

PERSIAN LOVE CAKE - STACKED EDITION

So sure, I definitely shared my bundt version of it with you last week but now I wanted to share again, but this time as a stacked cake, making it perfect for a birthday or a celebration or an anniversary or just a Thursday. The sponge still has bundles of flavour and despite it being soaked to an inch of its life with a beautiful rose and cardamom spiked sugar syrup, it's sturdy as heck. SOMETIMES bigger, truly is better.

Recipe Makes: 3 x 7 inch tins

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SPONGE

300g Unsalted Butter*
100 ml Veg Oil
255 g Caster Sugar
6 Medium Eggs
18 Green Cardamom Pods
275 g '00' Flour or Plain**
400 g Ground Almonds
2 ½ tsp Baking Powder**
Pinch of Salt
Zest and Juice of 1 Lemon
1.25 tbsp Rose Water
150 ml Buttermilk*

*room temp

SOAK

75 g Caster Sugar
60 ml Water
45 ml Lemon Juice, fresh
Zest of 1 Lemon
3 Cardamom Pods
3/4 tbsp Rose Water

**sifted

FILLING

125 g Unsalted Pistachio
160 g White Chocolate
50 g Unsalted Butter

BUTTERCREAM

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- Preheat oven to 150C Fan/Gas Mark 3/302F Fan and grease and line 3 x 7 inch cake tins. YES BOTTOM AND SIDES OKAY. The faff now is so worth it later.

- Add the butter, oil and sugar to a stand mixer bowl and cream together until light and fluffy using the paddle attachment, for at least for 5 minutes on a medium speed.

- Next in are the eggs. I would normally say to beat well between each addition but I plonked them all in together and still yielded a great result.

- In a separate bowl mix together the flour, ground almonds, salt and baking powder.

- Next you want to split open the cardamom pods, remove the seeds and use a pestle and mortar to grind down to a fine dust. If you have a mini blender, use this but when I say fine dust, just as fine as you can go.

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- Add the mixed flour, ground cardamom seeds, lemon zest and juice and rose water to the main bowl and give it a good mix until there are no visible streaks of flour. You can do this by hand using a rubber spatula or pop it back into the stand mixer and mix on a low to med speed.

- When combined, pour in the buttermilk to finish and fold in well to completely combine before transferring the batter evenly between the three tins.

- Pop it into the oven and bake for 32 to 35 minutes.

- In the meantime, make the drizzle by adding all ingredients to a saucepan (don't worry about removing the seeds from the pod, just pierce each one with a knife and pop it in) and place over a gentle heat until slightly thickened, with a more syrupy consistency. This should take about 8 to 10 mins over a low to med heat. When done, leave to one side.

- Once your sponges are baked, allow them to sit for 5 minutes at room temp to relax slightly.

- Turn out each of the sponges onto a cooling rack before using a pastry brush to liberally apply the sugar syrup across each one. Use up all of that sugary goodness to ensure your sponges are moist AF.

- Carefully cover the sponges with clingfilm and leave to completely cool. Yes they are warm but wrapping them now means the sponges will retain their moisture.

- In the meantime, make the white chocolate and pistachio filling by adding the pistachios to a pan of boiling water. Let them bubble away in there for 5 minutes, until the water has a brown film. Drain the pistachios in a sieve, rinse under cold water and peel away any remaining skin to reveal beautifully bright green pistachios.

- Pop them into a blender and blitz until you are left with a fine green paste/crumb.

- Add the white chocolate and butter to a pan and gently heat. I SAID GENTLY OKAY! Use a rubber spatula to mix until smooth before adding in the pistachio paste. Mix well. Note: If you find you have oil pooling, no stress. Just drain this out well.

- Once your sponges are cool, begin to stack your sponges using the buttercream of your choice (my swiss meringue duh) and use the pistachio paste between each layer (this likely won't be spreadable by palette knife, so either roll out, or smush with your clean hands).

- Decorate as you wish or check Rubes Recommends for how to pipe this beauty.