

mary berry coconut sponge cake recipe

Introduction to Mary Berry's Coconut Sponge Cake Recipe

Mary Berry coconut sponge cake recipe is a delightful treat that combines light and fluffy sponge with the tropical flavor of coconut. Mary Berry, a beloved figure in British culinary culture, is renowned for her straightforward and delicious recipes. This coconut sponge cake is no exception, offering both simplicity and an impressive taste that will please anyone who tries it. In this article, we will explore the history, ingredients, preparation steps, and tips for achieving the perfect coconut sponge cake.

The Allure of Coconut in Baking

Coconut is a versatile ingredient that adds a unique flavor and texture to baked goods. It can be found in various forms, including shredded, flaked, and in milk or cream. The use of coconut in desserts has a rich history, particularly in tropical regions where it is a staple ingredient. Its sweet, nutty flavor complements cakes beautifully, making it a popular choice for many bakers.

Why Choose Mary Berry's Recipe?

Mary Berry's coconut sponge cake recipe stands out for several reasons:

1. **Simplicity:** The recipe is straightforward, making it accessible for novice bakers.
2. **Flavor:** The balance of coconut and vanilla creates a cake that is both rich and refreshing.
3. **Texture:** The sponge is light and airy, providing a delightful contrast to the creaminess of the coconut.
4. **Versatility:** This cake can be served on its own or dressed up with frosting, fresh fruit, or a simple dusting of icing sugar.

Ingredients for Mary Berry's Coconut Sponge Cake

To make the coconut sponge cake, you will need the following ingredients:

- 200g (7 oz) self-raising flour
- 200g (7 oz) caster sugar
- 200g (7 oz) unsalted butter, softened
- 4 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 100g (3.5 oz) desiccated coconut
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

- A pinch of salt
- For the frosting (optional):
- 200g (7 oz) unsalted butter, softened
- 400g (14 oz) icing sugar
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 50g (1.75 oz) desiccated coconut for decoration

Step-by-Step Instructions

Follow these detailed instructions to create the perfect coconut sponge cake.

Preparation

Before you start baking, ensure you have everything ready. Preheat your oven to 180°C (350°F) and grease and line two 20cm (8 inch) round cake pans with baking parchment.

Mixing the Batter

1. Cream the Butter and Sugar: In a large mixing bowl, beat the softened butter and caster sugar together until the mixture is pale and fluffy. This usually takes about 3-5 minutes using an electric mixer.
2. Add Eggs: Slowly add the eggs one at a time, mixing well after each addition. This helps to incorporate air into the batter, ensuring a light sponge.
3. Combine Dry Ingredients: In a separate bowl, sift together the self-raising flour, baking powder, and salt. Gradually fold this mixture into the wet ingredients using a spatula or wooden spoon.
4. Incorporate Coconut and Vanilla: Add the desiccated coconut and vanilla extract to the batter. Gently fold until just combined. Be careful not to overmix, as this can lead to a dense cake.

Baking the Cake

1. Divide the Batter: Evenly distribute the batter between the two prepared cake pans, smoothing the tops with a spatula.
2. Bake: Place the pans in the preheated oven and bake for 20-25 minutes, or until the cakes are golden brown and a skewer inserted into the center comes out clean.
3. Cool the Cakes: Once baked, remove the cakes from the oven and let them cool in the pans for 10 minutes. Then, transfer them to a wire rack to cool completely.

Frosting and Decorating the Cake

While the cakes are cooling, you can prepare the optional frosting.

Making the Frosting

1. Cream the Butter: In a mixing bowl, beat the softened butter until smooth and creamy.
2. Add Icing Sugar: Gradually sift in the icing sugar, mixing well to avoid lumps. Add the milk to achieve a spreadable consistency.
3. Frost the Cake: Once the cakes are completely cool, place one layer on a serving plate. Spread a generous layer of buttercream on top, then place the second cake on top.
4. Decorate: Use the remaining frosting to cover the top and sides of the cake. Sprinkle desiccated coconut over the top for decoration.

Serving Suggestions

Mary Berry's coconut sponge cake is perfect for any occasion. Here are a few serving suggestions:

- With Fresh Fruit: Serve with fresh berries or tropical fruits for a refreshing contrast.
- With Cream: A dollop of whipped cream or clotted cream enhances the richness of the cake.
- As a Layer Cake: Create a multi-layered cake by adding additional layers of frosting and coconut between the sponge layers.

Tips for the Perfect Coconut Sponge Cake

1. Use Room Temperature Ingredients: Ensure that your butter and eggs are at room temperature for better incorporation and a lighter cake.
2. Don't Overmix the Batter: Overmixing can lead to a tough sponge. Gently fold ingredients until just combined.
3. Check for Doneness: Keep an eye on the cakes towards the end of baking time. Ovens vary, and you may need to adjust the time slightly.
4. Storage: Store any leftover cake in an airtight container at room temperature for up to three days. You can also freeze the cake for longer storage.

Conclusion

Mary Berry's coconut sponge cake is a delightful addition to any dessert table, combining simplicity with a burst of flavor. Whether you're baking for a special occasion or just treating yourself, this recipe is sure to impress. With its fluffy texture and tropical taste, it embodies the essence of comfort food, making it a beloved choice among cake enthusiasts. Follow the steps outlined in this article, and you'll be well on your way to creating a stunning coconut sponge cake that captures the spirit of Mary Berry's culinary expertise. Happy baking!

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the main ingredients in Mary Berry's coconut sponge cake recipe?

The main ingredients include self-raising flour, desiccated coconut, butter, sugar, eggs, and baking powder.

How long does it take to bake Mary Berry's coconut sponge cake?

It typically takes about 25 to 30 minutes to bake the cake at 180°C (350°F).

Can I use fresh coconut instead of desiccated coconut in the recipe?

Yes, you can use fresh coconut, but it may alter the texture and moisture of the cake.

What is the best way to store Mary Berry's coconut sponge cake?

Store the cake in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days or in the fridge for up to a week.

Is it possible to make Mary Berry's coconut sponge cake gluten-free?

Yes, you can substitute self-raising flour with a gluten-free flour blend to make it gluten-free.

What can I serve with Mary Berry's coconut sponge cake?

It pairs well with a dollop of whipped cream, custard, or a scoop of ice cream, and can be garnished with fresh fruit.

Can I make Mary Berry's coconut sponge cake in advance?

Yes, you can bake the cake in advance and freeze it. Just ensure it is well-wrapped to maintain freshness.

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