

Cream Cheese Coffee Cake

From the episode: *Coffee Break Sweets*

Makes one 10-inch cake, serving 12 to 16

Leftovers should be stored in the refrigerator, covered tightly with plastic wrap. For optimal texture, allow the cake to return to room temperature before serving.

INGREDIENTS

LEMON SUGAR-ALMOND TOPPING

- 1/4** cup sugar
- 1 1/2** teaspoons finely grated zest from 1 lemon
- 1/2** cup sliced almonds

CAKE

- 2 1/4** cups (11 1/4 ounces) unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 1/8** teaspoons baking powder
- 1 1/8** teaspoons baking soda
- 1** teaspoon table salt
- 10** tablespoons (1 stick plus 2 tablespoons) unsalted butter , softened but still cool
- 1** cup plus 7 tablespoons sugar
- 1** tablespoon finely grated zest plus 4 teaspoons juice from 1 to 2 lemons
- 4** large eggs
- 5** teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 1/4** cups sour cream
- 8** ounces cream cheese , softened

INSTRUCTIONS

1. FOR THE TOPPING: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Stir together sugar and lemon zest in small bowl until combined and sugar is moistened. Stir in almonds; set aside.

2. FOR THE CAKE: Spray 10-inch tube pan with nonstick cooking spray. Whisk flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt together in medium bowl; set aside. In stand mixer fitted with paddle attachment, beat butter, 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar, and lemon zest at medium speed until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes, scraping down sides and bottom of bowl with rubber spatula. Add eggs 1 at a time, beating well after each addition, about 20 seconds, and scraping down beater and sides of bowl as necessary. Add 4 teaspoons vanilla and mix to combine. Reduce speed to low and add one-third flour mixture, followed by half of sour cream, mixing until incorporated after each addition, 5 to 10 seconds. Repeat, using half of remaining flour mixture and all of remaining sour cream. Scrape bowl and add remaining flour mixture; mix at low speed until batter is thoroughly combined, about 10 seconds. Remove bowl from mixer and fold batter once or twice with rubber spatula to incorporate any remaining flour.

3. Reserve 1¼ cups batter and set aside. Spoon remaining batter into prepared pan and smooth top. Return now-empty bowl to mixer and beat cream cheese, remaining 5 tablespoons sugar, lemon juice, and remaining teaspoon vanilla on medium speed until smooth and slightly lightened, about 1 minute. Add ¼ cup reserved batter and mix until incorporated. Spoon cheese filling mixture evenly over batter, keeping filling about 1 inch from edges of pan; smooth top. Spread remaining cup reserved batter over filling and smooth top. With butter knife or offset spatula, gently swirl filling into batter using figure-8 motion, being careful to not drag filling to bottom or edges of pan. Firmly tap pan on counter 2 or 3 times to dislodge any bubbles. Sprinkle lemon sugar-almond topping evenly over batter and gently press into batter to adhere.

4. Bake until top is golden and just firm, and long skewer inserted into cake comes out clean (skewer will be wet if inserted into cheese filling), 45 to 50 minutes. Remove pan from oven and firmly tap on counter 2 or 3 times (top of cake may sink slightly). Cool cake in pan on wire rack 1 hour. Gently invert cake onto rimmed baking sheet (cake will be topping-side down); remove tube pan, place wire rack on top of cake, and invert cake sugar-side up. Cool to room temperature, about 1½ hours. Cut into slices and serve.

TECHNIQUE

TAP ONCE, TAP TWICE

Tapping the tube pan on the counter before and after baking eliminates any large air pockets in the filling.



TECHNIQUE

ASSEMBLING CREAM CHEESE COFFEE CAKE

1. Reserve 1 1/4 cups batter, then fill pan with remaining batter; smooth top.



2. Beat 1/4 cup reserved batter with filling ingredients; spoon filling evenly over batter.



3. Top filling with remaining cup reserved batter; smooth top.



4. Using figure-8 motion, swirl filling into batter. Tap pan on counter.



5. Sprinkle lemon sugar-almond topping onto batter, then gently press to adhere.



America's Test Kitchen is a 2,500-square-foot kitchen located just outside of Boston. It is the home of *Cook's Country* and *Cook's Illustrated* magazines and is the workday destination for more than three dozen test cooks, editors, and cookware specialists. Our mission is to test recipes until we understand how and why they work and arrive at the best version. We also test kitchen equipment and supermarket ingredients in search of brands that offer the best value and performance. You can watch us work by tuning in to *America's Test Kitchen* (www.americastestkitchen.com) on public television.