

Strawberry Lemonade Layer Cake

Joann Johnson

Ingredients:

1 cup butter, softened
2 cups granulated sugar
4 large eggs, separated
3 cups cake flour
1 tbsp. baking powder
1/8 tsp. table salt
1 cup milk
1 tbsp. lemon zest
1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
Shortening
Strawberry-lemonade Jam/Strawberry Frosting*

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Beat butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy; gradually add sugar, beating until light and fluffy. Add egg yolks, one at a time, beating until blended after each addition.
2. Stir together flour and next 2 ingredients, add to butter mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Beat at low speed just until blended. Stir in zest and juice.
3. Beat egg whites in a large bowl at high speed until stiff peaks form. Gently stir one-third of egg whites into batter; fold in remaining egg whites. Spoon batter into 4 greased (with shortening) and floured 9-inch round cake pans.
4. Bake at 350° for 16 to 20 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pans on wire racks 10 minutes. Remove pans from wire racks and cool completely.
5. Place 1 cake layer on a serving platter and spread with about ½ cup strawberry-lemonade jam leaving a ½ inch border around the edge. Spoon 1 cup strawberry frosting into a zip-top plastic freezer bag. Snip 1 corner of bag to make a small hole. Pipe a ring of frosting around cake layer just inside the top edge. Top with second and third cake layers, repeating procedure with filling and frosting between each layer. Top with last cake layer, and spread remaining strawberry frosting on top and sides of cake.

*Strawberry-Lemonade Jam

Ingredients:

2 ½ cups coarsely chopped fresh strawberries
¾ cup sugar
¼ cup fresh lemon juice
3 tbsp. cornstarch

Directions:

1. Process strawberries in a blender until smooth. Press through a wire-mesh strainer into a 3-quart saucepan. Using back of a spoon to squeeze out lime juice, discard pulp. Stir in sugar.
2. Whisk together lemon juice and cornstarch. Gradually whisk into strawberry mixture. Bring mixture to a boil over medium heat and cook whisking constantly 1 minute. Remove from heat. Place plastic wrap directly on warm jam; chill 2 hours or until cold. Refrigerate in an airtight container up to 1 week.

*Strawberry Frosting

Ingredients:

1 8 oz. package cream cheese, softened
2/3 cup sugar, divided
2/3 cup chopped fresh strawberries
1 drop pink food coloring gel (optional)
1 ½ cups heavy cream
3 tbsp. fresh lemon juice

Directions:

1. Beat cream cheese and 1/3 cup sugar with an electric mixer until smooth. Add strawberries and food coloring. Beat until blended.
2. Beat cream and juice at medium speed until foamy. Increase speed to medium-high, and slowly add remaining 1/3 cup sugar, beating until stiff peaks form. Fold half of cream mixture into cheese mixture. Fold in remaining cream mixture. Use immediately.