

Walnut Espresso Cake

Ingredients

Cake ~

- 3 eggs, room temperature
- 175g butter ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) butter, room temperature
- 175g ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 180g ($1\frac{1}{2}$ cups) cake flour
- 10g ($2\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons) baking powder
- 5g (1 tablespoon) espresso powder

Buttercream ~

- 225g (1 cup) butter, at room temperature
- 400g ($3\frac{1}{2}$ cups) powdered sugar
- 15g ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup) espresso powder
- 1-2 teaspoons dark rum (I used Bundaberg Rum, which is an Aussie rum)
- 40 walnut halves, for decoration

Preparation

Cake ~

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F).
2. Line the bottom of two 8-inch springform pans with rounds of parchment and spray the sides with baking spray (you may also make this a one-layer cake by using a 9-inch springform pan).
3. In a small bowl, whisk the eggs with a fork to break up the yolks.
4. Using a stand mixer or hand held beaters, cream the butter and the sugar together until very pale and fluffy - almost as pale as milk.
5. Add about a third of the eggs while continuing to beat until incorporated, then add another third once again beating until incorporated, then the final third beating until fully incorporated.
6. Continue to beat and add the vanilla and mix until incorporated.
7. Set a sieve over the mixing bowl and sift the dry ingredients directly onto the batter.
8. using a rubber spatula, gently fold the dry ingredients in, just until no streaks of flour remain.
9. divide the batter evenly between the two prepared cake pans and smooth the tops gently.
10. Bake for 20-25 minutes (note if using a larger single pan bake for approximately 30 minutes).
11. Remove and set on a baking rack to cool.
12. After 10 minutes, invert the cakes onto the rack to finish cooling.

Buttercream ~

1. While the cakes are cooling, make the buttercream.

2. Using a stand mixer or hand held beaters, cream the butter for 1 minute.
3. Add the powdered sugar and beat until creamy and smooth.
4. Add the espresso powder and rum and beat to combine.
5. If you are not icing the cake right away, refrigerate the icing in a covered container. Bring to room temperature before icing the cake.
6. When icing the cake, you always want to ice the bottom side as it is more porous. If the cake is domed in shape, slice a thin layer off the top to make it even and level. If you do this, then either side is fine for icing.
7. Ice one layer with half the butter cream, then nestle about 20 walnut halves in the buttercream.
8. Cover with the second layer of cake, ice the second layer with the remaining buttercream and very lightly press the remaining walnut halves in a pretty pattern of concentric circles into the buttercream.
9. You can leave the sides of the cake bare, or ice them. This icing is too good to waste
10. If making this as a larger, one-layer cake, simply cover the top of the cake with all of the icing and all of the walnuts. It may look excessive but will taste fabulous.
11. This cake is best served within a few hours of icing it.