



Pink Coconut Layer Cake

1950s

Coconut in a cake has always made sense to me. It's a sweet, tropical taste that works nicely with buttery, sugary ingredients and offers a wonderful texture and chew to anything it's added to. Coconut has been a popular ingredient in American cooking since Colonial times, and one of the most popular cakes to use the ingredient is the coconut layer cake.

This simple cake would often be dressed up with bright, colorful food coloring. It's pink because everything in the 1950s and '60s was more colorful and brighter and had more thought put into the design. If you've followed my career long enough, you know I'm a big fan of anything pink. So, I had to include this delicious and adorable cake in the book. Φ

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Ingredients

For the cake

- 2 cups (240 g) cake flour, sifted
- 2 teaspoons (10 g) baking powder
- 1 teaspoon (5 g) salt
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (150 g) unsalted butter, softened
- 1½ cups (300 g) sugar
- 3 large eggs (150 g)
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (157 mL) whole milk
- 1 teaspoon (5 g) vanilla bean paste

For the 7 minute icing

- 2 large egg whites (68 g), room temperature
- 1½ cups (300 g) sugar
- 5 tablespoons (75 mL) cold water
- 1½ teaspoons (7 g) light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon (5 g) vanilla bean paste
- Pink or red food coloring
- 2 cups (140 g) sweetened coconut flakes

Directions

Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Butter and flour two 9--inch round cake pans.

1. Sift together the cake flour, baking powder, and salt three times over a sheet of parchment paper or a medium bowl.
2. In a large bowl, combine the butter and sugar and cream together until light and fluffy. In a small bowl, beat the eggs until pale yellow and light, then add to the creamed butter and sugar mixture.
3. Add the dry ingredients and milk to the creamed mixture in three portions each, alternating between the two and beating together after each addition until smooth. Mix in the vanilla. Divide the batter between the prepared cake pans and bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until a cake tester inserted in the middle comes out clean. Let cool completely.
4. To make the icing, pour an inch or two of water into a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. Combine the egg whites, sugar, cold water, and corn syrup in a heatproof bowl and place on top of the pot of boiling water. Whisk constantly by hand or using an electric mixer for about 7 minutes, until the icing is thick and the sugar has completely dissolved. Remove the bowl and add the vanilla and then the food coloring, one drop at a time, mixing until you reach the desired shade.
5. Turn the cake out of the pans. Place one cake layer on a cake plate and frost with a generous portion of icing. Add the second layer on top and cover the entire cake with the remaining icing. Cover the cake with the coconut and serve.

About the Recipe: Pink Coconut Layer Cake has been enjoyed since Colonial times and remains especially popular in the South. This colorful butter cake reflects the bright pink style of the 1950s and 1960s. Topped with fluffy whipped icing, it makes an elegant dessert.

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