GRANDMA'S VICTORIA SPONGE

This light sponge cake, oozing with homemade jam, is a summer classic. It's great for bake sales, or for a family treat.

(SERVES 8-10)

INGREDIENTS

275g (10oz) butter, plus extra for greasing 275g (10oz) caster sugar 275g (10oz) self-raising flour 5 eggs

For the filling: 110g (4oz) butter 225g (8oz) icing sugar, plus extra for dusting 1 tbsp milk 1 tsp vanilla extract Shop-bought or homemade strawberry jam (page 74) Icing sugar for dusting

You will need: Paper doily

To make your Victoria sponge extra special, make your own strawberry jam using the recipe on page 74.

- 1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/fan 160°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
- 2. Grease two 20cm (8 inch) cake tins and line the bases with baking parchment.
- 3. Put the butter, caster sugar and eggs into the bowl of a free-standing electric mixer (or you can use a handheld electric whisk and mixing bowl). Then sift in the flour, lifting your sieve quite high to incorporate air, and beat for 1–2 minutes until light and creamy.
- 4. Divide the mixture evenly between the tins. You can weigh the filled tins if you want to check they are even. Lightly smooth the surface of the cake mixture with a spatula or the back of a spoon.
- 5. Place the tins on the middle shelf of the oven and bake for about 30 minutes. It is best not to open the door while they are cooking.
- 6. The cakes are ready when they are golden brown and coming away from the edge of the tins and a skewer inserted into the middle of the cakes comes out clean. Remove them from the oven and leave to cool in their tins for 5 minutes. Carefully turn the cakes on to a wire rack and peel off the baking parchment. Leave to cool completely.
- 7. To assemble the cake, place one cake upside down onto a plate and spread with plenty of jam.
- 8. To make the buttercream, beat the butter until soft and creamy. Gradually beat in the icing sugar, milk and vanilla extract. Carefully spread a thick layer of the buttercream on top of the cake spread with jam.
- 9. Top with the second cake and dust the top with icing sugar using a doily to create a pretty pattern like my grandma showed me when I was little.

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