

VICTORIA SPONGE RECIPE



Ingredients

4 free-range eggs
225g/8oz caster sugar, plus a little extra for dusting the finished cake
225g/8oz self-raising flour
2 tsp baking powder
225g/8oz butter at room temperature, plus a little extra to grease the tins
To serve
good-quality strawberry or raspberry jam
whipped double cream (optional)

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/160C Fan/Gas 4. Grease and line two 20cm/8in sandwich tins.
2. Break the eggs into a large mixing bowl, then add the sugar, flour, baking powder and butter. Mix together until well combined with an electric hand mixer (you can also use a wooden spoon), but be careful not to over mix. Put a damp cloth under your bowl when you're mixing to stop it moving around. The finished mixture should fall off a spoon easily.
3. Divide the mixture evenly between the tins: this doesn't need to be exact, but you can weigh the filled tins if you want to check. Use a spatula to remove all of the mixture from the bowl and gently smooth the surface of the cakes.
4. Bake the cakes on the middle shelf of the oven for 25 minutes. Check them after 20 minutes. The cakes are done when they're golden-brown and coming away from the edge of the tins. Press them gently to check – they should be springy to the touch.
5. Set aside to cool in their tins for 5 minutes. Run a palette or rounded butter knife around the inside edge of the tins and carefully turn the cakes out onto a cooling rack.
6. To assemble the cake, place one cake upside down onto a plate and spread it with plenty of jam. If you want to, you can spread over whipped cream too.
7. Top with the second cake, top-side up. Sprinkle over the caster sugar.

LEMON DRIZZLE RECIPE



Ingredients

225g/8oz unsalted butter, softened,
plus extra for greasing
225g/8oz caster sugar
4 free-range eggs
225g/8oz self-raising flour
1 unwaxed lemon, zest and juice
85g/3oz icing sugar

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/160C Fan/Gas 4. Grease a 900g/2lb loaf tin with a little butter and line with baking paper.
2. Tip the remaining butter and caster sugar into a food processor and blend for a few seconds. Add the eggs one at a time, blending after each addition. Add the flour and lemon zest and blend until smooth.
3. Pour the batter into the lined baking tin, flatten the top with the back of a spoon and bake for 50–55 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, stir together the lemon juice and icing sugar. When the cake has cooled a little, poke holes in the top using a skewer, chopstick or a piece of raw spaghetti. Drizzle over the icing, set aside for a few minutes, and serve.

BASIC CUPCAKE RECIPE



Ingredients

For the cupcakes

110g/4oz butter or margarine, softened
at room temperature

110g/4oz caster sugar

2 free-range eggs, lightly beaten

1 tsp vanilla extract

110g/4oz self-raising flour

1-2 tbsp milk

For the buttercream icing

140g/5oz butter, softened

280g/10oz icing sugar

1-2 tbsp milk

a few drops food colouring

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4 and line a 12-hole muffin tin with paper cupcake cases.
2. Cream the butter and sugar together in a bowl until pale. Beat in the eggs a little at a time and stir in the vanilla extract.
3. Fold in the flour using a large metal spoon, adding a little milk until the mixture is of a dropping consistency. Spoon the mixture into the cupcake cases until they are half full.
4. Bake the cupcakes in the oven for 10-15 minutes, or until golden-brown on top and a skewer inserted into one of the cakes comes out clean. Set aside to cool for 5 minutes, then remove from the tin and cool on a wire rack.
5. For the buttercream icing, beat the butter in a large bowl until soft. Add half the icing sugar and beat until smooth.
6. Then add the remaining icing sugar with one tablespoon of the milk, adding more milk if necessary, until the mixture is smooth and creamy. Add the food colouring and mix until well combined.
7. Spoon the icing into a piping bag with a star nozzle and pipe the icing using a spiralling motion onto the cupcakes in a large swirl.