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miss geraldine's italian cream cake

makes one 9-inch 3-layer cake

This is my mother's favorite cake recipe. Her best friend, Mabel, always made it for special occasions. It's a great cake for your holiday baking because you can make it ahead of time and freeze it. I am a firm believer that freezing this cake makes it even better! It's pretty garnished with red and green cherries, too.

Pan Grease (page 16/not included) or extra vegetable shortening and flour for preparing the pans

5 large eggs, separated (see Hint/below)

1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature

1/2 cup vegetable shortening

2 cups sugar

1 cup buttermilk

1 teaspoon baking soda

2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour, sifted twice

1 cup sweetened coconut flakes

1 cup chopped pecans

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 teaspoon coconut extract

Cream Cheese Frosting (page 123/below)

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Coat three 9-inch round cake pans with Pan Grease (page 16/*not included*) or a thin layer of shortening with a light dusting of flour.

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat the egg whites on high speed until stiff, 3 minutes. Carefully transfer the whites to a clean, dry bowl and set aside.

In the same bowl used for the egg whites, whisk together the butter and the shortening on high speed for 2 minutes. Add the sugar and beat until light and fluffy, 5 minutes. Scrape down the sides and around the bottom of the bowl. Beat in the egg yolks on low speed to combine. Scrape down the bowl. Increase the speed to high and beat for 1 more minute.



Combine the baking soda and the buttermilk, stirring until dissolved. Pour the buttermilk into the butter mixture and add the flour. Beat on low speed for 30 seconds. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl. Beat on high speed for 1 minute. Add the coconut, pecans, and both extracts. Mix well. Use a rubber spatula to fold in the beaten egg whites. Divide the batter among the prepared pans.

Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cakes comes out with just a few crumbs on it, 25 minutes. Let the layers cool for 15 minutes before turning them out onto wire racks to cool completely.

Place one cake layer on a serving plate. Frost with $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Cream Cheese Frosting, then add a second cake layer and spread with $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup frosting. Add the final cake layer and frost the top and sides.

hint Room-temperature egg whites whip up fluffier than cold ones straight from the fridge. That said, the colder the egg, the easier it is to separate the whites from the yolks. I like to separate cold eggs, put the whites into a small bowl, and then set that small bowl into a larger bowl of warm water for 10 minutes before beating.

Cream Cheese Frosting

makes enough for one 9-inch 4-layer cake or 24 cupcakes

This is Daisy Cakes' signature frosting. It's simply delicious. There are countless things you can add to it—like zest, nuts, curd, and even bacon—to really dress it up and make it your own signature frosting. Let your imagination run wild!

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 2 8-ounce packages cream cheese, cold
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 16-ounce boxes confectioners' sugar, sifted

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the butter on medium speed until smooth, 1 minute. Scrape down the sides and around the bottom of the bowl. Add the cream cheese and vanilla and beat on high speed until smooth, 1 minute.

With the mixer on low speed, gradually add the confectioners' sugar just until blended. Scrape down the bowl. Increase the speed to high and beat until smooth and fluffy, about 1 minute. The frosting will keep in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 7 to 10 days.

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