



Toasted Almond Cake with Strawberries in Rose Water Syrup

contributed by Jenn from Epicurious.com

This cake is pretty much a fancy version of strawberry shortcake with a middle eastern twist. It is pretty easy to make and REALLY yummy. I added a bit of sugar to the whipping cream - maybe 1/8-1/4 cup.

- Cake (not cut) improves in flavor if made at least 1 day ahead (up to 3) and kept, tightly wrapped in plastic wrap, at room temperature.
- Strawberries can be macerated in syrup up to 2 hours.
- Rose water can be found at Middle Eastern grocery stores and Whole Foods

Quantity	Ingredients	Preparation Notes
Cake		
3/4 C	Whole Almonds with skins (1/4 lb), toasted and cooled	• Make cake first
1 1/4 C	Flour	• Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 350°F.
1 tsp	Baking Powder	• Butter and flour 9" square cake pan, knocking out excess flour
1/2 tsp	Salt	• With blender motor at high speed, add half of toasted almonds through top hole and finely grind (be careful not to grind to a paste).
4	Large eggs at room temperature (about 30 minutes)	• Transfer to a bowl and grind remaining almonds in same manner, transferring to bowl.
1 1/4 C	Superfine Granulated Sugar	• Add flour, baking powder, and salt to ground almonds and whisk until combined well.
3/4 C	Butter, melted and cooled (1 1/2 sticks)	• Beat eggs in a large bowl with an electric mixer at high speed until foamy, about 15 seconds, then add superfine sugar a little at a time, beating.
1/3 C	Whole Milk	• Continue beating until mixture is thick, pale, and forms a ribbon when beater is lifted, 7 to 8 minutes in a stand mixer or 10 to 14 minutes with a handheld.
1/4 tsp	Almond Extract	• Add butter in a slow stream, beating, then add milk and almond extract and beat until just combined.
1/2 C	Sliced Almonds (2 oz)	• Reduce speed to low, then add flour mixture, mixing until just combined.
Strawberries and Cream		• Spread batter in pan, smoothing top, then sprinkle evenly with sliced almonds.
2 C	Water	• Bake until top is golden, cake begins to pull away from side of pan, and a wooden pick inserted in center of cake comes out clean, 30 to 40 minutes.
1 1/3 C	Sugar	• Cool cake in pan on a rack 30 minutes, then run a knife around edge to loosen and invert onto rack.
6 Tbsp	Fresh Lemon Juice	• Turn cake right side up on rack and cool completely, about 30 minutes more.
2 lb	Strawberries, trimmed and quartered lengthwise	• Make Strawberries in Syrup
1/2 tsp	Rose Water or 1 tsp Vanilla Extract (to taste)	• Bring water, sugar, and lemon juice to a boil in a 2- to 3-quart saucepan, stirring until sugar is dissolved, then boil, uncovered, until reduced to about 2 cups, 8 to 10 minutes.
1 1/2 C	Chilled Heavy Cream	• Transfer syrup to a bowl and cool completely. Stir in strawberries and rose water and macerate at room temperature 30 minutes.

🍌 **Whip Cream and Assemble**

- 🍌 Beat cream in a large bowl with cleaned beaters until it holds soft peaks.
- 🍌 Cut cake into 4 squares and reserve 2 squares for another use.
- 🍌 Carefully cut each of remaining 2 squares diagonally into quarters for a total of 8 triangles, then halve each triangle horizontally.
- 🍌 Sandwich triangle halves with strawberries, syrup, and whipped cream.