

Baffling Blueberry Birthday Cake

By Yotam Ottolenghi, NYT Cooking Commenters, and Sam Knight

Total Time ~ 2 ½ hours

An indulgent and unique flavor well-suited for special occasions. Best paired with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

INGREDIENTS

Cooking spray, parchment paper, aluminum foil

150g unsalted butter, at room temperature

95g granulated or superfine sugar (caster sugar)

Zest of one whole lemon, plus 1 tablespoon of lemon juice

1 teaspoons vanilla extract

1 teaspoons almond extract

3 large eggs, beaten

90g all-purpose flour, sifted

1 ¼ teaspoons baking powder

Meager pinch of salt

110g almond flour, sifted

200g fresh blueberries. Set aside a handful and toss the rest in almond flour.

3 cups of cream cheese frosting

To make from scratch: 1 stick unsalted butter, 1 package Philadelphia cream cheese, 1 cup confectioner's sugar, liberal splashing of heavy cream, 1tsp vanilla extract, and 1tsp almond extract. Mix on high speed in stand mixer with lid.

To make the confectioner's sugar, I blended natural/turbinado cane sugar in a Magic Bullet, doing a pulse and shaking until the sugar is a fine powder.

PREPARATION

1. Prepare all ingredients and **preheat oven to 325°F** (use convection). Spray 10-inch springform pan with cooking spray. Cut a circle of parchment paper and place it at the bottom, cut strips of paper to wrap around the sides, then coat the paper with a second layer of cooking spray. Finally, wrap the bottom with aluminum foil, curling around the edges to prevent leaks while baking.
2. Place the butter, sugar, lemon zest, almond extract, and vanilla extract in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Beat on high speed for 3 to 4 minutes, until light, then lower speed to medium. Add eggs in three portions, scraping down the sides of the bowl a few times as necessary. The mix will not combine completely until the dry ingredients are added, just mix until the butter and eggs are evenly distributed.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, salt and almond flour. Stop the mixer, add the dry ingredients, then start on the lowest speed. Slowly increase the speed to the highest setting to avoid a puff of dry powder. Mix until the dry ingredients are no longer visible. Stop the mixer again and gently fold in the flour-dusted blueberries with a spatula. Once combined, scoop batter into the pan.
4. Bake for 40 minutes, then begin to check for doneness. The center of the cake should bounce back when prodded, and a toothpick inserted should come out clean. If not, continue baking for 5-minute increments. *If making frosting from scratch, prepare while the cake bakes.*
5. Allow the cake to air-cool for 10 minutes.
6. Carefully release the spring lock to free the cake. Slide a plate up next to the cake, grab the bottom section of parchment paper and use it to slide the cake off of the bottom of the pan and on to the plate. Place the bottom circle of the pan on the top of the cake. Flip everything over so the cake is upside down on the pan. Now, peel off the parchment paper. Finally, flip the cake back on to the plate.

7. Now that the cake is free, **wait for it to cool completely** (refrigerate) before adding the frosting, or the frosting will melt. If you prefer a taller cake, you can repeat the recipe for multiple layers, spreading a layer of cream cheese frosting between them.
8. Spread the cream cheese frosting evenly around the top and sides of the cake. Add the unfloured blueberries to the center and sprinkle sugar on top. Slice and serve, optionally with vanilla ice cream.