

Frosted Forest Cake

Serves 8-10

This cake is super moist with just a soft hint of vanilla mint flavor and a smooth buttercream/cream cheese hybrid frosting.

Prep time: 45 minutes

Cook time: 45 minutes

Cool time 30 minutes

Decorating time: 1 hour

Total: 3 hours

Ingredients

Cake (per layer)

- 1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3/4 cup unsalted butter (melted is fine, who remembers to thaw butter?)
- 3 egg whites
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 tbsp vanilla
- 1/2 cup whole milk
- 1 tsp mint extract (if you aren't into mint sub in almond or raspberry flavor instead)

Frosting

- 1.5 lb powdered sugar
- 1 lb unsalted butter
- 1 tsp vanilla extract 5mL
- 10-20 drops green food coloring for the trees
- 1/2 tsp mint extract
- 1 brick of cream cheese

Decorating

- 10-12 sugar ice cream cones
- Red circle sprinkles for decorating, optional

Instructions

Cake

1. Butter two to three 8-inch pans. Preheat oven to 350F.

2. Sift the dry ingredients together in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, beat the wet ingredients together until smooth.
3. Add the wet to the dry and mix until combined. This will make one layer so repeat steps 1-3 for how many layers you want. Two layers will make an 8-inch tall cake.
4. Bake for 35-40 minutes or until the center domes and a toothpick can be inserted and removed with no crumbs.
5. Let the layers cool in the pans for about 5 minutes, then dump each layer out onto a cooling rack. I recommend that you cut cardboard circles to be the same size as the cake to place under the bottom layer to make it easier to slide around during decorating.

Frosting

1. Beat the butter and cream cheese together until smooth. Add the sugar and mix on high. Add the vanilla and salt. You can also add whole milk a tablespoon at a time to get a smoother consistency if needed.
2. Divide the frosting into two batches. For one batch, add the green food coloring and mint extract and mix until combined.
3. Frosting should be very thick. Add powdered sugar by the half cup to thicken if needed.
4. Keep green piping frosting refrigerated until directly before decorating.

*Alternatively, you can buy frosting and spruce it up! Just get two tubs of buttercream frosting, and 1 tub of cream cheese frosting. Add ½ brick of cream cheese and 3 cups of powdered sugar (in ½ cup increments) until you reach a desired consistency.

Put it together!

1. After cake layers are completely cool (important so that the frosting doesn't melt) pipe a two-tone spiral of green and white frosting on the top of each bottom layer and stack the layers. If you are doing more than 2 layers, I recommend that you use cake straws to stabilize your cake.
2. For the trees on the side of the cake, use a serrated knife to cut the a few sugar cones into different sizes. Once you have a variety of desired sizes, carefully cut them in half. This is easier if you gingerly dip the side that you want to cut into water.
3. Place cones onto cake where you would like the "trees" to be. Be sure to leave enough space for frosting! Use a number 30 tip (use a smaller tip for small trees) to pipe loose star-shaped dollops onto the surface of the cone beginning at the bottom and working to the top. If your stars start to blob too much, place your piping bag back in the refrigerator for a while to set the frosting again.
4. When all of your trees have been piped, individually add red circle sprinkles to a few if you would like to make them more festive. Liberally sift powdered sugar onto the top of the cake and get your forks and plates out!

Recipe adapted from John Kanell.