



# FOR THE LOVE OF CAKE

*Louise Vansleve & Adam Cremona*

Photography by Frank Selmo



# CONTENTS

## THE CLASSICS 11

Classic butter cake 12

Classic one bowl chocolate cake 14

Suzanne's sponge cake 16

Marble cake 18

Devil's food cake 20

The perfect cupcake recipe 22

Sour Cream and Lemon Pound Cake 24

Indulgent dark fruit cake 26

Spanish Magdalenas 28

## FRUIT & FANCY 30

Whole orange and poppy seed cake with glacé icing 32

Super moist carrot cake with lemony cream cheese frosting 34

Hummingbird cake 36

Layered mocha banana Bundt cake 38

Pineapple upside down cake 40

Delicate & dainty Earl Grey & lemon curd chiffon cake 42

## DECADENT DESSERT CAKES 44

Almond & pecan coffee crumble cake 46

Red velvet cake with marshmallow frosting 48

Sumptuous Black Forest gâteau 50

Flourless chocolate hazelnut dessert cake 52

## MUD CAKES 54

Heavenly white chocolate mud cake 56

Salted caramel mud cake 58

Divine dark chocolate mud cake 60

## WORLD FLAVOURED CAKES 62

Tropical coconut cake with pineapple & lime jam 64

Indonesian orange Lapis Surabaya cake 66

Hungarian chocolate & raisin kuglóf 68

Torta de Santiago (cake of Saint James) 70

Pistachio & rosewater marshmallow cake 72

## JAMS, JELLIES & SYRUPS 74

Tips & Tricks for making Jams, Jellies & Syrups 76

Balsamic Strawberry Conserve 78

Pineapple, Passionfruit & Kaffir Lime Jam 79

Brandied Apricot & Vanilla Bean Jam 80

Espresso Jelly 81

Blood Orange Jelly 82

## BUTTERCREAMS, GANACHES AND TOPPINGS 84

Basic Buttercream 86

Coffee Buttercream 86

Swiss Meringue Buttercream 87

White Chocolate Ganache 88

Milk Chocolate Ganache 88

Caramel Ganache 88

Dark Chocolate Ganache 89

Flavouring Ganaches 90

Syrups 91

Dulce De Leche 91

## DRINKS TO BAKE BY 92

Amaretto Sour 94

Sake Espresso 94

Mulled Wine 96

Rosewater Martini 96

Cucumber Mint G & T 97

Sakejito 98

Port Punch 98





SHILLING  
**LOOKER-UP**  
COOK BOOK  
WITH  
MORE THAN 600 RECIPES  
ENLARGED & IMPROVED  
WITH  
NEW COLOURED COVERS  
AND UPWARDS  
THE WOOD

My name is Louise Vansleve and I am the founder of [www.learncakedecoratingonline.com](http://www.learncakedecoratingonline.com)

*My love affair with all things sweet started almost before I could chew!*

I remember as a child hiding chocolates under my pillow and stashing little bags of chocolate drops wherever I could. I would collect every cent I could find and would sneak to the corner shop for a 20 cent bag of mixed lollies at every chance. By the time I was an adult I had a few sensational dessert recipes up my sleeve but I soon realised that in order to be able to bake all the recipes I wanted to try, I would need to make a business of it, otherwise I would end up eating much more than I should!

In the beginning it really was the baking and the eating that fueled my passion for cake. Not the decorating.

Once the business started, I realised just how essential it was to have fail-safe cake recipes. Recipes that didn't cost me time and money in constant trialing and tweaking for cakes that just didn't work. It would throw my whole week into disarray when I had a cake that didn't rise, or a cake that didn't have that wow factor. I believe that a mouthful of cake should be followed by some sort of pleasurable moan, perhaps with an expression of "OMG". Unless that is happening; well, I just haven't done my job.

Now, years later, I produce online cake decorating tutorials with clients around the world and I am always being asked for those fail-safe recipes.



So, I thought I would go one step further and create a book that would give you, regardless of whether you bake for business or pleasure, a collection of triple-tested recipes that are to die for.

With chef Adam Cremona, we came up together with a range of mouth watering cakes that can be used as dessert cakes and cakes under fondant or buttercream.

We have also included ganaches, buttercreams, syrups and jellies to be used as accompaniments to your cakes.

You will see a guide with each cake



Gluten Free



Perfect for Fondant Cakes



Perfect for Buttercream Cakes



Dessert Cakes - Perfect just as they are



Breakfast Cakes - Just because you can

Recipes are based on Australian Standard Measures

One Australian metric measuring cup holds approximately 250ml; one Australian metric tablespoon holds 20ml; one Australian metric teaspoon holds 5ml.

I hope you enjoy cooking with and using these recipes as much as we have enjoyed creating, styling, photographing and eating them!

Louise xx

Louise Vansleve - Editor in Chief and Stylist

# LOUISE VANSLEVE

EDITOR IN CHIEF AND STYLIST



Self confessed sake aficionado and avid bookworm, Louise Vansleve has a passion for all things cake. Well, cakes and cocktails!

Louise is the Creative Director and Editor of [www.learn-cake-decorating-online.com](http://www.learn-cake-decorating-online.com) Louise is passionate about delivering exciting content to her members from all over the world, all whilst having plenty of fun of course.

She is also passionate about helping women achieve their potential and giving women an outlet to pursue their creative passions.

*When she is not scouring op shops for props or throwing 400 ideas at those around her and creating a snowstorm as Frank likes to call it, she can be found with cocktail shaker in hand mixing up a round of drinks.*

During the shoot for this book, she made a firm editorial decision that a chapter simply must be included called “Drinks to Bake by”. After all, every good cake decorator knows that late night baking and decorating is best done with a wee beverage in hand.



# ADAM CREMONA

CHEF, FOOD STYLIST & RECIPE WRITER



As an up and coming rising star, Adam has a knack for devising the perfect formula when it comes to all things cakes and desserts – he makes everything look and taste divine. Which made it very hard for Frank not to eat all of Adam's hard work!

*He is all about finding the winning formula with texture, flavour and simplicity.*

Plus he brings with him the added bonus of the expertise required to enable you to succeed in the kitchen.

Adam has contributed to some famous household names in cookbooks and magazine food columns – and luckily for us he is now bringing his skills and experience to the Learn Cake Decorating Online Team.

Adam is an absolute perfectionist in the kitchen, which means that with his meticulous testing methods and continuous improvement of recipes and techniques – you will get a perfect result first time – every time.

Being well known in the food publishing circles has certainly helped (oh and that fact that he's a specialist in all things sweet and savoury – plus being an all round good guy).

When he isn't in the kitchen, Adam enjoys matching (and sampling) wine and cocktails to his culinary creations.

# FRANK SELMO

PHOTOGRAPHER AND HEAD OF CAKE QUALITY CONTROL



Frank is an international award-winning photographer who forms the other (behind the camera) half of Learn Cake Decorating Online and Cake Media Creative.

After meeting Louise at a wedding expo and locking eyes across tiers of display cakes, he has been drawn into the cake world. He now believes after many hours of filming and editing cake tutorials, he knows all the pro tips and secrets and is planning his on-camera debut making his first cake - which he is certain will be a masterpiece. Louise is looking forward to trading places and filming his big moment.

*When Frank is on set photographing cake, the first words after he has hit the shutter are "Can we eat it now?"*

Frank has now also assumed the role of Chief Cake Taster, a role which he takes very seriously and hopes to further develop.



# Recipes







# THE CLASSICS

It is essential to have the classics mastered in your baking. Once you have these down pat, you can branch out and start the experimentation! Add some of our flavoured ganaches and buttercreams to these if you need a flavour hit, but remember, sometimes the simplest flavours are the best.

# CLASSIC BUTTER CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME 1 HOUR 25 MINUTES  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 12



250g (8 ounces) butter, softened  
2 teaspoons vanilla bean paste  
1 cup (220g) caster sugar  
3 eggs  
2½ cups (375g) self-raising flour  
1 cup (250ml) milk

Butter cake forms my earliest memory of eating cake. My mum would make us butter cake as kids and we would eat it still warm with butter melting through it, sprinkled with cinnamon sugar.

Sometimes the simplest things really are the best.

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease and line base and sides of deep 20cm square or 22cm round cake pan.
- 2 Beat butter, vanilla and sugar with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Stir in half the flour and milk until just combined, then, repeat with remaining flour and milk.
- 3 Spread mixture into prepared pan. Bake cake 1 hour or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Stand cake in pan 10 minutes before turning topside up onto a wire rack to cool.

## TIPS

### Butter

Make sure your butter is at room temperature. If it is straight from the fridge, you can gently microwave it for a few second to soften it but be careful it doesn't melt or you will have to start again.

### Sifting

Make sure you don't skip this step, it helps to aerate the mixture and prevents lumps. It will also give you a finer crumb.

### Splitting

The top of a butter cake can split a little. This can be the result of an oven that is too hot or opening the oven during tasting. It won't affect the taste though.





# CLASSIC ONE BOWL CHOCOLATE CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **1 HOUR 20 MINUTES**  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 10



125g (4 ounces) butter, softened

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 cup (220g) caster sugar

3 eggs

1½ (225g) cups self-raising flour

¼ cup (25g) Dutch cocoa powder

2/3 cup (160ml) milk

## Rich Chocolate Frosting

20g (¾ ounce) butter, softened

100g (3 ounces) dark chocolate,  
chopped

¼ cup (25g) Dutch cocoa powder

2 cups (320g) icing sugar, sifted

3 tablespoons hot water

Everyone hates washing up and no one more than me! That is why I love this recipe. It is so simple yet delicious!

- 1** Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease and line base and sides of deep 20cm round cake pan.
- 2** Beat butter, vanilla, sugar, eggs, flour and cocoa in an electric mixer on low speed. Gradually add the milk whilst still beating. Increase mixer speed to high and beat for 3-4 minutes or until mixture is smooth and pale in colour.
- 3** Spread mixture into prepared pan. Bake cake 1 hour or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Stand cake in pan 10 minutes before turning topside up onto a wire rack to cool.
- 4** Make the rich chocolate frosting by melting the butter and chocolate in a small heatproof bowl over a bain-marie. Stir in the combined sifted icing sugar and cocoa powder and enough of the water to achieve a spreadable consistency.
- 5** Spread top of cooled cake with rich chocolate frosting and dust with cocoa if desired.

### TIP

For best results always use pure vanilla extract not vanilla essence in your baking.







# SUZANNE'S SPONGE CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **50 MINUTES**  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 12



This cake took its pride and place on so many cake and dessert tables at so many birthdays, afternoon teas and even a First Holy Communion party throughout my childhood. My mum was famous for this cake and for a very good reason! It's feather light and is virtually fool proof to make. The addition of fresh strawberries as well as the traditional strawberry jam and cream is what makes this humble cake extra special - Adam

5 eggs, separated  
2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste  
pinch of salt  
¾ cup caster (superfine) sugar  
1¼ cups (185g) self-raising flour,  
triple sifted  
½ cup (160g) strawberry jam,  
warmed slightly  
1¼ cups (310ml) thickened (heavy)  
cream, whipped  
250g (8 ounces) strawberries,  
hulled and thinly sliced  
icing sugar for serving

## TIPS

Don't make a coffee whilst in the middle of making this cake. Get it done and in the oven!

Make this cake on the day that you are going to eat it. A sponge should be eaten fresh!

- 1 Preheat oven to 200°C/400°F. Grease and line base and sides of a deep 22cm round cake pan.
- 2 Beat egg yolks, oil, vanilla and salt with an electric mixer for about 5 minutes or until the mixture is very pale and creamy.
- 3 Beat egg whites in clean bowl with an electric mixer until soft peaks form, gradually add sugar, one spoonful at a time; beating until sugar dissolves. Gently fold half the egg white mixture into the yolk mixture, followed by the remaining half, folding until the mixture is just combined. Sift flour over the egg mixture and gently fold in until just combined.
- 4 Pour mixture into the prepared pan. Bake cake for 25 minutes or until cake springs back when pressed gently in the centre with your finger-tips. Immediately turn cake topside up onto a baking paper covered cooling rack and allow to cool completely.
- 5 Cut cooled cake in half horizontally. Place bottom layer on serving plate and spread with the warmed jam. Arrange the sliced strawberries over the jam and top with the cream. Place the remaining cake layer on top and serve dusted with icing sugar.



# MARBLE CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **1 HOUR 20 MINUTES**  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 10



Cake decorating has come a long way in the past 20 years and sometimes as parents we think that our kids demands have increased. Make this gorgeous marble cake and you will soon see your children's eyes light up. There is nothing like a giant slice of pink, chocolate and vanilla swirls on a plate to make any kid's day. No decorating required aside from a lovely pile of simple buttercream frosting on top.

250g (8 ounces) butter, softened  
1 cup (220g) caster (superfine) sugar  
3 eggs  
2½ cups (375g) self-raising flour  
1 cup (250ml) milk  
2 tablespoons Dutch cocoa powder  
2 tablespoons extra milk  
125g (4 ounces) raspberries  
½ teaspoon pink food colouring  
2 teaspoons vanilla bean paste

## Butter cream frosting

100g (3 ounces) butter, softened  
1½ cups (240g) icing sugar, sifted  
2 tablespoons milk

- 1** Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease and line base and sides of deep 20cm round cake pan.
- 2** Beat butter and sugar with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Stir in half the flour and milk until just combined, then repeat with remaining flour and milk.
- 3** Using the back of a spoon push raspberries through a fine sieve, extracting as much juice as possible and discard the seeds.
- 4** Divide the cake mixture equally between three bowls. Add combined cocoa and extra milk to one bowl, raspberry juices and pink colouring to another and the vanilla to the remaining bowl.
- 5** Drop alternate spoonfuls of each mixture into the prepared pan. Pull the blade of a knife through the cake mixture in a backwards and forwards motion to create a marble effect.
- 6** Bake the cake for 1 hour or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Stand the cake in the pan for 10 minutes before turning top side up onto a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7** To make butter cream frosting, beat butter in an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Gradually add sifted icing sugar and milk, beating until combined. Spread frosting over top of cooled cake.

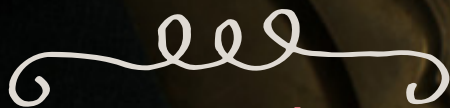
## TIP

Don't over swirl! The beauty to this cake is the gorgeous contrast in colours. Over swirl and your marble will look more like granite swirl!









## DEVIL'S FOOD CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME 1 HOUR 10 MINUTES  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 10



A classic moist and airy cake that uses cocoa instead of chocolate for flavour. This cake has certainly stood the test of time. The earliest print recipe of this cake was in 1905 and it is very similar to Red Velvet Cake.

### TIP

Do try to get Dutch Cocoa, but if you can't, make sure your cocoa is the darkest you can find. The light coloured cocoas just won't do in this instance.

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup (70g) Dutch cocoa powder

2 teaspoons instant coffee granules

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup (80ml) boiling water

1 cup (250ml) milk

250g (8 ounces) butter, softened

2 cups (440g) caster sugar

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

4 eggs, lightly beaten



3 cups (450g) plain flour, sifted

1 teaspoon bi-carbonate of soda (baking soda)

1 teaspoon red food colour

$1\frac{1}{4}$  cups (310ml) thickened cream, whipped



- 
- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease and line base and sides of two deep 20cm round cake pans.
  - 2 Combine cocoa, coffee, boiling water and milk in a large heatproof bowl, stirring until coffee and cocoa dissolve. Set aside to cool.
  - 3 Meanwhile beat butter, sugar and vanilla with an electric mixer until pale and fluffy. Gradually add eggs, mixing until combined. Add half the sifted flour and bi-carbonate of soda and half the coffee mixture; mixing until almost combined. Add the remaining dry ingredients, the remaining coffee mixture and the food colouring then stir the mixture until well combined.
  - 4 Divide the mixture equally between the prepared pans. Bake cakes for 50 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre of each cake comes out clean. Stand cakes in pans for 10 minutes before turning top side up onto a wire rack to cool completely.
  - 5 Using a sharp knife, trim cakes to remove any domed tops. Place one cake on a serving plate and spread with the cream. Top with the remaining cake and serve dusted with icing sugar if desired.
- 



# THE PERFECT CUPCAKE RECIPE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **35 MINUTES**  
(+ COOLING TIME)

MAKES 12



180g (5½ ounces) butter, softened

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

¾ cup (165g) caster sugar

3 eggs

2 teaspoons finely grated lemon  
zest

¾ cup (110g) plain flour, sifted

¾ cup (110g) self-raising flour,  
sifted

⅓ cup (80ml) milk

Oh the trial and tribulations of a perfect cupcake! When I started my cake business I specialised in cupcakes and I can't tell you how many hours I spent seeking a recipe that would give me a perfect dome and a perfect crumb. You know what they say ... seek and you shall find.

I present to you ... the perfect cupcake recipe!



- 1** Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Line 12 holes of a ⅓ cup (80ml) capacity muffin pan with paper cases.
- 2** Beat butter, vanilla and sugar with an electric mixer until pale and creamy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until well combined. Stir in zest, sifted flours and milk; mixing until smooth.
- 3** Spoon cake mixture between paper cases, filling until each case is ¾ full. Bake cupcakes for 25 minutes or until the tops are golden brown and spring back when touched with the tip of a finger. Transfer cupcakes to wire racks to cool.



## TIPS

Don't overmix the batter. An overmixed batter will crush all of the airbubbles that make your cupcakes so light and fluffy.

Measure your cupcake mix into the wrappers, this will ensure evenly cooked cupcakes. Some people like to use an ice cream scoop.



# SOUR CREAM AND LEMON POUND CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME 1 HOUR 50 MINUTES  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 12



3 cups (450g) flour  
½ teaspoon baking powder  
¼ teaspoon bi-carbonate of soda  
(baking soda)  
½ teaspoon salt  
250g (8 ounces) unsalted butter  
3 cups (660g) caster (superfine)  
sugar  
6 large eggs at room temperature  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla paste  
grated zest of two lemons  
1 cup (250ml) sour cream

## Syrup

1 cup (250ml) fresh lemon juice  
¾ cup (105g) sugar  
¼ cup water (60ml)  
grated zest of 1 lemon

### TIP

Bake this in a loaf pan or a Bundt tin and dust with icing sugar or add a simple glaze.

Pound cake refers to a cake that is traditionally made with a pound each of four ingredients: flour, butter, eggs and sugar. This makes a rather large cake and so can be adjusted as long as the ratios stay the same.

The pound cake came back on my radar recently when I tried the most sublime version of it in Bali of all places. The subtle hint of lemon and coconut gives this version a light fresh taste.

- 1 Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 160°C/325°F. Grease a 25 cm Bundt pan or 2 loaf pans (21cm x 11cm).
- 2 Sift the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt together; set aside.
- 3 Beat the butter and sugar in a large bowl with a hand-held electric mixer on high speed until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes.
- 4 Beat in the eggs, one at a time, then the vanilla and zest.
- 5 Divide the flour mixture into thirds and the sour cream mixture into halves. On a low speed, add the ⅓ of the flour mixture, followed by ½ of the sour cream mixture. Repeat until you finish off with the remaining ⅓ of the flour mixture.
- 6 Beat until smooth, scraping down the sides of the bowl often with a rubber spatula. Spread evenly in the pan.
- 7 Bake until a skewer inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean, about 1 hour 15 minutes.
- 8 To make the syrup, bring the lemon juice, zest, water and sugar to a boil over a high heat and cook until it is reduced to ½ cup, about 15 minutes. Allow syrup to cool before using.
- 9 Transfer the cake to a wire rack and cool for 10 minutes. Drizzle half the syrup over the cake. Invert onto the rack and brush with the remaining syrup. Cool completely.







# INDULGENT DARK FRUIT CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME

4 HOURS 30 MINUTES

(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

SERVES 36



Prunes, port and dark muscovado sugar are where my fruit cake recipe gets its incredibly moist texture and dark crumb. Not just a favourite at Christmas, this cake is perfect for a traditional wedding.




- 300g (9½ ounces) pitted prunes, coarsely chopped
- 300g (9½ ounces) raisins, coarsely chopped
- 100g (3 ounces) dried currants
- 100g (3 ounces) sultanas
- 200g (6½ ounces) red glacé cherries, quartered
- ½ cup (125ml) runny honey
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 10cm (4 inch) long strip of orange peel
- ½ cup (125ml) port
- 200g (6½ ounces) butter, softened
- ¾ cup (165g) dark brown muscovado sugar
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- ½ cup (125ml) orange juice
- 2 tablespoons finely grated orange zest
- 1 cup (150g) plain flour
- ⅔ cup (80g) almond meal
- ½ teaspoon bi-carbonate of soda (baking soda)
- 1 teaspoon mixed spice
- ¼ cup (60ml) extra port

## TIP

You can swap the port for a more traditional rum or brandy if you prefer, but I personally love the sweet 'plum like' flavour you get from the port.



- 
- 1 Combine the fruit, honey, cinnamon, peel and port in a large bowl and stand, covered, overnight.
- 2 Preheat oven to 150°C/300°F. Line base and sides of a deep 20cm square cake pan with three layers of brown paper.
- 3 Beat butter and sugar with an electric mixer until pale and fluffy, beat in eggs one at a time until just combined (the mixture may curdle at this stage but it will come together at the next stage).
- 4 Discard the cinnamon stick and orange peel from the fruit mixture. Add the fruit mixture to the butter mixture along with the juice, zest, flour, almond meal, baking soda and spice, mixing well to combine.
- 5 Spread cake mixture into the prepared pan. Drop cake pan from a height of 20cm onto your bench top three times to break up any large air bubbles in the mix. Level the top of the cake mix.
- 6 Bake cake for about 4 hours, giving the cake a quarter turn every half hour and covering with foil if the cake begins to over brown during cooking. Remove the cake from the oven and brush with the extra port. Cover cake with foil and allow to cool completely in the pan.

#### TIPS

If you can't get dark brown muscovado sugar you can simply use ordinary dark brown sugar in its place.

If you want to break tradition and not cover your fruit cake in Marzipan, try our White Chocolate and Brandy ganache.

If you want to add even more moisture and flavour, brush your cake every few days with port for several weeks before using and store wrapped in foil in an airtight container and keep in a cool dark place.





# SPANISH MAGDALENAS

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **30 MINUTES**  
(+ COOLING TIME)

MAKES 18



2 eggs  
1½ cups (330g) caster sugar  
50g (1½ ounces) butter, melted  
1 cup (250ml) milk  
¾ cup (180ml) extra virgin olive oil  
3 cups (450g) plain flour, triple sifted  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest  
⅓ cup (55g) icing sugar

Magdalenas are the Spanish version of fairy cakes. The Spaniards will often eat these for breakfast or merienda (afternoon tea) with a nice cup of coffee. I have included these here as any cake that is eaten for breakfast is certainly worth the inclusion.

- 1 Grease or line 18 holes of a ⅓ cup capacity muffin pan (we used a ⅓ cup capacity rose mould pan).
- 2 Beat eggs and sugar with an electric mixer until pale and creamy, gradually add butter in a thin steady stream whilst still beating.
- 3 Whisk in all remaining ingredients except the icing sugar. Fill paper cases with the mixture so that each case is two thirds full. Bake for 20 minutes or until golden. Transfer magdalenas to a wire rack to cool.
- 4 Dust the cooled magdalenas generously with sifted icing sugar just before serving.

## TIP

Magdalenas are best eaten on the day they are baked.













## FRUIT & FANCY

I just adore the recipes in this section. From garden party to wedding, these cakes made using different fruit flavours add variety to your repertoire.

They are perfect as a lovely afternoon tea cake but will work equally well with buttercream or under fondant for a special occasion cake.

# WHOLE ORANGE AND POPPY SEED CAKE WITH GLACÉ ICING

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **2 HOURS**  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 12



2 medium sized oranges (480g),  
washed and scrubbed well

¼ cup (40g) poppy seeds

¼ cup (60ml) milk

100g (3 ounces) butter, softened

1 cup (220g) caster sugar

1 teaspoon baking powder

5 eggs, beaten

2 cups (240g) almond meal

¼ cup (30g) custard powder  
(gluten free)

## Glacé icing

1½ cups (240g) icing sugar

20g (¾ ounce) butter, softened

2 tablespoons orange juice

### TIP

This cake is lovely with a white or dark ganache if using it underneath fondant. You could also add lemon zest for a sharper taste.

This cake is so moist and architecturally beautiful to look at, that I decided an icing or frosting wasn't necessary. You could easily whip up a quick glacé icing with some icing sugar and fresh orange juice if you wanted. I baked this cake in an ornate cathedral style Bundt pan, making it the perfect centrepiece for an afternoon tea. - Adam

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease a 10 cup (2.5 litre) capacity Bundt pan.
- 2 Using a fork, pierce the skins of both oranges all over. Place oranges in a small saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring saucepan to a boil. Boil covered for 1 hour, drain and cool.
- 3 Cut oranges in half and place into the bowl of a food processor. Pulse until oranges until finely chopped.
- 4 Combine poppy seeds and milk in a small bowl and set aside for 30 minutes.
- 5 Beat butter and sugar with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Stir in baking powder, eggs, almond meal and custard powder along with the poppy seeds and oranges until well combined.
- 6 Pour mixture into the prepared pan. Bake cake for 1 hour or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Stand cake in pan for 20 minutes before turning out onto a wire rack to cool completely.
- 7 To make the glacé icing, combine the sifted icing sugar and butter in a heat-proof bowl over a bain-marie. Add enough of the juice to achieve a spreadable consistency; remove from heat as soon as this stage is reached. Top the cake with icing straight away.





# SUPER MOIST CARROT CAKE WITH LEMONY CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **1 HOUR 35 MINUTES**  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 12



- ¾ cup (180ml) vegetable oil
- 1¼ cups (275g) firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 3 eggs
- ½ cup (125ml) sour cream
- 2½ cups (600g) coarsely grated carrot
- 1 cup (100g) walnuts, roasted and chopped
- 2¾ cup (410g) self-raising flour
- ¼ teaspoon bi-carbonate of soda (baking soda)
- 1 teaspoon mixed spice
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

## Lemony cream cheese frosting

- 125g (4 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 30g (1 ounce) butter, softened
- 1¾ cups (280g) icing sugar
- ¼ cup (60ml) lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest

I must confess that one of my guilty food pleasures is a particular store-bought brand's version of this cake. It's uniquely dark and super moist crumb are what inspired me to develop the perfect carrot cake recipe. The oil, dark brown sugar and sour cream are the secret ingredients to which this cake owes its title. And I have always loved the idea of putting carrots into a cake! - Adam

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease and line a deep 22cm round cake pan.
- 2 Beat oil, sugar, eggs and sour cream with an electric mixer until pale and creamy. Stir in carrot and nuts followed by the combined and sifted flours, soda and spices.
- 3 Spread mixture into the prepared pan. Bake cake for 1 hour 15 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Stand cake in pan for 10 minutes before turning top side up on to a wire rack to cool.
- 4 To make lemony cream cheese frosting, beat cream cheese and butter with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Gradually add icing sugar, one spoonful at a time, beating until frosting is smooth and fluffy, then beat in the juice and zest. Spread cake with frosting.

### TIPS

Use the freshest and organic spices where possible.

A sprinkle of coconut on the top of this cake with the lemon zest also adds a lovely texture.







# HUMMINGBIRD CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **2 HOURS 5 MINUTES**  
(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

SERVES 12



1 medium sized (1.25kg)  
pineapple

2½ cups (375g) self-raising flour

1 cup (220g) caster (superfine  
sugar)

½ cup (110g) firmly packed  
brown sugar

¼ teaspoon bi-carbonate of  
soda (baking soda)

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

¾ cup (180ml) vegetable oil

3 eggs, lightly beaten

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

440g (14 ounces) crushed  
pineapple in syrup

2 large bananas (460g), mashed

⅔ cup (80g) pecan nuts,  
chopped


## Cream cheese frosting

150g (4½ ounces) cream cheese,  
softened

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

3 cups (480g) icing sugar, sifted





This cake is said to have originated in the islands of tropical Hawaii. It is traditionally layered and always contains crushed pineapple, mashed banana, pecans and is topped with a cream cheese frosting. Hawaii is my most favourite holiday destination and therefore this deliciously sweet cake will always have a place in both my heart and my kitchen.- Adam

- 1 Preheat oven to 100°C/215°F. Line two flat baking trays with baking paper.
- 2 Peel pineapple. Using a melon baller or a small sharp knife remove all the eyes from the pineapple flesh. Using a sharp knife, cut the pineapple crossways into wafer thin slices. Using a small round cutter, remove the centre eyes from each pineapple slice. Place pineapple slices onto prepared trays and bake in oven for 30 minutes or until the tops are dry to touch. Turn the pineapple slices over and bake for a further 30 minutes or until dry. Leave to cool completely. Once cooled store the dried pineapple slices in an airtight container for up to 2 days.
- 3 Meanwhile, preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease and line a deep 22cm round cake pan with baking paper.
- 4 In a large bowl combine flour, sugars, soda and cinnamon. Stir in the oil, eggs, vanilla, crushed pineapple, banana and nuts.
- 5 Pour the mixture into a prepared pan. Bake cake for 40 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Cool cake in pan for 10 minutes before turning top side up onto a wire rack to cool.
- 6 Meanwhile, make the cream cheese frosting by beating the cream cheese and vanilla extract with an electric mixer until light and fluffy; then gradually beat in the sifted icing sugar, beating until frosting is a smooth and spreadable consistency.
- 7 Cut the cooled cake in half horizontally and place the bottom half on a serving plate. Spread half the frosting over the bottom layer of cake and then top with the remaining layer of cake. Spread the remaining frosting over the top of the cake and decorate with the dried pineapple just before serving.

#### TIP

When your bananas start to go past their use by date, peel them and pop them in the freezer. Just make sure you defrost them before trying to mash!



# LAYERED MOCHA BANANA BUNDT CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES  
(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

SERVES 12



¾ cup (180ml) milk, warmed  
1½ tablespoon instant coffee granules  
200g (6½ ounces) butter, softened  
1 cup (220g) caster (superfine) sugar  
3 eggs  
2½ cups (375g) self-raising flour  
2 large (460g) bananas, mashed  
2 large (460g) bananas, extra

## Dark chocolate ganache

250g (8 ounces) dark eating chocolate, chopped

⅔ cup (160g) pouring cream



When I was in Laos recently with my daughter, we ordered strong Iced Coffees (made with condensed milk) and Banana Nutella Pancakes for lunch one day by the river in Luang Prabang. They were so good, I instantly messaged Adam and said we needed a cake version of that meal in the book.

The combination of coffee, chocolate ganache and banana is just heaven and when I eat it, the flavours take me back to that day on the riverbank.

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease a 10 cup (2.5 litre) capacity Bundt pan.
- 2 Combine milk and coffee in small heatproof jug; stirring until coffee dissolves. Set aside to cool.
- 3 Beat butter, vanilla and sugar with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Stir in half the flour with half the milk mixture until just combined, then repeat with remaining flour and milk mixture. Stir in the mashed banana.
- 4 Spread the mixture into a prepared pan. Bake cake for 1 hour or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Stand cake in pan 10 minutes before turning top side up onto a wire rack to cool.
- 5 Meanwhile to make the ganache, place the cream in a medium saucepan and heat until just below boiling point. Whisk in the chocolate; mixing until smooth. Refrigerate, stirring occasionally, until ganache just reaches a thick pouring consistency.
- 6 Peel and slice the extra bananas. Cut cake in half horizontally. Place bottom layer of cake on a serving plate and spread with the ganache. Top with the sliced banana and then the remaining layer of cake. Serve dusted with icing sugar if desired.

## TIP

Whilst you cannot serve fresh banana in a fondant cake, the banana flavour through the cake is strong enough to use just with a chocolate ganache. A coffee buttercream would work equally as well as ganache.







# PINEAPPLE UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **45 MINUTES**  
(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

SERVES **16**



425g canned pineapple slices in juice, drained, juice reserved

½ cup (75g) firmly packed brown sugar

130g (4 ounces) butter, softened

½ cup (75g) caster (superfine) sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste

3 eggs

1½ cups (250g) self-raising flour, sifted

## TIP

To be really indulgent, serve this with a dollop of Dulce De Luche and double cream.

This cake originates back in the 1920's when canned pineapple was something of a delicacy. The invention of a machine in a cannery to cut pineapple rings sparked a huge upside down pineapple cake trend! The cannery received over 2,500 recipes for this after holding a "What to do with your pineapple rings" competition.

It has a somewhat groovy retro feel to it though, after it regained popularity in the 50's and 60's, and somehow makes me feel like serving cabanossi and cheese on toothpicks at parties.

Do you have a guilty retro pleasure? Like listening to Abba in the car and singing at the top of your voice? For me its long brown boots and pineapple upside down cake.

Pull out your flares and get baking! There is nothing retro about the taste of this cake!

- 1** Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease a deep 7.5cm x 35cm (3inch x 14inch) bar pan, line base and sides with baking paper. You can use a 22cm (9inch) round cake pan if you don't have a bar pan.
- 2** Pat pineapple slices dry with absorbent paper, then cut each slice into four pieces. Sprinkle brown sugar over base of pan and top with the pineapple pieces.
- 3** Beat butter, sugar and vanilla with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing well in between additions. Stir in the sifted flour and ¼ cup (80ml) of the reserved pineapple juice.
- 4** Spread the mixture over the pineapple in the pan. Bake the cake for 35 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the cake comes out clean. Stand cake in pan for 5 minutes before turning out onto a serving plate to cool slightly before serving.





# DELICATE & DAINTY EARL GREY & LEMON CURD CHIFFON CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES

(+ STANDING TIME)

SERVES 12



3 teaspoons Earl Grey tea leaves  
1 cup (220g) caster (superfine) sugar  
6 eggs, separated  
⅔ cup (160ml) lemon juice, strained  
1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest  
½ cup (125ml) extra virgin olive oil  
¾ teaspoon cream of tartar  
1⅓ cups (200g) self-raising flour, triple sifted  
2½ cups (625ml) thickened (heavy) cream, whipped  
edible violets for serving

## Lemon curd

125g (4 ounces) butter, chopped  
4 egg yolks  
1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest  
⅓ cup (80ml) lemon juice  
½ cup (110g) caster (superfine) sugar  
1 tablespoon cornflour

Chiffon cakes are commonly known to be difficult to make but if you follow this recipe carefully I guarantee you it's easy. By turning the cake upside down and leaving it to cool in this position you are effectively suspending all the air in the cake. The result – the most light and fluffy cake you will ever taste. This cake reminds me of clouds and lemon drops and it's very pretty to look at as well. -Adam

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Adjust oven shelf to the lowest position and place a flat oven tray on shelf.
- 2 Place the tea and half of the sugar in a food processor. Process until the tea leaves are very finely chopped. Combine tea mixture and egg yolks in the bowl of an electric mixer and beat for 5 minutes or until the mixture is very pale, thick and creamy. Gradually add juice, half the zest and the oil, beating until well combined. Transfer mixture to a large bowl. Sift over flour and whisk until just combined.
- 3 Beat egg whites with an electric mixer until glossy firm peaks form. Add cream of tartar and gradually add remaining sugar, beating until sugar dissolves. Fold egg white mixture into yolk mixture in two batches until just combined.
- 4 Pour mixture into un-greased angel food pan. Place on prepared oven tray in oven and bake for 1 hour or until the cake is well browned. Turn cake pan over onto a flat surface immediately and leave to cool completely in this position. Do not touch the pan in any way until it is completely cool.
- 5 Meanwhile, to make the lemon curd, place all the ingredients in a medium sized saucepan. Stir ingredients over a low heat until the butter melts and the mixture thickens to coat the back of a spoon. Remove curd from heat and transfer to a heatproof bowl. Place curd in the fridge, covered, until completely cooled.
- 6 Run a small knife around edges of cake pan to help release cake from the pan and then lift the cake out of the pan. Using a sharp serrated knife, split the cake in half horizontally. Position the bottom layer of the cake on a serving plate. Spread with the curd, followed by half of the cream and top with the remaining half of the cake. Spoon remaining cream over the top of the cake and top with the edible violets.



## TIPS

Make sure you use the correct tin for this cake, which is aluminium, not a non-stick tin. Do not grease the tin as the chiffon cake is very delicate and needs to attach to the sides of the tin or it will collapse.

This cake rises mainly from the meringue so be sure to whisk your egg whites until they form glossy firm peaks.











# DECADENT DESSERT CAKES

We all need a little indulgence now and then. One mouthful of any of these cakes and you will find yourself transported to a world of pleasure. After all as C. Joybell C. says “Cake is happiness! If you know the way of the cake, you know the way of happiness! If you have a cake in front of you, you should not look any further for joy!”

# ALMOND & PECAN COFFEE CRUMBLE CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES  
(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

SERVES 14



½ cup (125ml) hot milk  
2 tablespoons instant coffee granules  
125g (4 ounces) butter, softened  
1¼ cups (275g) caster (superfine) sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste  
3 eggs  
1 cup (150g) plain flour, sifted  
½ cup (75g) self-raising flour, sifted  
¼ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
100g (3 ounces) white fondant icing, coarsely chopped  
1 tablespoon boiling water

## Almond crumble topping

1 cup (150g) plain flour  
½ cup (60g) almond meal  
1/3 cup (75g) demerara sugar  
1/3 cup (75g) caster (superfine) sugar  
125g (4 ounces) cold butter, chopped  
¼ cup (20g) rolled oats  
⅓ cup (25g) flaked almonds  
⅓ cup (40g) pecans, coarsely chopped

This cake is the perfect dessert or afternoon tea cake. Not too sweet but just perfect with a coffee; or perhaps live on the edge and serve with my Sake Espresso.

- 1 Preheat oven to 180C°/350°F. Grease and line a deep 22cm (9 inch) round spring-form cake pan with baking paper.
- 2 Make the almond pecan crumble topping by combining flour, almond meal, and sugars in a large bowl. Using your fingertips rub in the butter until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add the oats, pecans and almonds, pressing the mixture together with your fingers to create large uneven lumps in the mixture. Cover and set aside.
- 3 Combine milk and coffee in small heat-proof jug; stirring until coffee dissolves.
- 4 Beat butter, sugar and vanilla with an electric mixer until pale and fluffy. Beat in eggs one at a time until mixture is just combined. Add sifted flours, soda and cinnamon and then the milk mixture, mixing on low speed until the mixture is just combined. Increase speed; beating until the mixture is smooth and becomes a paler colour.
- 5 Spread mixture into prepared pan. Bake cake for 30 minutes.
- 6 Working quickly, sprinkle the almond pecan crumble mixture over the cake and bake for a further 30 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the top of the cake comes out clean. Allow to cool for 10 minutes before turning topside up onto a wire rack to cool.
- 7 Meanwhile place the fondant icing in a small bowl over a bain-marie; stirring constantly until the fondant begins to melt. Add enough of the water to achieve a thick but still pourable consistency and the mixture is smooth. Transfer fondant mixture to a piping bag fitted with a small plain tube. Drizzle the fondant icing over the cooled cake.

## TIPS

Do not plan to have one piece of this only. Serve with your best double cream





# RED VELVET CAKE WITH MARSHMALLOW FROSTING

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 12



125g (4 ounces) unsalted butter,  
softened

1½ cups (330g) caster (superfine)  
sugar

2 eggs

1½ (200g) cups plain (all purpose)  
flour

¼ cup (25g) Dutch cocoa powder

1 cup (250ml) buttermilk

¼ cup (60ml) extra virgin olive oil

3 tablespoons red food colouring

1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda  
(baking soda)

1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar

## Marshmallow frosting

1 cup (220g) caster (superfine)  
sugar

4 egg whites

½ teaspoon cream of tartar

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

½ cup (125ml) boiling water

1 teaspoon powdered gelatine

After a huge surge in popularity in recent years this is our most asked for recipe. It is traditionally served with cream cheese frosting but Adam has created the most sublime marshmallow frosting in this version.

- 1 Preheat oven to 160°C/325 with an electric °F. Grease and line a 20cm (8 inch) round cake pan.
- 2 Beat butter and sugar together in an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time; beating until just combined.
- 3 Stir in flour and cocoa until just combined. Then add combined buttermilk, oil and colouring; mixing until mixture is smooth. Combine bicarbonate of soda and vinegar in a small cup and stir until the mixture fizzes up. Fold the vinegar mixture through the cake batter until just combined.
- 4 Pour batter into the prepared pan and bake for 50 minutes to 1 hour or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Cool cake in pan for 10 minutes before transferring to wire rack to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 Meanwhile, to make the marshmallow frosting sprinkle the gelatine over the boiling water in a small heatproof jug, whisking the mixture with a fork until the gelatine dissolves. Place the sugar, egg whites, cream of tartar and vanilla in the bowl of an electric mixer and beat until firm peaks form. Whilst still beating, gradually add the gelatine mixture in a thin steady stream. Continue beating until the frosting is white, has doubled in volume and is just cool.
- 6 Cut the cake in half horizontally and place the bottom layer on a serving plate. Spread 1½ cups of frosting over the cake, top with the remaining layer of cake. Spread remaining frosting over the top and sides of the cake, using a palette knife to create large swoops and peaks in the frosting.

### TIP

To use this cake underneath fondant, omit the marshmallow frosting and ganache with a white ganache





# SUMPTUOUS BLACK FOREST GATEAU

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME

1 HOUR 10 MINUTES

(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

SERVES 16



Chocolate and cherries – need I say more?  
This is a flavour match made in heaven. -  
Adam

## TIP

Team this with boozy syrup made from the combined cherry liqueur and canned cherry syrup and you have one majorly indulgent adults-only dessert. Simply remove the alcohol and replace it with more of the syrup from the canned cherries if you're opting for a more child friendly dessert.





8 eggs

1½ cups (330g) caster  
(superfine) sugar

1½ cups (225g) self-raising  
flour, triple sifted

½ cup (50g) Dutch cocoa  
powder, triple sifted

20g (1 ounce) butter, melted

⅔ cup (160ml) hot water

½ cup (125ml) black cherry  
bourbon liqueur or kirsch

2½ cups (625ml) thickened  
(heavy) cream, whipped

3 x 425g (13½ ounce) cans  
pitted black cherries, drained,  
syrup reserved

#### Chocolate glaze

½ tablespoon hot water

¼ cup (25g) Dutch cocoa  
powder

80g (2½ ounces) dark chocolate,  
chopped

¼ cup (55g) caster (superfine)  
sugar

10g (½ ounce) unsalted butter

¼ cup (60ml) pouring cream

**1** Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease and line two 20cm (8 inch) round cake pans.

**2** Beat the eggs and sugar with an electric mixer for about 10 minutes or until the mixture is light, frothy and doubled in volume. Sift the combined flour and cocoa over the egg mixture; using a rubber spatula, gently fold ingredients together until just combined. Carefully pour the combined butter and water down one side of the bowl and fold gently to combine.

**3** Divide the mixture between the prepared pans. Bake for 25 minutes or until the centres of the cakes spring back when touched with a fingertip. Immediately turn the cakes onto baking paper lined racks to cool.

**4** Using a sharp serrated knife, cut each cooled cake in half horizontally. Combine kirsch and ¼ cup (80ml) of the reserved cherry syrup in a small bowl. Brush the tops of each cake generously with the kirsch mixture. Place the bottom layer of one of the cakes on a serving plate, spread with one third of the cream and top with one third of the cherries. Repeat layering with remaining the cake, cream and cherries, finishing with cake. Refrigerate cake whilst making the chocolate glaze.

**5** Make the chocolate glaze by combining all of the ingredients in a small heatproof bowl. Place the bowl over a bain-marie, stirring continuously until the mixture is smooth and glossy. Pour the glaze over the chilled cake, allowing the glaze to dribble down the sides of the cake a little.

# FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE HAZELNUT DESSERT CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **1 HOUR 30 MINUTES**  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 12



200g (6½ ounces) dark chocolate, chopped coarsely

165g (5 ounces) butter, chopped coarsely

6 eggs, separated

¾ cup (165g) caster (superfine) sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1½ cups (150g) hazelnut meal

## TIP

Serve with your best Pedro Ximenez or Chocolate Port and your lover will be yours forever.

Heaven in a cake. So much so that I ate it in a bubble bath.

- 1** Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease and line a deep 22cm (9 inch) round spring-form pan with baking paper.
- 2** Combine the chopped chocolate and butter in a small saucepan over low heat, stirring until smooth. Leave to cool for 15 minutes.
- 3** Meanwhile, beat egg yolks, sugar and vanilla with an electric mixer for about 5 minutes or until thick and creamy. Fold in the chocolate mixture and the hazelnut meal.
- 4** Beat egg whites in a clean bowl with an electric mixer until soft peaks form. Fold into cake mixture, very gently, until just combined.
- 5** Pour the mixture into the prepared pan. Bake the cake for 45 minutes or until the top is just firm. Cool cake in pan for 20 minutes, before turning top-side up, onto a wire rack to cool completely.











# MUD CAKES

The mud cake is a relative newcomer to the cake scene, seeming to have popped up somewhere in the 1970's. The first mud cakes came from America descending from the famed Brownie and Fudge, and originally contained marshmallow. Other derivatives of this cake are the Mississippi Mud Pie and Dirt Cake.

The recipes we have given here are Australian Mud Cakes. With our humid weather, cake decorators in Australia prefer to use ganache under their fondant instead of buttercream, allowing greater stability in warm weather and also allowing us to get those sharp edges on our cakes that we are known for. When using ganache, a denser, stronger cake is required, hence our love of mud cakes.

These stronger cakes also lend themselves to carving, which allows cake decorators to sculpt their cakes using ganache as putty. This results in artistic and gravity defying sculptures that would otherwise only be seen in clay!

# HEAVENLY WHITE CHOCOLATE MUD CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **2 HOURS 25 MINUTES**  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES **16**



250g (8 ounces) butter, coarsely chopped

200g (6½ ounces) white chocolate, chopped

1¼ cups (275g) caster (superfine) sugar

½ cup (125ml) milk

½ cup (125ml) vanilla flavoured liqueur

1 cup (150g) plain flour

1 cup (150g) self-raising flour

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 eggs, lightly beaten

This cake is as perfect with a dark chocolate ganache as it is with a white chocolate ganache. Its subtle flavour allows you to use your fillings to create your culinary masterpiece.

- 1** Preheat the oven to 160°C/325°F. Grease and line a deep 20cm (8 inch) round or 18cm (7 inch) square cake pan with baking paper.
- 2** Combine butter, chocolate, sugar and milk in a medium saucepan. Stir over a medium heat, without boiling, until the mixture is smooth. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl; stir in liqueur and set aside to cool for 20 minutes.
- 3** Whisk in flours, then the vanilla extract and eggs. Pour the mixture into the prepared pan.
- 4** Bake the cake for 2 hours, covering the pan loosely with foil half-way through the cooking time to prevent over-browning. To check if cake is cooked insert a skewer into the centre of the cake, if the skewer comes out clean the cake is cooked. Cool the cake in the pan for 15 minutes before turning it, topside up, onto a wire rack to cool completely.

## TIP

Serve this with a cherry flavoured dark chocolate ganache, a layer of Dulce De Leche and dark chocolate ganache, or as we have here with a coffee buttercream.





# SALTED CARAMEL MUD CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **3 HOURS 45 MINUTES**  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 16



395g (12½ ounce) can sweetened condensed milk

250g (8 ounces) unsalted butter, chopped

¾ cup (165g) firmly packed brown sugar

1 teaspoon sea salt flakes

¼ cup (60ml) butterscotch schnapps

1½ cups (225g) plain (all purpose) flour

½ cup (75g) self-raising flour

2 eggs, lightly beaten

## TIP

Serve layered with white ganache and topped with caramel ganache dripping down the sides, laden with piles of Caramel Popcorn.

Over the years I have sampled many caramel mud cakes and sadly none of them have been worthy of their titles. For me, it's important that the cake is flavoured with actual caramel and not just be a white chocolate mud cake flavoured with brown sugar. I guarantee this cake to be a hit and by balancing the sweetness of the caramel with sea salt flakes you get a perfectly balanced flavour sensation. - Adam

- 1 Preheat oven to 220°C (425°F).
- 2 Pour the condensed milk into a medium shallow baking dish; cover with foil. Place the dish in a large baking dish; the add enough boiling water to the large dish to come halfway up the sides of the smaller dish. Transfer to the oven and bake for about 1¼ hours or until the condensed milk is caramel in colour, whisking twice during the cooking time. Remove the smaller dish from the larger dish and whisk the caramel until smooth. Cover and allow to cool to room temperature.
- 3 Reduce the oven temperature to 160°C (325°F). Grease and line a deep 20cm (8 inch) round or 18cm (7 inch) square cake pan with baking paper.
- 4 Combine butter, sugar and salt in a medium saucepan; whisk over low heat, without boiling, until smooth. Add caramel and schnapps; whisking until smooth. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl; cool for 15 minutes.
- 5 Whisk the flours and then the eggs into the caramel mixture; pour the mixture into the prepared pan.
- 6 Bake the cake for 2 hours, covering the pan loosely with foil half way through the cooking time to prevent from over-browning. To check if cake is cooked insert a skewer into the centre of the cake if the skewer comes out clean, the cake is cooked. Stand the cake in the pan for 15 minutes before turning, topside up, onto a wire rack to cool.





# DIVINE DARK CHOCOLATE MUD CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **2 HOURS 30 MINUTES**  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES **16**



250g (8 ounces) unsalted butter,  
chopped

200g (6½ ounces) dark chocolate,  
chopped coarsely

¾ cup (165g) caster (superfine)  
sugar

¼ cup (55g) firmly packed brown  
sugar

¾ cup (180ml) hot water

1½ tablespoons instant coffee  
granules

½ cup (125ml) coffee liqueur

1½ cups (225g) plain (all purpose)  
flour

½ cup (75g) self-raising flour

¼ cup (25g) Dutch cocoa powder

2 eggs, lightly beaten

This is the quintessential mud cake. Dense, firm, rich. This simply must be a foundation recipe in your cake arsenal.

- 1** Preheat the oven to 160°C/325°F. Grease and line a deep 20cm (8 inch) round or 18cm (7 inch) square cake pan with baking paper.
- 2** Combine the butter, chocolate, sugars, water and coffee in a medium saucepan; stir over low heat, without boiling, until smooth. Add liqueur; whisking until smooth. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl; cool for 15 minutes.
- 3** Whisk the flours, cocoa and egg into the chocolate mixture; pour the mixture into the prepared pan.
- 4** Bake the cake for 2 hours, covering the pan loosely with foil half way through the cooking time to prevent from over-browning. To check if the cake is cooked insert a skewer into the centre of the cake, if the skewer comes out clean, the cake is cooked. Stand the cake in the pan for 15 minutes before turning, topside up, onto a wire rack to cool.

## TIP

If you have any of this left over at a party and have layered it with dark chocolate ganache, you have instant pudding! Freeze the remaining cake in portion sizes and then when you need a quick dessert, simply thaw in a microwave and the ganache will melt into the cake giving you an instant warm pudding-like cake. Just perfect with bowls of ice cream around a game of monopoly.









# WORLD FLAVOURED CAKES

According to Marcel Proust “The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.” For me I would go as far as to say my love of travel consists in having new food! I adore travel and cuisines from around the world. These recipes inspired from international flavours are sure to wow your guests no matter what the occasion.



# TROPICAL COCONUT CAKE WITH PINEAPPLE & LIME JAM

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME 1 HOUR 10 MINUTES  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 12



250g (8 ounces) butter, softened  
1 cup (220g) caster (superfine) sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste  
3 eggs  
2 teaspoons finely grated lime rind  
zest  
1½ cup (225g) self-raising flour,  
sifted  
1½ cups (120g) desiccated coconut  
½ cup (125ml) pineapple juice  
½ cup (125ml) milk  
1 cup (330g) pineapple & lime jam,  
warmed slightly (see page 77 for  
recipe)  
1¼ cups (310ml) thickened (heavy)  
cream, whipped  
fresh coconut flakes to serve

Serve this cake at your best summer garden parties with trays of Mojitos. Who said you needed savoury snacks with your cocktails?

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease and line deep 20cm (8 inch) round pan with baking paper.
- 2 Beat butter, sugar and vanilla with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well between additions.
- 3 Add zest, sifted flour, coconut, juice and milk and stir well to combine.
- 4 Pour mixture into prepared pan. Bake cake for 40 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Cool cake in the pan for 10 minutes before turning topside up onto a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 Cut cake in half horizontally. Place bottom layer of cake onto a serving plate and spread with the warmed jam, top with the remaining cake layer. Spread top of cake with the cream and decorate with the coconut.

## TIPS

If you don't like the pineapple flavour in the cake, you can simply replace the juice with milk.

If you are using this cake with fondant, replace the cream topping with a coconut white ganache or a coconut buttercream.





# INDONESIAN ORANGE LAPIS SURABAYA CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME 1 HOUR 15 MINUTES  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 16



380g (12 ounces) butter, softened

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup (160ml) condensed milk

30 egg yolks

1 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup (295g) caster sugar

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup (100g) plain flour, sifted

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup (35g) Dutch cocoa powder,  
sifted

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup (60g) custard powder

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60ml) orange juice

1 tablespoon finely grated orange  
zest

2 tablespoons milk

1 cup (320g) strawberry jam,  
warmed slightly

## TIPS

We have added a hint of orange in our version, which I think adds the perfect "zestiness" to this cake.

To use up all the leftover egg whites, try making our Swiss Meringue Buttercream on page 87.

I am passionate about South East Asian food and through my travels there I have tried so many unusual desserts. Asian desserts are not as sweet as we are used to in the west and I find them quite a pleasant change. This cake is known as "Spiku" in Surabaya but outside its home town, it is known as Lapis Surabaya. It is one of Indonesia's "signature" cakes and is served at birthday parties and weddings.

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease and line three deep 20cm (8 inch) square cake pans with baking paper.
- 2 Beat butter with an electric mixer until very light and fluffy, add condensed milk, beating until well combined. Set mixture aside.
- 3 Beat egg yolks and sugar with an electric mixer for about 10 minutes or until doubled in volume and very light and creamy. Fold in sifted flour, mixing until almost combined. Pour egg and flour mixture into the butter mixture and mix gently until well combined.
- 4 Divide mixture equally between three bowls. Fold sifted cocoa powder into one of the three bowls of mixture. Combine the two remaining bowls of mixture and fold in the custard powder, juice and zest.
- 5 Pour the chocolate mixture into one prepared pan and divide the orange mixture between the two remaining prepared pans. Bake the cakes for 18-20 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre of each cake comes out clean. Cool cakes in the pans for 15 minutes before turning topside up onto wire racks to cool completely.
- 6 Trim away any domes from the tops of the cakes. Place one of the orange flavoured cakes on a serving plate; spread the top of the cake with half of the warmed jam. Place the chocolate cake on top of the jam layer, followed by the remaining jam and the remaining orange cake. Serve dusted with icing sugar if desired.





# HUNGARIAN CHOCOLATE & RAISIN KUGLÓF

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME 1 HOUR 40 MINUTES  
(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

SERVES 14



Known as Gugelhupf in Germany and Austria, Babka in Poland and Kouglof in France - this delicious yeast pastry goes by many names depending on what part of the world you are in. We devoured this sweet treat whilst it was still warm topped with creamy vanilla bean ice cream. For an extra chocolate hit you could replace the raisins with dark chocolate chips if desired. I hope you enjoy this cake just as much as we did!

¾ cup (160ml) warm milk

1 sachet (7g) dried yeast

3 eggs, beaten lightly

2 teaspoons vanilla bean paste

⅓ cup (75g) caster (superfine) sugar

3 cups (450g) strong baker's flour

½ teaspoon sea salt flakes

125g (4 ounces) butter, softened

100g (3 ounces) dark chocolate, finely chopped

⅔ cup (100g) raisins

## Chocolate paste

80g (2½ ounces) dark chocolate, chopped

½ cup (50g) Dutch cocoa powder

¼ cup (60ml) Grand Marnier

30g (1 ounce) butter, softened

1½ teaspoon ground cinnamon





- 1 Preheat oven to 190°C/375°F. Grease 10 cup (2.5 litre) capacity Bundt or baba pan well with butter.
- 2 Place warm milk in a small bowl, sprinkle with the yeast and whisk with a fork to combine. Cover and set aside 10 minutes or until foamy.
- 3 In a small bowl, whisk together the eggs, vanilla and sugar. Place the flour and salt in the bowl of an electric mixer. Using the dough hook attachment, mix on low speed. Gradually add the egg mixture, followed by the yeast mixture; continue mixing on low speed until combined. Gradually add the butter, small amounts at a time, mixing until all the butter is incorporated. Turn the mixer up to medium speed and continue mixing for 10 minutes or until the dough is soft and smooth.
- 4 Transfer the dough to a well-oiled plastic or glass bowl, wrap the bowl loosely in a large towel and position in a warm part of your kitchen for 1½ hours or until the dough is doubled in size.
- 5 Meanwhile, make the chocolate paste by combining the chocolate, cocoa, Grand Marnier, butter and cinnamon in a small saucepan. Stir over a low heat until the ingredients melt together and the mixture is smooth. Set aside to cool.
- 6 Meanwhile, knock back the dough by lightly punching it with a closed fist. Transfer to a lightly floured surface and knead until just smooth. Roll the dough out to a 25cm x 50cm (10 inch x 20 inch) rectangle; the dough should be about ½ cm (¼ inch) thick. Spread the cooled chocolate paste over the dough, leaving a 4cm (1½ inch) border around the edges. Sprinkle over the raisins. Roll the dough up tightly from one of the longer sides and then coil the roll into the prepared pan. Cover and set aside in a warm place for 1 hour.
- 7 Bake the kuglóf for about 40 minutes or until golden brown and the dough makes a hollow sound when tapped on top. Cool in the pan for 10 minutes before turning out onto a wire rack to cool completely.

#### TIPS

Leftover sliced Kuglóf is delicious when toasted for breakfast or turn it into super yummy french toast for an indulgent breakfast in bed.

When baking in a bundt pan, just spray it with cooking oil to grease the sides or brush with butter using a pastry brush.



# TORTA DE SANTIAGO

(cake of Saint James)

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME 1 HOUR  
(+ COOLING TIME)

SERVES 12



6 eggs, separated  
¾ cup (165g) caster (superfine) sugar  
3 cups (300g) almond meal  
1 tablespoon finely grated lemon rind zest  
¼ cup (60ml) amaretto liqueur  
¼ cup (40g) icing sugar

## TIPS

This cake is traditionally dusted with icing sugar using a stencil of the cross of Saint James.

This cake could be used under fondant but be aware that as with many flourless cakes it does not rise very high, so you may need 2 batches to get the same height as a cake with flour.

This delicious almond cake, which also happens to be gluten free, is made in cities across Northern Spain and enjoyed by the locals as well as those tracing the historic pilgrimage to Santiago, where Saint James' body lay. The story goes that Saint James' remains were carried by boat from Jerusalem to Northern Spain where he was buried in the City of Santiago de Compostela.

This is a simple rustic recipe but we have added a touch of Amaretto for a touch of sophistication

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease and line deep 20cm (8 inch) round spring-form cake pan with baking paper.
- 2 Beat egg yolks and sugar with an electric mixer for 5 minutes or until mixture is pale, thick and creamy. Fold in the sifted almond meal, zest and the amaretto.
- 3 Beat the egg whites in clean, dry bowl with an electric mixer until soft peaks form. Gently fold egg whites into the almond mixture.
- 4 Pour the mixture into the prepared pan. Bake for 40 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Cool cake in pan for 15 minutes before removing and allowing to cool completely on a wire rack.
- 5 Using a lead pencil, scissors and a piece of paper trace and cut out a Saint James cross. Place the paper cut out on top of the cake and dust generously with the icing sugar. Remove the paper cut out to reveal the pattern.





# PISTACHIO & ROSEWATER MARSHMALLOW CAKE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME 1 HOUR 15 MINUTES  
(+ COOLING AND REFRIGERATION TIME)

SERVES 12



⅔ cup (90g) roasted pistachio kernels  
250g (8 ounces) butter, softened  
1 cup (220g) caster (superfine) sugar  
3 eggs  
⅓ cup (80ml) orange juice  
1 teaspoon baking powder, sifted  
1 cup (150g) self-raising flour  
organic pink rose petals and extra chopped pistachio kernels to decorate  
**Rosewater marshmallow**  
2 tablespoons powdered gelatine  
¼ cup (60ml) cold water  
1 cup (250ml) boiling water  
2 cups (440g) caster (superfine) sugar  
1½ tablespoons rosewater  
pink food colouring

For this cake I asked Adam to create a cake based on Turkish Delight, as it is one of my all time favourite sweets. The result has a delicate but exotic middle-eastern flavour. The pistachios give the cake itself a gentle green hue, which contrasts spectacularly with the delicate pink rosewater marshmallow.

This cake was my absolute favourite to photograph in the book. The glossy Marshmallow on the top of the cake with the fresh rose petals from the garden had the three of us standing and looking at it in awe.

This is the cake for truly impressing your guests. Perhaps serve with Turkish Coffee or my Rosewater Martini.

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F. Grease and line a deep 22cm (9 inch) round spring-form cake pan with baking paper.
- 2 Blend or process pistachios with a food processor until very finely chopped.
- 3 Beat butter and sugar with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs, one at a time, until just combined. Stir in the juice, nuts, sifted baking powder and flour.
- 4 Spread mixture into the prepared pan. Bake the cake for 35 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Allow the cake to cool in the pan for 15 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 5 Position cake topside up on serving plate.
- 6 Make the rosewater marshmallow by sprinkling the gelatine over the cold water in a small bowl. Combine the boiling water and sugar in a small saucepan, stirring over low heat until the sugar dissolves. Increase the heat and bring the mixture to a boil; stir in the gelatine mixture. Boil the mixture, uncovered, for 20 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to cool for 15 minutes.
- 7 Beat the gelatine mixture with an electric mixer until it turns white in colour and is very thick. Fold in the rosewater and enough food colouring to tint the marshmallow pale pink. Spread the marshmallow over the cake, using the back of a metal spoon to create swoops and peaks. Refrigerate for 1 hour.
- 8 Allow the cake to return to room temperature before serving topped with the rose petals and extra pistachios.



### TIPS

Use a wet knife to cut this cake, as this will allow the knife to glide through the marshmallow rather than tearing through it.

If using this cake underneath fondant, cover with a rosewater-infused white ganache.







# JAMS, JELLIES & SYRUPS



## Tips & Tricks for making jams, jellies & Syrups

**Sterilising jars and vessels** – To ensure jam keeps, you need to store it in properly sterilised jars. Place the jars with their lids into a large boiler or pot filled with water. Bring it to a boil and boil for 10 minutes. Carefully remove the jars from the boiling water and place on a clean oven tray. Keep the jars in a cool oven at 150°C/300°F until they are completely dry. They are then ready to receive your jam. Alternatively, rather than using the boiling method, you can run the jars with their lids through the dishwasher on a short, hot cycle before placing them in the oven. Once sterilised, keep your jars in a cool oven and remove them just before decanting.

**Decanting your jam** – It is important to pour hot jam into hot jars. Seal the jars tightly with their appropriate lids straight away, using an oven mitt or kitchen towel to protect your hands from the heat. When the jam cools, it will create it's own vacuum-type seal that will only be broken when the jar is first opened.

**Sugar** – The key ingredient in any jam, jelly or syrup. Unless specified, always use plain white granulated or preserving sugar rather than caster or superfine sugar when making jams, jellies and syrups. The jams, jellies and syrups will benefit from the use of this coarser sugar. The result will be brighter, clearer, more sparkling looking jams, jellies and syrups.

**Straining jellies** – When making a jelly from fruit juice, it is particularly important to strain the juice through a few layers of muslin cloth to remove any sediment or pith from the juice. The result: jellies that are crystal clear not cloudy or murky.

**Quantity isn't quality** – Working in smaller quantities is much easier and makes for better results. When making jams, always use a large, wide saucepan or a preserving pan but don't be tempted to fill it to capacity. Having a larger pan with less in it allows the jam to boil more rapidly, in turn allowing more liquid to evaporate. As a general rule, jam should reduce down by half once it's cooked. If your jam isn't reduced enough it may result in the jam not setting once cooled.

**Pectin** – Pectin is a natural substance found in most fruits and vegetables. Levels of pectin vary depending on the type of fruit or vegetable and how ripe it is. Fruits tend to have a higher level of pectin just before they are ripe. Certain fruits and vegetables such as strawberries, apricots, peaches and pineapples amongst others have a much lower pectin level and therefore require the addition of powdered pectin to ensure there is enough pectin to set the jam or jelly they are going into. You can buy powdered pectin from most supermarkets, specialist food stores and health food stores.





# BALSAMIC STRAWBERRY CONSERVE

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **40 MINUTES**  
(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

MAKES APPROXIMATELY ENOUGH JAM TO FILL **8 X 250ML JARS**

1kg (2 pounds) strawberries,  
washed and hulled

1.1kg (2¼ pounds) white  
(granulated or preserving) sugar

¼ cup (60ml) freshly squeezed  
lemon juice

¼ cup (60ml) balsamic vinegar

50g (1½ ounces) powdered pectin

## TIP

Use this in your sponge and in the Surabaya cake, and most definitely on your toast with butter.

No longer will my daughter tolerate store bought jam. In our house the only thing that is allowed near bread is most definitely “Adam’s Jam”.

- 1 Place a small saucer or plate in the freezer.
- 2 Place the strawberries, sugar, juice and vinegar in a very large preserving pan or large deep saucepan. Mix the ingredients with a wooden spoon to roughly combine.
- 3 Place the pan over a medium heat, stirring every now and then until the sugar dissolves. Bring the mixture to a boil, add the pectin and stir until dissolved into the jam. Continue boiling the jam for 5 minutes or until the liquid reduces by half; stirring occasionally.
- 4 Remove the jam from the heat; you can now begin testing the jam to see if it will set once cooled. Place a teaspoon of the jam onto the cold saucer and allow it to sit for 40 seconds. You can now push the jam gently with your fingertip, if the surface of the jam wrinkles when you push at it that means the jam is ready. If the surface doesn’t wrinkle that means the jam needs to be cooked longer. Return the jam to the heat and boil for a further 3-4 minutes before testing for a set again.
- 5 Once your jam is at setting point, remove it from the heat and allow it to sit for 15 minutes to allow any bubbles to subside. During this time if there is any scum on the surface of the jam use a metal spoon to skim it off. Decant the jam into hot sterilised jars and seal them immediately. Leave the jars to cool to room temperature before labelling and dating them.





# PINEAPPLE, PASSIONFRUIT & KAFFIR LIME JAM

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PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **45 MINUTES**  
(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

MAKES APPROXIMATELY ENOUGH JAM TO FILL **4 X 300ML JARS**

1.2kg (2½ pounds) chopped  
pineapple (you'll need a 2kg (4  
pound) pineapple)

3 cups (660g) white (granulated or  
preserving) sugar

½ cup (125ml) lime juice

1 tablespoon finely grated lime  
rind zest

3 kaffir lime leaves, bruised

1 star anise

⅓ cup (80ml) fresh passionfruit  
pulp

50g (1½ ounces) powdered pectin

- 1 Place a small saucer or plate in the freezer.
- 2 Place the pineapple, sugar, juice, zest, kaffir lime leaves and star anise in a very large preserving pan or a large deep saucepan. Mix the ingredients with a wooden spoon to roughly combine.
- 3 Place the pan over a medium heat, stirring every now and then until the sugar dissolves. Bring the mixture to a boil, add the pectin and passionfruit and stir until dissolved into the jam. Continue boiling the jam for 10 minutes or until the liquid reduces by half; stirring occasionally.
- 4 Remove the jam from the heat; you can now begin testing the jam to see if it will set once cooled. Place a teaspoon of the jam onto the cold saucer and allow it to sit for 40 seconds. You can now push the jam gently with your fingertip, if the surface of the jam wrinkles when you push at it that means the jam is ready. If the surface doesn't wrinkle that means the jam needs to be cooked longer. Return the jam to the heat and boil for a further 3-4 minutes before testing for a set again.
- 5 Once your jam is at setting point, remove it from the heat and allow it to sit for 15 minutes to allow any bubbles to subside. During this time if there is any scum on the surface of the jam use a metal spoon to skim it off. Decant the jam into hot sterilised jars and seal them immediately. Leave the jars to cool to room temperature before labelling and dating them.



# BRANDIED APRICOT & VANILLA BEAN JAM

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PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **1 HOUR**  
(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

MAKES APPROXIMATELY ENOUGH JAM TO FILL **4 X 300ML JARS**

1kg (2 pounds) apricots, halved,  
stones removed

4½ cups (990g) white (granulated  
or preserving) sugar

1 cup (250ml) brandy

1 vanilla bean, halved lengthways

50g (1½ ounce) powdered pectin

- 1 Place a small saucer or plate in the freezer.
- 2 Place the apricots, sugar, brandy and vanilla in a very large preserving pan or large deep saucepan. Mix the ingredients with a wooden spoon to roughly combine.
- 3 Place the pan over a medium heat, stirring every now and then until the sugar dissolves. Bring the mixture to a boil; add the pectin, stirring until pectin dissolves. Boil the mixture for 30 minutes.
- 4 Remove the jam from the heat; you can now begin testing the jam to see if it will set once cooled. Place a teaspoon of the jam onto the cold saucer and allow it to sit for 40 seconds. You can now push the jam gently with your fingertip, if the surface of the jam wrinkles when you push at it that means the jam is ready. If the surface doesn't wrinkle that means the jam needs to be cooked longer. Return the jam to the heat and boil for a further 3-4 minutes before testing for a set again.
- 5 Once your jam is at setting point, remove it from the heat and allow it to sit for 15 minutes to allow any bubbles to subside. During this time if there is any scum on the surface of the jam use a metal spoon to skim it off. Decant the jam into hot sterilised jars and seal them immediately. Leave the jars to cool to room temperature before labelling and dating them.



# ESPRESSO JELLY

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME 40 MINUTES  
(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

MAKES ENOUGH JELLY TO FILL  
6 X ⅓ CUP CAPACITY SERVING GLASSES

1 tablespoon powdered  
gelatine  
¼ cup (60ml) boiling water  
½ cup (125ml) espresso  
coffee, cooled  
3 cups (750ml) water  
¾ cup (165g) white  
(granulated or preserving)  
sugar  
½ cup (125ml) coffee  
flavoured liqueur

A sublime filling in a light chocolate cake.

- 1 Sprinkle gelatine over boiling water in a small heatproof bowl, whisk with a fork until gelatine dissolves.
- 2 Strain coffee through three layers of muslin cloth into a medium sized saucepan. Add the water and sugar; stir over a medium heat until the sugar dissolves. Bring the mixture to a boil. Remove from heat and add the gelatine, stirring until dissolved. Stir in the liqueur.
- 3 Strain the mixture through a fine sieve before decanting into individual serving glasses or jelly mould as desired.

## TIP

If using as a filling in a cake, set the jelly in the same size tin as your cake. Make sure you have lined the tin with baking paper for easy removal.





## BLOOD ORANGE JELLY

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PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **40 MINUTES**  
(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)  
MAKES ENOUGH JELLY TO FILL  
**6 X ¾ CUP CAPACITY SERVING GLASSES**

1 tablespoon powdered  
gelatine

¼ cup (60ml) boiling water

4 cups (1 litre) fresh blood  
orange juice

1 cup (220g) white  
(granulated or preserving)  
sugar

This jelly is delicious with a chocolate cake to create a grown up variation on the Jaffa.

- 1 Sprinkle gelatine over water in a small heatproof bowl, whisk with a fork until gelatine dissolves.
- 2 Strain the juice through three layers of muslin cloth into a medium sized saucepan. Add the sugar and stir over a medium heat until the sugar dissolves. Bring the mixture to a boil. Remove from heat and add the gelatine, stirring until dissolved.
- 3 Strain the mixture through a fine sieve before decanting into individual serving glasses or a jelly mould as desired.

### TIPS

If using as a filling in a cake, set the jelly in the same size tin as your cake. Make sure you have lined the tin with baking paper for easy removal.

Add a dash of Cointreau or Grand Marnier for a more adult version.









# BUTTERCREAMS, GANACHES AND TOPPINGS



## BASIC BUTTERCREAM

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **10 MINUTES**  
(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

140g (4 ½ ounces) butter at room temperature cut into cubes

1 ¼ cups (280g) icing sugar

1 to 2 tablespoons milk

A few drops of food colouring if required

- 1 Beat the butter in a large bowl until soft. Add half of the icing sugar and beat until smooth.
- 2 Add the remaining icing sugar and one tablespoon of the milk and beat the mixture until creamy and smooth. Beat in the extra milk if necessary, to loosen the mixture.
- 3 Stir in the food colouring until well combined.

## COFFEE BUTTERCREAM

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **25 MINUTES**  
(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

1 ½ tablespoons instant espresso powder

2 tablespoons hot water

5 large egg whites

1 ¼ cups (275g) superfine sugar

450 grams (14 ¼ ounces) butter cut into cubes, at room temperature

- 1 In a small bowl, dissolve espresso powder in 2 tablespoons hot water; set aside. In the heatproof bowl of an electric mixer, combine egg whites and sugar. Set the bowl over a pan of simmering water. Whisk constantly until sugar has dissolved and whites are hot to the touch, which will take 3 to 5 minutes.
- 2 Transfer the mixture to the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Mix on low speed, gradually increasing to high speed, until stiff, glossy peaks form, which will take about 10 minutes.
- 3 With the machine running on low speed, add the butter to the egg whites, beating until smooth. Add the espresso mixture and continue beating until incorporated.



# SWISS MERINGUE BUTTERCREAM

PREPARATION AND COOKING TIME **30 MINUTES**  
(+ STANDING AND COOLING TIME)

5 large egg whites

1 cup (220g) caster (superfine) sugar

pinch of salt

450 grams butter cut into small cubes, at room temperature

1 1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract, or the seeds of 1 vanilla pod

## TIPS

If you need to refrigerate this buttercream, bring it back to room temperature and then beat on a low speed for 3 minutes before using.

Use the best vanilla you can afford to buy; substituting essence will change the delicate flavour of this buttercream.

To make a coconut buttercream, add 1/4 cup desiccated coconut.

This is my most favourite filling ever. Something about the silken texture of this buttercream as it glides across the roof of your mouth is just heaven.

- 1 Combine egg whites and sugar in the heatproof bowl of a standing mixer, set over a pan of simmering water. Whisk constantly by hand until the mixture is dissolved and measures 60°C using a candy thermometer.
- 2 Attach the bowl to the mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Starting on low and gradually increase to medium-high speed; whisk until stiff (but not dry) peaks form. Continue mixing until the mixture is fluffy and glossy, then completely cool (test by touching the bottom of the bowl), which will take about 10 minutes.
- 3 With the mixer on medium-low speed, add the butter a few tablespoons at a time, mixing well after each addition. Once all the butter has been added, whisk in vanilla. Switch to the paddle attachment and continue beating on low speed until all air bubbles are eliminated, which will take about 2 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl with a flexible spatula and continue beating until the frosting is completely smooth.
- 4 Keep the buttercream at room temperature if using the same day.
- 5 If you need to colour your buttercream, use a toothpick to dip in your colour and then slowly add colour until you reach your desired shade.

### WHITE CHOCOLATE GANACHE

1 part cream to 3 parts chocolate (example: 300 ml cream to 900gram chocolate)

*Variations:* To make a delicious Brandy Ganache to cover your Christmas cakes with instead of marzipan, substitute the amount of cream by the same amount of brandy. I recommend if you are using 300ml of cream to 900 ml of chocolate, reduce the cream by 60ml and add 60ml of Brandy. This of course can be adjusted with taste.

- 1 Heat cream to boiling point, pour over chocolate. Cover and let sit to melt for a few minutes. Use a balloon whisk or a hand mixer to mix till smooth.
- 2 If the ganache is still lumpy, microwave for 30 seconds at a time and mix until smooth.
- 3 Allow to sit overnight at room temperature. Ganache should have a peanut butter consistency.

### MILK CHOCOLATE GANACHE

1 part cream to 2.5 parts chocolate (example: 600 ml cream to 1.5 kilos chocolate)

This will vary depending on the brand you choose. I recommend making a few batches in small amounts until you are happy with your final result.

- 1 Heat cream to boiling point, pour over chocolate. Cover and let sit to melt for a few minutes. Use a balloon whisk or a hand mixer to mix till smooth.
- 2 If the ganache is still lumpy, microwave for 30 seconds at a time and mix until smooth.
- 3 Allow to sit overnight at room temperature. Ganache should have a peanut butter consistency.

### CARAMEL GANACHE

200g White Chocolate

¼ cup (60ml) pouring cream

1/2 cup (125ml) Caramel Top 'n Fill or Dulce De Leche

- 1 Heat cream to boiling point, pour over chocolate. Cover and let sit to melt for a few minutes. Use a balloon whisk or a hand mixer to mix till smooth.
- 2 If ganache is still lumpy, microwave for 30 seconds at a time and mix until smooth.
- 3 Stir through caramel. Allow to cool before using.

#### TIP

This ganache is not suitable as a covering underneath fondant cakes as it will not set hard. Instead, use it as a topping over dessert cakes, ice cream or a decadent filling in a buttercream cake.





## DARK CHOCOLATE GANACHE

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1 part cream to 2 parts chocolate (example:  
600 ml cream to 1.2 kilos chocolate)

- 1 Heat cream to boiling point, pour over chocolate. Cover and let sit to melt for a few minutes. Use a balloon whisk or a hand mixer to mix till smooth.
- 2 If the ganache is still lumpy, microwave for 30 seconds at a time and mix until smooth.
- 3 Allow to sit overnight at room temperature. Ganache should have a peanut butter consistency.

### TIP

Use melted leftover ganache as an indulgent ice cream topping



## Flavouring Ganaches

If you want to keep your repertoire with cakes quite small, you can introduce flavour with your ganaches and syrups.

I like to use pure essential oils to flavour my ganaches as I do not like synthetic flavours. Be warned though, many of the cheaper essential oils are made from synthetic compounds and are not food safe.

I only use and recommend [DoTerra oils](#) as they are the highest grade oils I have been able to find. These oils have amazing health benefits too. When I am not drinking cocktails whilst baking, I use 2 drops of peppermint oil in hot water. These 2 drops are equivalent to 28 cups of peppermint tea and not only aid digestion and get rid of headaches, but they also have the bonus effect of waking you up when you are in a mid afternoon slump. Just ask Jess from The Chocolate Artisan, I hand her one of these every time we film for Learn Cake Decorating Online. Now she can't get enough of them and is now adding the oil to her fabulous chocolates!

I also put a few drops of essential oils in my drinking water each day. Slim and Sassy and DigestZen are my favorites.

Some suggestions are:

**Dark Chocolate and Peppermint**

**White Chocolate, Lemongrass and Coconut**

**Dark Chocolate and Wild Orange**

**Milk Chocolate and Lavender**

**White Chocolate and Lime**

If you decide to infuse with Lavender in your ganaches you can also keep it handy for any burns you may suffer whilst pulling hot pans from the oven. Putting pure Lavender on your burns has been proven to reduce inflammation and blistering significantly. This saves my poor fingers on a regular basis as I am hopeless when it comes to getting burnt. Much to Adam's amusement, I shot a whole day of this book with several fingers in a glass of ice as I had forgotten to take my Lavender with me.

You can also infuse your ganaches with flavours such as Earl Grey Tea and Milk Chocolate. Honey, Thyme and Milk Chocolate are also sublime.

This is done by infusing the cream with your chosen tea or herb whilst heating. This will infuse the cream with your chosen flavour and then allow your chocolate to have a subtle flavour once mixed through.



## SYRUPS

1 cup (250ml) water

1 cup (220g) caster (superfine) sugar

### TIP

Flavour with alcohol but reduce water by the amount of alcohol used

60 ml Cointreau, Kahlua or Grand Marnier

If you prefer not to use alcohol, you can also use jam in place of sugar to add extra flavour to your cakes.

I find brushing all of my fondant cakes with syrup ensures a moister cake. I also like the addition of alcohol to a cake in this way for its preserving qualities and subtle hint of flavour. Just be sure not to brush too freely. You want your cakes to be moist not wet.

- 1 Place the water and sugar in a small saucepan.
- 2 Stir over a low heat until the sugar dissolves. Bring to the boil and cook for 2 minutes.
- 3 Remove from heat. Store in refrigerator in a clean jar.

## DULCHE DE LECHE

2 x 395g (12 ½ ounce) sweetened condensed milk

### TIP

If using on a fondant cake, only use for the centre filling of your cake. Use a basic ganache or buttercream on the outside to ensure a firm enough cake for the fondant.

This sumptuous caramel is heaven when used as a layer on your white chocolate mud cake before covering with white ganache or use with dark ganache swirled through the filling on a dark mud cake to create a Mars Bar-like cake.

- 1 Preheat oven to 220°C. Pour condensed milk into a heatproof baking dish then place dish in a roasting pan. Pour water into the pan to come halfway up the side of dish.
- 2 Cover with foil and bake, refilling the pan with water if necessary, for 1 hour 45 minutes or until dark golden. Whisk the mixture until smooth.
- 3 Pour into a 500ml (2-cup) capacity sterilised jar and seal. Once opened, store in the fridge.







# DRINKS TO BAKE BY

I have spent more nights than I care to count baking and decorating cakes into the early hours of the morning. It is common amongst many of my cake decorator friends that we partake in a wee beverage to see us through these long hours. A few of them have been developed based on the fact that I only had my baking liqueurs and baking ingredients handy. I don't like wastage and nor do I like bottles hanging around the house too long. So here you have my favourite drinks to bake by. May they see you through many hours of baking.



## AMARETTO SOUR

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45ml Amaretto liqueur  
30ml simple syrup  
20ml fresh lemon juice  
1 orange slice for garnish

I love cooking with Amaretto but it is one of those things that I don't use too often, so in between recipes I like to make Adam's favourite cocktail, the Amaretto Sour. There are versions of this recipe using egg white, but this one is so simple it takes no time at all to make and is the perfect aperitif or mid baking soother.

- 1 Pour the Amaretto, simple syrup, and lemon juice into a cocktail shaker with ice.
- 2 Shake and strain into a glass filled with ice. Garnish with an orange slice and a cherry if you have one.



## SAKE ESPRESSO

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60ml strong espresso coffee  
45ml sake  
15 ml sugar syrup  
dash of cream

This is one of my all time favourite drinks. I first made it for Frank instead of our morning coffee at breakfast on a weekend away. A perfect start to the day and the weekend in general! I love both sake and coffee so it is a perfect combination. If you are not away and have an evening of work to get through, this is a perfect late afternoon pick me up.

- 1 Pour the Sake, coffee and sugar syrup into a cocktail shaker with ice. Shake well.
- 2 Strain into a chilled glass. Top with a dash of cream.

### TIP

This cocktail can be served warm or cold depending on the weather and your mood.







## MULLED WINE

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750 ml Chianti or dry red wine

honey to taste - I use about 3 tablespoons but it depends on the wine you have chosen

peel of 1 lemon

peel of one lime

peel of one orange

1 star anise

1 cinnamon stick

5 cloves

1 bay leaf

1/2 vanilla pod

- 1 Place all the ingredients into a saucepan with just a small dash of wine and bring to a simmer to allow the spices to infuse and create a basic syrup.
- 2 Once the mixture is nice and sticky, add the rest of the wine and the star anise and turn down the heat. Allow to warm gently. This process is essential as if you allow the wine to heat too much you will burn off all the alcohol. Ladle into glasses and enjoy in a warm kitchen or around the fireplace with friends.

I first tried mulled wine when I spent a season working in the snowfields in Thredbo. Along with schnapps it fast became my drink of choice. Warming and soothing, it is just perfect for a winter evening.



## ROSEWATER MARTINI

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30 ml Creme de Cacao

45 ml vodka

10 ml rosewater or to taste

crushed ice

organic rose petals, to serve

Rosewater comes in a fairly large bottle. I love cooking with it but I find that sometimes it spends too long in my cupboard before getting used up. However, I adore martinis and this one with rosewater is sensational.

- 1 Pour the vodka, Creme de Cacao, rosewater and crushed ice into a cocktail shaker. Shake.
- 2 Shake and strain into a glass filled with ice. Garnish with an organic rose petal.

### TIP

You could also add a lychee and a dash of the lychee syrup or sugar syrup if you like things on the sweet side.



# CUCUMBER MINT G & T

We have long hot summers in Australia and there have been so many nights I have been working on cakes and baking without air conditioning and feeling just so hot and sweaty! This drink is just at home in the kitchen whilst you are baking in summer as it is at a garden party.

This cooling and refreshing drink is the perfect 5pm cool off. Almost as good as a quick dip in the ocean! The addition of cucumber provides a refreshing twist on a classic drink.

3 sprigs mint

4 cm stick of Lebanese cucumber

60 ml gin (I like Hendricks)

tonic water to top to taste

thin wedge of cucumber to garnish

- 1 Strip the leaves from two sprigs of mint and place in the bottom of a mason jar, or assorted glasses, along with cucumber.
- 2 Muddle with a muddling stick or the handle of a wooden spoon. Fill the glass with ice.
- 3 Pour gin over ice, top off glass with tonic, stirring once, and garnish with remaining mint sprig and thin cucumber wedge.





## SAKEJITO

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6 mint leaves for muddling plus  
a sprig of mint for garnish

60 ml lime juice

60ml sake

30ml sugar syrup

splash of sparkling water

I first tried sake in Kyoto with two of my oldest friends. Unable to find accommodation at the end of the night, we ended up spending the night in a love hotel. Perhaps after a few of these I will tell you the rest of the story. Mix these up and you will be a sake convert for life.

- 1 In a shaker, add the mint and lime juice. Using the handle of a wooden spoon, muddle the mint to release the oils.
- 2 Add the sake, sugar syrup and ice. Shake well and strain over ice.
- 3 Add a splash of sparkling water and garnish with a lime wedge and a sprig of mint.



## PORT PUNCH

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30ml port

30ml simple syrup

20ml fresh lemon juice

orange slice for garnish

It's tempting to buy really cheap port when cooking with it. Don't. Buy something decent. Take what you need for cooking and enjoy the rest. This cocktail is a surprise. It is unexpectedly delicious.

- 1 Pour the port, simple syrup, and lemon juice into a cocktail shaker with ice.
- 2 Shake and strain into a glass filled with ice. Garnish with an orange slice if you have one.





A large glass spoon is suspended by a thin wire, acting as a wind chime. It hangs in the foreground, with its bowl reflecting the surrounding greenery. In the background, other similar glass wind chimes are visible, and the scene is set in a lush garden with trees and foliage. A semi-transparent white box containing text is positioned in the upper left quadrant of the image.

## *A giant thank you to*

Lisa Valuyskaya from Idea Stylist who designed my first ebook all the way from Rome and does an amazing job. I almost wanted to write another book just so I could work with her again!

Loo Taylor who allowed us to take over her gorgeous house with cake tins and more props than an antique store. You can visit Little Pig Creek in Kangaroo Valley. ([www.littlepigcreek.com.au](http://www.littlepigcreek.com.au)) A perfect property that allowed us to fully immerse ourselves in the project and bake and eat to our heart's content in her gorgeous kitchen.