



Victoria Sponge



Ingredients

For the Sponge –

- 3 eggs
- 150g caster sugar
- 150g unsalted butter
- 150g sieved self-raising flour
- 1/2 tsp of vanilla essence
- Jam (strawberry or raspberry)

For the buttercream –

- 150g softened unsalted butter
- 220g sieved icing sugar
- 1/3 vanilla pod or vanilla essence

Instructions

For the Sponge:

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (375F, gas mark 4).
2. Grease and line two 8 inch cake tins (if you only own one tin, you can bake the sponge and slice in half).
3. Cream the caster sugar, vanilla essence and softened unsalted butter until light and fluffy.
4. Gradually add the beaten eggs, a little at a time, to avoid the mixture curdling.
5. Sieve the flour and fold into the mixture.
6. Divide the cake mix between the two cake tins and smooth.
7. Place on the middle shelf of the oven and bake for approximately 20 minutes, until the cake appears golden brown.
8. Insert a skewer and ensure it comes out clean.
9. Remove the sponges from their tins and leave to cool.

For the Buttercream:

1. Cream the softened butter with the sieved icing sugar and seeds from the vanilla pod (or vanilla essence).

Assembling the cake

1. Ensure that both sponges are completely cold before spreading a layer of jam onto the surface of one sponge.
2. Spread a thick layer of buttercream on top of the jam (if you prefer this can be done first).
3. Gently place the second sponge on top and gently press down.
4. Sprinkle with icing sugar and serve with a pot of fresh English tea!



Welsh Cakes (Cacennau Cymraeg)



In the 19th and early 20th century, Wales was the largest producer of coal in the world. The village men would go off to the coalmines while the lady of the household would prepare Welsh cakes. These would be served with afternoon tea; children were also given these to take along with their lunches for school.

Because Welsh cakes are rather durable and easy to carry in the coat pocket, they became a staple among the coalminers working underground, perfect for bringing cheer to a dismal day in the mines.

Ingredients

Ingredients (for 12 pieces)

- 225g of self-raising flour, or 225g plain flour and 1tsp baking powder
- 1 pinch of salt
- 100g of butter, or margarine, plus extra for cooking
- 50g of caster sugar, plus extra for sprinkling
- 50g of currants
- 1 egg, beaten with 3 tbsp milk

Instructions

1. Mix the flour and salt together in a large bowl and rub in the margarine or butter. Add the sugar and currants and stir well.
2. Pour the egg mixture in and mix until you have a stiff dough.
3. Roll the dough out on a lightly floured board until about 5mm thickness and stamp out rounds with a pastry/biscuit cutter.
4. Heat the griddle [a heavy cast iron frying pan makes a good substitute] over a medium heat until hot and grease with a little butter – the baking griddle should be well-greased, and then heated until a little water sprinkled on the surface skips about in balls, evaporating. Cook the cakes for about 3-4 minutes each side, until they are golden brown and have risen slightly.
5. Serve immediately sprinkled with a little extra caster sugar. If preferred, they can be eaten cold for up to a week but mine never last that long.