

Raspberry Bakewell cake



Ingredients

- 140g ground almonds
- 140g butter, softened
- 140g golden caster sugar
- 140g self-raising flour
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 250g raspberries
- 2 tbsp flaked almonds
- icing sugar, to serve

Method:

1. Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4 and base-line
2. Grease a deep 20cm loose-bottomed cake tin.
3. Blitz the ground almonds, butter, sugar, flour, eggs and vanilla extract in a food processor or by hand until well combined.
4. Spread half the mix over the cake tin and smooth over the top.
5. Scatter the raspberries over, then dollop the remaining cake mixture on top and roughly spread – you might find this easier to do with your fingers.
6. Scatter with flaked almonds and bake for 50 mins until golden.
7. Cool, remove from the tin and dust with icing sugar to serve.

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Chocolate marble cake



Ingredients

- 225g butter, softened
- 225g caster sugar
- 4 eggs
- 225g self-raising flour
- 3 tbsp milk
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder

Method:

1. Heat oven to 180C/gas 160C/gas 4.
2. Grease a 20cm cake tin and line the bottom with a circle of greaseproof paper. If you want to make life easy, simply put all the ingredients (except the cocoa powder) into a food processor and whizz for 1-2 mins until smooth. If you prefer to mix by hand, beat the butter and sugar together, then add the eggs, one at a time, mixing well after each addition. Fold through the flour, milk and vanilla extract until the mixture is smooth.
3. Divide the mixture between two bowls. Stir the cocoa powder into the mixture in one of the bowls. Take 2 spoons and use them to dollop the chocolate and vanilla cake mixes into the tin alternately. When all the mixture has been used up (and if young kids are doing this, you'll need to ensure the base of the tin is fairly evenly covered), tap the bottom on your work surface to ensure that there aren't any air bubbles.
4. Take a skewer and swirl it around the mixture in the tin a few times to create a marbled effect.
5. Bake the cake for 45-55 mins until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Turn out onto a cooling rack and leave to cool.

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Easy chocolate cupcakes



Ingredients

- 300g dark chocolate, broken into chunks - don't use one with a high cocoa content
- 200g self-raising flour
- 200g light muscovado sugar, plus 3 tbsp extra
- 6 tbsp cocoa
- 150ml sunflower oil, plus a little extra for greasing
- 284ml pot soured cream
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Method:

1. Heat oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4 and line a 10-hole muffin tin with paper cases.
2. Whizz the chocolate into small pieces in a food processor. In the largest mixing bowl you have, tip in the flour, sugar, cocoa, oil, 100ml soured cream, eggs, vanilla and 100ml water. Whisk everything together with electric beaters until smooth, then quickly stir in 100g of the whizzed-up chocolate bits.
3. Divide between the 10 cases, then bake for 20 mins until a skewer inserted comes out clean (make sure you don't poke it into a chocolate chip bit).
4. Cool on a wire rack.
5. To make the icing, put the remaining chocolate bits, soured cream and 3 tbsp sugar in a small saucepan. Heat gently, stirring, until the chocolate is melted and you have a smooth icing. Chill in the fridge until firm enough to swirl on top of the muffins, then tuck in.

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Granny's Victoria sponge cake



Ingredients

- 200g unsalted butter, softened, plus extra for greasing
- 200g caster sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 4 medium eggs
- 200g self-raising flour, plus extra for dusting
- about 6 tbsp raspberry jam
- 250ml double cream, whipped
- icing sugar, for dusting

Method:

1. Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5.
2. Grease and flour 2 x 20cm sandwich tins.
3. Place the butter, sugar and vanilla extract into a bowl and beat well to a creamy consistency. Slowly beat in the eggs, one by one, then fold in the flour and mix well.
4. Divide the mix between the cake tins, place into the oven and bake for about 20 mins until risen and golden brown. The cakes should spring back when gently pushed in the middle. When ready, remove from the oven>
5. Allow to cool for 5 mins in the tin, before turning out onto a wire rack and cooling completely.
6. Spread the jam onto one cake and top with the cream. Sandwich the cakes together and dust with icing sugar.

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Being inventive... Hedgehog cake



Ingredients

- 150g unsalted butter
- 150g plain flour
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 200g light muscovado sugar
- 150g plain chocolate, broken into pieces
- * 150g soured cream
- * ½ tsp baking powder
- * 2 large eggs
- * 1 tsp vanilla extract

For the icing and decoration

- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- 150g unsalted butter, softened
- 2 x 134g boxes choc Flake bars
- 2 chocolate chips
- 1 round chocolate
- * 2 tbsp hot water
- * 300g icing sugar
- * 2 tbsp hot water
- * 2 gold or silver balls
- * 2 tbsp cocoa powder

Method:

1. Heat the oven to 160C/140C fan/gas 3. Grease and base line a 1 litre heatproof glass pudding basin and a 450g loaf tin with baking parchment.
2. Put the butter and chocolate into a saucepan and melt over a low heat, stirring. When the chocolate has all melted remove from the heat.
3. In a large bowl mix together the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and muscovado sugar. In another bowl beat together the eggs, soured cream and vanilla extract. Pour the egg and chocolate mixtures into the flour and mix thoroughly together.
4. Weigh 250g into the loaf tin, then spoon the rest of the mixture into the pudding basin.
5. Cook both cakes side by side in the oven. The loaf cake will cook in about 30 mins and the basin cake in about 1 hour. Take the loaf cake out of the oven and close the oven door quickly so as not to allow the heat out. Test with a skewer inserted into the centre, it should come out clean. If not return to the oven for another five mins. Repeat with the basin cake after about another half an hour. Once each cake is cooked, allow to cool completely before turning out.
6. To make the icing, mix together the cocoa and water to make a smooth paste. Beat the butter until soft and gradually beat in the icing sugar. Add the cocoa paste and beat until smooth.
7. To assemble the cake, trim the top of the basin cake so it is flat. Turn cut side down onto a board and cut in half vertically. Spread a little butter icing on each of the flat bases and sandwich these two butter-creamed surfaces together to make a rugby ball shape for the hedgehog body. Place onto a 30cm cake board or wooden board. Cut the loaf cake in half vertically. Take one half and trim the short end to a v shape to make the pointy head. Use a little icing to attach to the body. Cut pieces from the remaining loaf cake to fill any gaps. Cover the whole cake in butter icing.
8. Cut the flake bars into pieces ranging from 2.5cm to 5cm. The spikes do not have to be regular or even in shape. Starting at the front push the spikes into the body of the hedgehog at a slight angle. Start with the small pieces gradually using larger ones as you go towards the back. Press a round chocolate into the tip of the head to represent the nose and use chocolate chips for the eyes. Using a tiny bit of butter icing attach silver or gold balls to the eyes.