whites to almonds is high. As they bake they will begin to dry out and then turn golden brown.

Gently press the sugared almonds around the sides and top of the cake, covering it completely.

Refrigerate the cake at least one hour to stabilize the whipped cream before serving.

Garnish (optional):

Before serving, use a fine-mesh sieve to dust top of cake with confectioner's sugar. Serve with fresh fruit or berries. Refrigerate leftovers.

57. NAKED WHITE LAYER CAKE



Small amount of vegetable shortening and flour for preparing pans

Cake Batter:

- 3 cups sifted cake flour
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk (preferably whole milk)
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1½ cups granulated sugar

5 large egg whites

Blueberry Sauce

Ultimate Whipped Vanilla Buttercream:

1½ cups granulated sugar

¼ cup all-purpose flour

3 tablespoons cornstarch

¼ teaspoon salt

1½ cups milk (preferably whole milk)

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

1½ cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare three 8-inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust with flour.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine sifted flour, baking powder, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside. Tip: It is important to pre-sift the flour 2 or 3 times before measuring, otherwise the flour will be compacted and you will have too much flour in the recipe. After sifting lightly spoon the flour into the measuring cup.

In a small mixing bowl, stir the milk and vanilla together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color.

With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the milk mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and milk mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended. Set aside.

In a large mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer just until stiff peaks form and the egg whites are still shiny. Using a balloon type wire whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold about ¼ of the beaten egg whites into the batter to lighten the batter, and then fold in the remaining egg whites.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with a small offset spatula or the back of a large spoon. Bake 25 to 28 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Assembly:

Cut tops of cakes with a serrated kitchen knife so they are level. Place one cake layer on a cake plate. Pipe an even layer of buttercream on the bottom layer making sure buttercream is spread out to the edges. Tip: if you want to add a fruit filling first build up the outer edges of buttercream a bit higher than the middle. Spread about ½ cup of fruit filling over the middle, then spread a bit more buttercream over the fruit filling to make the same height as the outer edges.

Place a second layer on top, press down a bit on the cake to make everything is level, and fill as you did for the bottom layer.

Place the last cake layer on top, upside down so the flat bottom of the cake is facing up to make a nice flat top.

If desired, crumb coat the cake by covering the sides and top of the cake with a thin layer of buttercream; smooth with an offset spatula, removing excess buttercream. The cake should show through the crumb coat for the naked cake look. Let the cake sit, or refrigerate, until the crumb coat is dried to the touch. At this point you can cover the cake in plastic wrap and refrigerate to firm the layers, about one hour or overnight.

58. ORANGE ALMOND CAKE



Parchment paper and small amount of vegetable shortening for preparing pans.

Cake:

- 3 oranges, with unwaxed and unblemished skin as the whole fruit is used.
- 8 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/16 teaspoon salt
- 1¾ cup granulated sugar
- 4¼ cups finely ground almonds (use either blanched or unblanched almonds)

Sugar Garnish (optional):

About 2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar (powered sugar) for unfrosted cake

Or:

Orange Buttercream Frosting (optional and not gluten-free or dairy-free):

(Makes about 6 cups)

6 tablespoons all-purpose flour

2 cups milk

2 cups (4 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

2 tablespoons freshly grated orange zest (about 1 orange)

2 cups granulated sugar

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

2 tablespoons orange liqueur, such as Grand Marnier, Cointreau, or Triple Sec

Sugared Almonds Garnish (optional):

1 large egg white

¼ cup granulated sugar

1 cup sliced almonds

Oranges: Scrub the oranges well and leave them whole. Place the oranges in a large pot with enough water to cover them. Bring water to a boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer, cover pan and cook oranges 1 hour. Occasionally use a wooden spoon or other utensil to turn the oranges in the water to cook evenly. Drain the oranges and let sit until oranges have cooled to room temperature.

Cut each orange into quarters; remove the stem end of the rind along with the core and seeds. Puree the orange quarters in a blender or food processor. Measure out 2 cups (16 ounces) of puree and discard any remaining puree.

Pans: Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 8-inch round layer cake pans. Lightly grease the pans and line with parchment paper; Line the sides of the pans with a collar of parchment paper that extends 2 inches above the top of the pan, and then place a parchment round in the bottom. Lightly grease the top of the parchment paper. Tip: Wrap the outside of the pans with a cake strip to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is about 2 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Cake:

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, add the eggs and beat on low speed about 1 minute or until blended, and then increase the mixer speed to medium-high and beat 2 to 3 minutes or until the eggs become thick and lemon colored. Add the baking powder, and salt and beat until mixed. Gradually add the sugar and beat another 2 to 3 minutes or until thick and almost tripled in volume. When beating, stop the mixer and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Reduce the speed to low and add the 2 cups of orange puree, and then add the ground almonds, mixing until thoroughly incorporated.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon or small offset spatula. Bake 60 to 70 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool completely in the pans.

When cooled remove cake from the pans and remove parchment paper.

Sugar Garnish (optional):

Serve each 8-inch cake individually as a gluten-free, dairy free cake with just a dusting of powdered sugar on top.

Orange Buttercream Frosting (optional):

Instead of dusting the cake tops with powdered sugar, layer the cakes with frosting and garnish with sugared almonds. I used one of my favorite frostings, Vanilla Buttercream Frosting. Please Note: this frosting recipe is not gluten-free. To keep gluten free use Swiss Meringue Orange Buttercream instead.

In a medium heavy saucepan, add the flour, and using a wire whisk, slowly whisk in the milk, whisking until the sauce is smooth and free of lumps. Place the pan over medium heat and cook, whisking constantly, until the sauce comes to a boil and thickens, 5 to 10 minutes. Boil and whisk for 1 minute. Remove from the heat, and set aside to cool to room temperature, or a tepid temperature. While cooling, whisk frequently to keep the sauce smooth. Tip: If the sauce is too warm when added to the creamed butter mixture it will melt the butter. If the sauce is too cold it will not blend smoothly.

Meanwhile, prepare the butter and sugar when the sauce is almost cooled to the right temperature, in a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, orange zest, and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter and orange zest in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter and orange zest about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color.

With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking about 3 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Gradually add the cooled sauce, adding 2 to 3 tablespoons at a time, beating about 20 seconds between each addition. Add the vanilla and orange liqueur and continue to beat for another 1 to 2 minutes to thoroughly blend and the frosting is somewhat fluffy.

The frosting should be used immediately, or refrigerate until needed.

Assembly:

Using a long kitchen knife, split each cake into 2 horizontal layers.

Place one of the layers on a cake plate. Using an offset spatula spread frosting on the layer. Repeat with the second and third layers. Place the last cake layer on top. Cover the sides and top

of the cake with frosting. (You may have some frosting left over; refrigerate and save for another use.)

Garnish with some of the sugared almonds around the side of the cake if desired and sprinkle the remaining almonds around the top edge of the cake.

Cover cake and refrigerate until ready to serve. Refrigerate leftovers.

Sugared Almonds:

Tip: I recommend making the sugared almonds one or several days beforehand and putting in a covered container until ready to use.

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Line a large baking pan or jelly roll pan with a non-stick baking mat or parchment paper. Set aside.

In a medium size bowl, beat the egg whites with a wire whisk until foamy. Add the sugar and whisk to mix. Add the almonds and stir until the almonds are completely coated.

Bake: Spread the almonds evenly in the prepared pan and bake, stirring occasionally, 20 to 30 minutes or until the almonds are golden brown. Remove from oven and stir or break them up with your hands. Let cool completely then place in a covered bowl until ready to use. Tip: the almonds will seem very wet at first because the ratio of egg whites to almonds is high. As they bake they will begin to dry out and then turn golden brown.

59. PUMPKIN PRALINE TORTE



Praline:

¾ cup firmly packed light brown sugar

⅓ cup unsalted butter

3 tablespoons whipping (heavy) cream

¾ cup pecans, coarsely chopped,

Batter:

2 cups all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 4 large eggs
- 1⅓ cups granulated sugar
- 2 cups fresh pumpkin puree or, one 15-ounce can of pumpkin
- 1 cup vegetable oil

Sweetened Whipped Cream:

- 2 cups heavy (whipping) cream
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 to 2 tablespoons pecans, coarsely chopped (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 9-inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the bottom only of the pans.

Praline:

In a small heavy saucepan over low heat, combine the brown sugar, butter, and whipping cream; heat and stir until the sugar is dissolved and butter is melted.

Pour praline mixture in the bottom of the prepared pans, dividing evenly. Sprinkle pecans over top of praline; set aside.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, allspice, and cloves; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, add eggs; beat on medium-high speed for 2 minutes. With the mixer still on medium-high speed, slowly add the sugar to the eggs, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking 3 to 4 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the eggs and sugar are fully incorporated, and the mixture looks light in color and thickened. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Reduce mixer speed to medium, add the pumpkin puree, and beat for 1 minute. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly pour the oil into the batter in a slow steady stream, and then beat for 1 minute longer.

Reduce mixer speed to medium-low, and blend in the flour mixture all at once, mixing just until incorporated.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the pans over the praline and pecans; smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and cool on a wire cooling rack for 5 minutes.

Run a thin kitchen knife around the edge of the pans to loosen the sides. Invert the pans onto the wire rack, and then carefully lift pans off of the cake. If any praline or pecans have stuck to the pan, remove and place back on the cake. Cool Completely.

Sweetened Whipped Cream:

In a large mixing bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the whipping cream until soft mounds form; gradually add the sugar and vanilla, continue beating until thick and stiff. Tip: the cream will whip easier if the mixing bowl and beaters are first chilled; place in the refrigerator to chill until ready to whip the cream.

Assembly:

Place one cake layer, praline side up, on a serving plate. Spread two-thirds of the whipped cream over the cake. Top with second cake layer, praline side up, and remaining whipped cream. Sprinkle with additional pecans if desired.

Cover and refrigerate before serving. Refrigerate leftovers.

60. PUMPKIN SPICE CAKE



Batter:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoons baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoons ground ginger
- 14 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 cup canned pumpkin

½ cup milk (preferably whole milk)

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

1½ cups granulated sugar

2 large eggs

Brown Butter Frosting:

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter

4 cups confectioners' (powdered) sugar

1/4 cup milk (preferably whole milk)

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Garnish:

About ½ cup pecans, toasted, coarsely chopped

1 teaspoon superfine sugar

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare two 8 inch round layer cake pans; lightly grease the bottom and sides of the pans with shortening and dust with flour. Tip: to make baked cake easier to remove from pan, lightly grease the pan, line the bottom with parchment paper, and then lightly grease the top of the parchment paper and dust with flour.

Optional: Use cake strips around the pans to help ensure the cake rises evenly. Tip: Make a cake strip with a length of aluminum foil long enough to encircle the pan with a little overlap. Fold the strip lengthwise until it is 2 to 3 inches wide. Wrap the strip around the outside of the pan and secure it with a metal paper clip or tape.

Batter:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and cloves; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a small bowl, combine pumpkin, milk, and vanilla; stir together. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about one third of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add about one half of the pumpkin mixture, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and continue alternating with the flour mixture and pumpkin mixture, ending with the last portion of the flour, and stirring just until blended.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the top of the batter with a small offset spatula or the back of a large spoon. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and place pans on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pans and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

Brown Butter Frosting:

In a small heavy bottomed pan, melt the butter over medium heat until golden brown, stirring frequently, about 10 minutes. Remove pan from heat. Pour the hot butter through a fine-mesh sieve to strain out the burned sediment. Discard burned sediment.

Let butter sit until it is cooled, reaches room temperature and solidifies, or cover and chill about 1 hour until it begins to solidify, remove from refrigerator and let sit until it is room temperature and solidified.

Beat the butter with an electric mixer on medium speed until it is light and fluffy. Gradually add powdered sugar alternately with the milk, beginning and ending with the powdered sugar. Add the vanilla and continue beating another 1 to 2 minutes until the frosting is light and fluffy. Tip: The frosting should be used immediately as it will set up while standing. If frosting becomes too firm to spread add a few drops of milk and re-whip to reach spreading consistency.

Using an offset spatula, spread frosting between layers and over top and sides of cake. Spread the frosting as smooth as possible over the top and sides.

Garnish:

As soon as cake is frosted, gently press the chopped pecans into the frosting around the sides of the cake. Tip: the frosting sets up fairly quickly; add the pecans while the frosting is still soft so the pecans will adhere to the frosting.

Let the cake sit until the frosting is set or cover and refrigerate for about 30 minutes until the frosting is set.

In a small bowl, combine superfine sugar and cinnamon. Place the cutout pumpkin stencil on top of the frosted cake. Place the cinnamon mixture in a fine mesh sieve and sprinkle over the top of the cake and stencil; carefully lift off the stencil.

61. RUSSIAN MAZURKA CAKE



Batter:

- 5 large eggs, separated
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons grated lemon zest (about 2 lemons)
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 cups filberts (hazelnuts), toasted, and finely ground

Topping:

- 1 cup whipping (heavy) cream
- 3 tablespoons confectioners (powdered) sugar

3 tablespoons rum

Colored sugar Easter Eggs or jelly beans(optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare one 9 inch round layer cake pan; lightly grease the pan with shortening.

Batter:

In a large mixing bowl, combine egg yolks and sugar; with an electric hand mixer beat 3 to 5 minutes on medium-high speed until the egg yolk foam becomes thick and lemon colored and drops in ribbons when the beater is lifted. Add lemon zest, lemon juice, and ground hazelnuts; gently stir until well mixed.

In another large mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until stiff peaks form. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold the beaten egg whites into the batter.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake about 35 minutes. When the sides of the cake begin to come away from the pan, turn off the oven and let cake stand 15 minutes in the warm oven.

Remove from oven, then remove the cake from the pan and cool on a wire cooling rack.

Topping:

In a medium bowl, combine whipping cream, powdered sugar, and rum; beat until thick and stiff.

Spread topping thickly over top of cooled cake. Decorate with colored sugar Easter eggs (optional.)

Cover frosted cake and refrigerate until ready to serve. Refrigerate leftovers.

62. SOUTHERN PECAN POUND CAKE



Batter:

- 1 cup pecan halves
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1⅓ cups granulated sugar
- 5 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- ¼ cup sour cream

Topping:

¼ cup pecan halves

1 tablespoon granulated sugar

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Prepare one 10 inch Angel Food cake pan; lightly grease the pan with shortening and dust with flour.

Batter:

By hand, break the pecans for both the batter and the topping into ¼ inch pieces. Toast nuts, cool, and then toss with 1 tablespoon flour. Set aside.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and salt; sift or whisk together to mix. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Tip: To cream, start by placing the butter in the bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed begin by beating the butter about 1 minute until it is smooth and light in color. With the mixer still on medium speed, slowly add the sugar to the butter, either one tablespoon at a time, or in a very slow steady stream, taking from 4 to 8 minutes to add all of the sugar, and beating until the butter and sugar are fully incorporated and the mixture is a light, or pale yellow color, with a fluffy texture. While adding the sugar, stop the mixer occasionally to scrape the mixture off the paddle and scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

Add eggs one at a time, beating until thoroughly mixed. Add the vanilla along with the last egg. Tip: For each egg, crack the egg into a small bowl and whisk with a fork to thoroughly break up the egg before adding to the creamed mixture. Start with the mixer on low speed so the liquid from the egg doesn't splatter, once the egg is partially mixed increase the speed to medium. Each egg should be fully incorporated into the mixture before adding the next egg, taking about one minute to blend in each egg.

With the mixer on low speed, add about ½ of the flour mixture, mix just until the flour is almost completely blended. Scrape the bowl down, and add the sour cream, blending just until mixed. Scrape the bowl down again and then add the remaining ½ flour mixture, mix just until blended, scraping down the side of the bowl as needed.

Using a large rubber spatula, gently fold 1 cup toasted pecans into the batter.

Spoon the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon.

Topping:

Sprinkle ¼ cup toasted pecans over the top of the batter, and sprinkle with granulated sugar.

Bake: Bake 55 to 65 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Place pan on a wire cooling rack to cool for 10 to 15 minutes then remove cake from the pan and place the cake on the wire cooling rack to finish cooling.

63. STRAWBERRIES AND CREAM LAYERED SPONGE



Batter:

- 8 large eggs, separated
- 1 cup granulated sugar, divided
- 2½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon warm water
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sifted cake flour
- ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon cornstarch, lightly spooned into measuring cup
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar

Syrup:

34 cup plus 2 tablespoons granulated sugar

1½ cups water

6 tablespoons orange liqueur, such as Triple Sec

Berries:

2 quarts fresh ripe strawberries

Sweetened Whipped Cream:

3 cups heavy (whipping) cream

¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons granulated sugar

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Prepare three 9-inch round layer cake pans; Grease the bottom only of the pans with shortening and then line the bottom with parchment paper. Do not grease or flour the top of the parchment paper or sides of the pan.

Batter:

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, combine the egg yolks and $\frac{2}{3}$ cup granulated sugar; using an electric mixer beat on low speed about 1 minute or until blended, and then increase the mixer speed to high and beat for 5 minutes or until the mixture is very thick and drops in ribbons when the beater is lifted. Lower the speed to low and beat in the vanilla and water until mixed, and then increase the mixer to high and beat another 30 seconds or until it thickens again. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl with a rubber spatula so the mixture blends evenly.

In a small bowl combine the cake flour and cornstarch; stir to combine. Spoon or pour the flour mixture into a sifter and then sift over the egg yolk mixture without mixing in; set aside.

In another large mixing bowl and using clean beaters, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until foamy, add the cream of tartar, and beat until soft peaks form. Gradually add the remaining ½ cup sugar; continue beating until stiff peaks form.

Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula, gently fold ½ of the egg whites into the egg yolk mixture, and then gently fold in the remaining egg whites, folding until all dry particles disappear.

Bake: Spoon the batter into the prepared pans and smooth the surface with the back of a large spoon. Bake 25 minutes or until a long toothpick, wooden skewer, or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Run a small kitchen knife around the inside edge of the pan to make sure the cake is completely loosened, and unmold at once, place on a wire cooling rack, top side up, to cool. Tip: To unmold, place a flat plate over the top of the cake. Turn the pan over to unmold the cake onto the plate, then place a wire rack on top of the cake (which is actually the bottom of the cake), and then turn the cake back over so it is now sitting on the wire rack, top side up, to cool.

Syrup:

In a small saucepan over medium high heat, combine sugar and water; bring to a rolling boil, stirring constantly so mixture does not burn. Remove pan from heat, cover, and set aside to cool. When cool, pour syrup into a liquid measuring cup and add the orange liqueur. If the syrup has evaporated slightly while boiling, add enough water to equal 2 cups.

Berries:

Wash and hull the strawberries and slice lengthwise about ¼ inch thick.

Sweetened Whipped Cream:

In a large mixing bowl, using an electric mixer, beat the whipping cream until soft mounds form; gradually add the sugar and vanilla, continue beating until thick and stiff. Tip: the cream will whip easier if the mixing bowl and beaters are first chilled; place in the refrigerator to chill until ready to whip the cream.

Assembly:

Using a fork, poke several deep holes about ¼ inches apart in the top of each cake. Spoon the syrup evenly over the top of each cake and allow the syrup to soak in. Tip: place each cake on a dinner plate to catch any drips while spooning on the syrup.

Place one layer of cake on a serving plate, top side up. Spread with ¼ of the whipped cream and scatter a little less than one third of the sliced strawberries on top of the cream. Repeat with the

second layer. Place the last cake layer on top, spread with the remaining whipped cream and cover with the remaining berries.
Cover and refrigerate several hours or overnight before serving. Refrigerate leftovers.

64. STRAWBERRY MERINGUE CAKE



Meringue:

1 cup pecans, toasted

1½ cups granulated sugar, divided

2 tablespoons cornstarch

1/4 teaspoon salt

7 large egg whites

½ teaspoon cream of tartar

Mascarpone Filling:

16 ounces mascarpone cheese

3 cups whipping (heavy) cream

1 cup confectioners' (powdered) sugar

2 tablespoons freshly grated orange zest (about 1 orange)

3 tablespoons orange liqueur, such as Grand Marnier, Cointreau, or Triple Sec (or substitute orange juice)

Strawberries:

About 3 cups hulled sliced fresh strawberries

1 tablespoon orange liqueur, such as Grand Marnier, Cointreau, or Triple Sec (or substitute orange juice)

Garnish:

About 1 cup halved fresh strawberries with stems for the top of the cake (use the prettiest berries)

Preheat oven to 250 degrees F. Prepare 2 large baking pans, such as 11x17x1 inch Jelly Roll pans; cut a piece of parchment paper to fit the bottom of each pan. Draw two 8-inch circles on each piece of paper. Turn the paper over and secure the paper in the pans with tape.

Meringue:

In a food processor or small food grinder, process the toasted pecans, ½ cup sugar, cornstarch, and salt until the pecans are finely ground. Set aside.

In a large bowl of an electric mixer, beat the egg whites and cream of tartar with an electric mixer until soft peaks form. Gradually add the remaining 1 cup sugar; continue beating until stiff peaks form. Remove the bowl from the mixer. Using a balloon type whisk or large rubber spatula; gently fold half of the pecan mixture into the egg whites, then fold in the remaining pecan mixture.

Gently spoon the egg white mixture onto the parchment paper circles, dividing the mixture evenly between the four circles. Use a rubber spatula, offset spatula, or the back of a spoon to gently spread the meringue to the edges of each drawn circle.

Bake: Bake for 1 hour, rotating the baking sheets after 30 minutes. At the end of the baking time, turn off the heat and, without opening the oven door, leave the meringues in the oven for 2 to 3 hours, or overnight to let the meringues dry and become crisp.

Mascarpone Filling:

In a large mixing bowl, combine mascarpone cheese, whipping cream, confectioners' sugar, and orange zest; use an electric mixer and beat together until mixture is smooth. Add orange liqueur and continue to beat 4 to 5 minutes or until mixture is thick and fluffy. Mascarpone filling should be used immediately, or refrigerate until needed.

Strawberries:

Place the sliced strawberries in a large bowl. Sprinkle orange liqueur over the berries and stir.

Assembly:

Gently lift one of the meringue circles from the parchment paper and place on a serving plate. Tip: If the meringues spread into each other, use a sharp knife to gently cut apart. If the meringue seems stuck to the paper gently slice a metal spatula or offset spatula underneath to loosen. Don't worry if the meringue cracks, it will still taste just as good.

Spread ¼ of the mascarpone filling, about 2 cups, over the top of the meringue circle. Sprinkle top of filling with 1 cup of the sliced strawberries. Repeat with the next two layers. Place the last meringue circle on top and cover with remaining mascarpone filling.

Garnish:

Place halved strawberries around the top edge of the cake.

Cake is best served immediately. Or refrigerate up to two hours before serving. Refrigerate leftovers.

65. WHITE CHOCOLATE WEDDING CAKE



This is a moist white cake with a taste of chocolate and cream. Makes a 3-layer cake with layers measuring 14", 10" and 6". Serves approximately 100

Ingredients

- 20 cups all-purpose flour
- 8 teaspoons baking soda
- 4 teaspoons baking powder

- 4 teaspoons salt
- 3 lbs white chocolate baking bar, chopped
- 4 cups hot water
- 2 cups softened butter
- 2 cups Crisco shortening
- 12 cups white sugar
- 2 dozen large eggs
- 8 cups buttermilk
- 3 tablespoons vanilla extract

Special Equipment:

14", 10" & 6" cake pans.

separator plates & columns.

base plate or heavy cardboard base.

1/4" dowel rods, cut to size.

pastry bags.

icing decorator tips in various sizes.

food paste coloring.

Bridal cake topper and other non-edible decorations as desired.

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Sift together the flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt. Set aside. In small saucepan, melt chopped white chocolate and hot water over low heat. Stir until smooth, and allow to cool to room temperature.

In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating well with each addition. Stir in flour mixture alternately with buttermilk. Mix in melted white chocolate and vanilla.

Grease & flour pans. Divide batter into pans according to their volume measurements.

(Either measure volume by pouring water into each cake pan, or it may be marked on bottom of Wilton cake pans).

Do not fill over 2/3 full.

Bake 6" cakes for 30 to 35 minutes; bake 10" cakes for 35-40 minutes; bake 14" cakes for 40-45 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cakes comes out clean.

You will have to clean and re-use the pans to make the correct number of layers. Cool the cakes about 7-9 minutes in the pans, then remove them from the pans to wire racks. Allow to cool completely before frosting. Continue baking as above.

When cool, brush crumbs from surface, frost thinly with a layer of buttercream to seal, then start with the 14" layers, placing them on a large serving platter (or foil wrapped heavy cardboard cut to match shape of your cake).

Secure 14" layer with 5-7 1/4" dowel rods cut to the depth of the two cake layers. Insert the dowel rods in a circle (or match shape of next layer) 2" in from the edge of cake.

Place a separator plate on top of dowel rods and place the 10" cake layers, frosted with buttercream on plate. Cut 3-5 dowel rods as before to the depth of the 10" cake layers. Stabilize middle layers with dowel rods placed in 5" circle (or match shape of cake).

Place the 6" layers on a small separator plate, frost with buttercream and decorate layers as desired. Cover lightly with plastic wrap.

Cake can be transferred at this point by wedging the two bottom layers into a box just larger than the serving platter and deeper than the layers.

Place top layer in separate cake carrier (it should fit in a Tupperware or Rubbermaid carrier). Refrigerate cake until ready to serve.

When setting up for reception, assemble separator plate with columns and place on top of second layer to settle the top layer.

Have extra icing on hand to repair decorations as needed. Place bridal topper on top of cake, and use fresh or silk flowers or other non-edible decorations as desired.