

PRUE LEITH'S MATCHA MILLE CRÊPE CAKE



Prue Leith

The crêpes in this beautiful, celebration centrepiece are made using matcha powder – finely ground green tea leaves that give a gorgeous, vivid colour. In Prue's recipe, they are layered with creamy, white chocolate and strawberry filling.

Serves: 10
Hands-On Time: 1 hr 20 mins
Baking Time: 40 mins

INGREDIENTS

For the batter:

400ml whole milk
45g caster sugar
3 large eggs
25g unsalted butter, melted
125g plain flour
15g cornflour
½ tsp baking powder
15g matcha powder, plus extra for dusting
Sunflower oil, for cooking

For the white chocolate filling:

150g white chocolate
75ml double cream
2 large egg whites
70g caster sugar
1 tsp vanilla paste
½ tsp fine salt
225g unsalted butter, softened
400g strawberries, hulled

To decorate:

Sliced strawberries
Fresh mango, cut into 5mm dice
Freeze-dried raspberry pieces
Desiccated coconut
Edible flowers (white and purple are pretty)

EQUIPMENT

You will need:

Sugar thermometer
Mandoline or very sharp knife
30cm crêpe or frying pan
24cm crêpe or frying pan
20cm plate or cake-tin base
23cm shallow bowl, lined with cling film, leaving a 20cm overhang

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METHOD

Step 1

Make the batter. Gently heat the milk and sugar over a low heat for 2–3 minutes, stirring, until the sugar dissolves and the milk is warm.

Step 2

Beat the eggs in a mixing bowl. Using a balloon whisk, slowly add the warm milk mixture to the eggs, whisking continuously. Add the melted butter and mix until combined.

Step 3

Sift together the flour, cornflour, baking powder and matcha powder over the egg mixture and whisk until completely smooth. Pass through a sieve into a clean jug, then cover and chill for 30 minutes.

Step 4

Meanwhile, make a white chocolate ganache for the filling. Melt the white chocolate with the cream in a heatproof bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water. Stir until smooth and remove from the heat, then leave to cool to room temperature.

Step 5

Place the egg whites and sugar in a separate heatproof bowl set over a pan of simmering water. Whisk continuously with a balloon whisk until the mixture reaches 71°C on a sugar thermometer.

Step 6

Transfer the egg-white mixture to a stand mixer fitted with the whisk, then whisk on high speed for 5–7 minutes, until you have a stiff, glossy meringue. Add the vanilla paste and salt and whisk for a few seconds to combine. Leave to cool to room temperature.

Step 7

In a separate bowl, whisk the softened butter until light and fluffy, then whisk in the white chocolate ganache until smooth. Add one third of the meringue and whisk gently until the meringue has been incorporated. Gently fold in the remaining meringue. Cover and set aside at room temperature.

Step 8

Using a mandoline or very sharp knife, cut the strawberries into wafer-thin slices and place them on kitchen paper.

Step 9

Make the crêpes. Heat the 30cm crêpe or frying pan over a medium heat. Lightly brush with sunflower oil, then remove any excess with scrunched-up kitchen paper.

Step 10

Pour in just enough batter to lightly cover the base of the pan and cook over a medium heat for 1½–2 minutes, until the outside edge begins to crisp. Loosen with a spatula, flip over and cook the other side for another 30 seconds. Transfer the crêpe to a sheet of baking paper and leave to cool.

Step 11

Heat the 24cm crêpe or frying pan over a medium heat and repeat steps 9 and 10 until you have used all the batter. You should end up with 1 large crêpe and 13 smaller ones.

Step 12

Using a 20cm plate or cake-tin base as a guide, trim the 13 smaller pancakes so that they are all the same size.

Step 13

To assemble, cut two 50 x 10cm-long strips of baking paper and arrange them in a cross on the work surface. Place the largest crêpe in the middle of the paper cross. Spoon 2–3 tablespoons of the white chocolate filling on top and spread out evenly with a palette knife.

Step 14

Place one of the smaller crêpes on top of the large crêpe, in the middle, and spread with more filling, then place another crêpe on top. Spread the crêpe with more filling, then neatly arrange a layer of the sliced strawberries over the top, leaving a 1cm border around the edge.

Step 15

Continue layering the crêpes in the same way, adding a layer of strawberries after every second crêpe. You should end up with 7 layers of 2 crêpes and 6 layers of sliced strawberries.

Step 16

Holding the ends of the paper cross, bring them up and over the crêpe cake to meet in the middle, then use as a handle to lift the cake into the lined bowl. Slip the strips of paper out from under the cake.

Step 17

Wrap the cling film tightly over the top (which will become the bottom) of the cake and secure tightly, so the edges of the large crêpe envelop the small crêpes. Chill for at least 4 hours, until set.

Step 18

To serve, turn out the cake, dome-side up, onto a cake plate or cake stand and discard the cling film. Dust with extra matcha powder and decorate with a crescent of fresh fruit, freeze-dried raspberries, desiccated coconut and edible flowers.