



Maple Plum Crumble

Preparation time: 5 min.

Cook : 25 min

Serves : 4

8 ripe plums, halved & stones removed

4tbsp. Maple syrup

50g/2oz butter, cut into pieces

50g/2oz plain flour

50g/2oz porridge oats

25g/1oz golden caster sugar

½ teasp. ground cinnamon

(add a little more if you like a lot of cinnamon flavour)

25g/1oz flaked almonds

Method

1) Heat oven to 200C/180Cfan/gas6

2) Place plum halves skin- side down, in the base of a large heatproof dish.

3) Drizzle over half of the maple syrup and roast for ten min.

4) Place flour, sugar, oats, cinnamon and butter in a bowl , rub in butter until it becomes a rough crumble.

5) Stir in almonds.

6) Sprinkle the crumble over the plums, drizzle with remaining maple syrup

7) Bake for 15 min until top is golden.

8) Serve with custard or vanilla ice cream

(see my recipe for delicious homemade ice-cream)



Yogurt and lemon syrup cake

Preparation Time: 25 minutes

Baking Time: 50 minutes

**Serves 12 s*

**This cake is sublime served warm with thick, fresh cream.*

Ingredients:

- 250g butter, softened
- 3 teaspoons finely grated lemon rind
- 1 cup (220g) caster sugar
- 3 eggs
- ½ cup (45g) desiccated coconut
- ¼ cup (30g) almond meal
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 ½ cups (375g) self-raising flour
- ¾ cup (200g) yogurt
- 1 medium lemon (140g)
- ½ cup (125ml) water
- ¼ cup (90g) honey
- 4 cardamom pods, bruised

Method:

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- 1) Position oven shelves; preheat oven to moderate. Grease 20cm baba pan
- 2) Beat butter, rind and sugar in small bowl with electric mixer until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well between additions
- 3) Transfer mixture to large bowl; using wooden spoon stir in coconut, almond meal and juice, then flour and yogurt. Spoon mixture into prepared pan; spread evenly with plastic spatula
- 4) Bake cake in moderate oven about 50 minutes. Stand cake 5 minutes then turn onto wire rack over tray.
- 5) Meanwhile, using vegetable peeler, remove rind from lemon; slice rind finely. Squeeze juice from lemon you need $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60ml) juice.
- 6) Combine rind, juice, the water, honey and cardamom in small saucepan; stir over heat, without boiling, until honey melts. Bring to a boil; reduce heat then simmer, uncovered, 5 minutes. Using slotted spoon, carefully remove and discard cardamom.
- 7) Pour hot syrup over hot cake.



Hummingbird Cake

Preparation Time: 35 minutes

Baking Time: 40 minutes

**Serves 12*

Ingredients:

- 450g can crushed pineapple in syrup
- 1 cup (150g) plain flour
- ½ cup (75g) self-raising flour
- ½ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 cup (200g) firmly packed brown sugar
- ½ cup (45g) desiccated coconut
- 1 cup mashed banana
- 2 eggs, beaten lightly
- ¾ cup (180ml) vegetable oil

Cream Cheese Frosting

- 30g butter, softened
- 60g cream cheese, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 1 ½ cups (240g) icing sugar mixture



Method:

- 1) Position oven shelves; pre-heat oven to moderate. Grease deep 23cm-squared cake pan, line base with baking paper.
- 2) Drain pineapple over medium bowl, pressing with spoon to extract as much syrup as possible. Reserve $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60ml) syrup.
- 3) Sift flour, soda, spices and sugar into large bowl. Using wooden spoon, stir in drained pineapple, reserved syrup, coconut, banana, egg and oil; pour into prepared pan.
- 4) Bake cake in moderate oven about 40 minutes. Stand cake 5 minutes then turn onto wire rack; turn cake top-side up to cool.
- 5) Spread cold cake with cream cheese frosting.
- 6) **Cream cheese frosting:** Beat butter, cream cheese and essence in small bowl with electric mixer until light and fluffy; gradually beat in icing sugar.

Tips:

- Use a light blended vegetable oil, such as corn, safflower or canola
- Use commercially made cream cheese, such as full-fat Philadelphia
- The pineapple must be well drained; too much syrup will give you a heavy cake. Canned crushed pineapple gives better results than blended or processed fresh or canned pieces or slices.
- The banana you use must be overripe; the fruit's natural starch is converted to sugar during ripening, and it's this natural sugar that contributes to the correct balance of ingredients.
- Overripe bananas freeze well. Place fruit too ripe to be palatable straight into your freezer; the skin will blacken, but the fruit inside is fine to use.
- Toasted shredded coconut is good sprinkled over the frosting.
- Storage: Cake will keep for up to 3 days in an airtight container in the refrigerator.
- Frosted or unfrosted, the cake can be frozen for up to 3 months



Carrot Cake with Lemon Cream Cheese Frosting

Preparation Time: 35 minutes
Baking Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

**Serves 12*

Ingredients:

- 1 cup (250ml) vegetable oil
- 1 1/3 cups (250g) firmly packed brown sugar
- 3 eggs
- 3 cups firmly packed, coarsely grated carrot
- 1 cup (120g) coarsely chopped walnuts
- 2 1/2 cups (375g) self-raising flour
- 1.2 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 2 teaspoons mixed spice

Lemon cream cheese frosting:

- 30g butter, softened
- 80g cream cheese, softened
- 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon rind
- 1 1/2 cups (240g) icing sugar mixture

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Method:

- 1) Position oven shelves: pre-heat oven to moderate. Grease deep 22cm-round cake pan, line base with baking paper
- 2) Beat oil, sugar and eggs in small bowl with electric mixer until thick and creamy
- 3) Transfer mixture to large bowl; using wooden spoon, stir in carrot and nuts then sifted dry ingredients. Pour mixture into prepared pan.
- 4) Bake cake in moderate oven about 1 ¼ hours. Stand cake 5 minutes then turn onto wire rack; turn cake top-side up to cool
- 5) Spread cold cake with lemon cream cheese frosting

Lemon cream cheese frosting:

- 1) Beat butter, cream cheese and rind in small bowl with electric mixer until light and fluffy; gradually beat in icing sugar



Boiled pineapple rum cake

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Baking Time: 2 hours

****Serves: 28***

Ingredients:

- 440g can crushed pineapple in syrup
- 1kg (5 cups) mixed dried fruit
- 250g butter, chopped coarsely
- 1 cup (200g) firmly packed brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons orange marmalade
- 2 tablespoons dark rum
- 4 eggs, beaten lightly
- 1 2/3 cups (250g) plain flour
- 1/3 cup (50g) self-raising flour
- 1/2 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tablespoon dark rum, extra

Method:

- 1) Drain pineapple over large jug; discard 1/2 cup (125ml) of the syrup



- 2) Combine pineapple, remaining syrup, fruit, butter, sugar, marmalade and rum in large saucepan. Using wooden spoon, stir over heat until butter melts and sugar dissolves; bring to boil. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, 10 minutes. Cool to room temperature.

- 3) Position over shelves; pre-heat oven to slow. Line base and side of deep 20cm-round cake pan with three thicknesses baking paper, bringing paper 5cm above edge of pan.

- 4) Using wooden spoon, stir egg and sifted dry ingredients into fruit mixture. Pour mixture into prepared pan.

- 5) Bake cake in slow oven about 2 hours. Brush hot cake with extra rum. Cover pan tightly with foil; cool cake in pan. Decorate with toffee stars, if desired.



Raspberry Hazelnut Cakes

Preparation Time: 30 minutes

Baking Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

*Serves: 12

Ingredients:

- 250g butter, softened
- 2 cups (440g) caster sugar
- 6 eggs
- 1 cup (150g) plain flour
- ½ cup (75g) self-raising flour
- 1 cup (110g) hazelnut meal
- 2/3 cup (160g) sour cream
- 300g fresh or frozen raspberries

Mascarpone Cream:

- 250g mascarpone cheese
- ¼ cup (40g) icing sugar mixture
- 2 tablespoons Frangelico
- ½ cup (120g) sour cream
- ½ cup (75g) roasted hazelnuts, chopped finely

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- 1) Position oven shelves; pre-heat oven to moderate. Grease deep 22cm round cake pan; line base and side with baking paper.
- 2) Beat butter and sugar in medium bowl with electric mixer until light and fluffy; add eggs, one at a time, beating until just combined between additions. Mixture will curdle at this stage, but will come together later.
- 3) Transfer mixture to large bowl; using wooden spoon, stir in flours, hazelnut meal, sour cream and raspberries. Spread mixture into prepared pan
- 4) Bake cake in moderate oven about 1 ½ hours. Stand cake 10 minutes, turn onto wire rack, turn top-side up to cool
- 5) Place cake on serving plate. Using metal spatula, spread cake all over with mascarpone cream.
- 6) **Mascarpone Cream:** Combine mascarpone, icing sugar, liqueur and sour cream in medium bowl. Using wooden spoon, stir until smooth; stir in nuts

Tips:

- If using frozen raspberries, don't thaw them; frozen berries are less likely to 'bleed' into the cake mixture
- Any berry of a similar size to raspberries can be used in this cake
- Any nut, such as almonds, pecans or walnuts, can be substituted for the hazelnut meal; blend or process whole roasted nuts until fine.
- Choose a liqueur to complement the flavours of the nuts. A good combination would be amaretto with blueberries, almond meal and roasted chopped almond kernels
- **Storage:** Unfrosted cake will keep for up to 3 days in an airtight container at room temperature, if you live in a cool climate.



- Cake can be frosted the day before required and stored in the refrigerator.
Unfrosted cake can be frozen for up to 3 months.

Rhubarb and Pear Custard Cake

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Baking Time: 1 hour

*Serves 10

Ingredients:

- 125g butter, softened
- ¼ cup (165g) caster sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 ½ cups (225g) self-raising flour
- ½ (60g) almond meal
- 2 tablespoons custard powder
- ½ cup (125ml) milk
- 3 trimmed stalks (250g) rhubarb, sliced
- 1 large pear (330g), peeled, sliced thinly
- ½ cup (180g) apricot jam, warmed, strained

Custard:

- 2 tablespoons custard powder
- 2 tablespoons caster sugar
- 1 cup (250ml) milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 20g butter



Method:

- 1) Position oven shelves; preheat oven to moderate. Grease deep 22cm round cake pan; line base and side with baking paper
- 2) Beat butter and sugar in medium bowl with electric mixer until light and fluffy; add eggs, one at a time, beating well between additions. Using wooden spoon, stir in flour, almond meal, custard powder and milk.
- 3) Using metal spatula, spread half of the cake mixture into prepared pan, top with half of the rhubarb and pear
- 4) Spread custard over fruit; spread remaining cake mixture over custard, top with remaining rhubarb and pear.
- 5) Bake cake in moderate over about 1 hour. Stand cake 5 minutes then turn onto wire rack; turn top side up, brush top with warm jam and leave to cool.

Custard:

Combine custard powder and sugar in small saucepan; using wooden spoon, gradually stir in milk. Stir over heat until mixture boils and thickens. Remove from heat, add vanilla and butter; stir until butter melts. Cover surface of custard completely with plastic wrap to prevent skin forming; cool to room temperature (do not refrigerate as mixture will not be spreadable)

Tips:

- Large firm strawberries can be sliced lengthways and substituted for the rhubarb; apple or nashi can be substituted for the pear; or a combination of any of these fruits (including the rhubarb) can be used
- Any jam can be substituted for apricot jam. Warm jam in the microwave oven for about 30 seconds on HIGH (100%); strain while warm.
- Any ground nuts can be substituted for almond meal; use a blender or processor to grind nuts finely.
- **Storage:** Cake will keep for 1 day in an airtight container in the refrigerator.



Family Cakes

Preparation Time: 30 minutes

Baking Time: 20 minutes

**Makes 24*

Ingredients:

- 125g butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 2/3 cup (150g) caster sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 ½ cups (225g) self-raising flour
- ¼ cup (60ml) milk
- ½ cup (160g) jam
- 300ml thickened cream

Method:

- 1) Line two deep 12 hole patty pans with paper cases
- 2) Combine butter, essence, sugar, eggs, flour and milk in small bowl of electric mixer; beat on low speed until ingredients are just combined. Increase speed to medium, beat about 3 minutes, or until mixture is smooth and changed to a paler colour



- 3) Drop slightly rounded tablespoons of mixture into paper cases. Bake in moderate oven over about 20 minutes. Turn cakes onto wire racks, turn top side up to cool.
- 4) Using sharp pointed vegetable knife, cut circle from top of each cake; cut circle in half to make two “wings”. Fill cavities with jam and whipped cream. Place wings in position on top of cakes; top with strawberry pieces and dust with a little sifted icing sugar, if desired.

Tips:

- Use two paper patty cases in each patty pan hole for added stability for butterfly cakes.
- **Storage:** Cakes are at their best made on day of serving. Once filled with cream, cakes should be refrigerated if made more than an hour ahead of time.
- Unfilled cakes can be frozen for up to 1 month.



Ginger Cake

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Baking Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

**Serves 24*

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups (300g) firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 ½ cups (225g) plain flour
- 1 ½ cups (225g) self-raising flour
- ½ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 250g butter, softened
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup (250ml) buttermilk
- ½ cup (175g) golden syrup

Lemon Frosting:

- 60g butter, softened
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon rind
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 cups (320g) icing sugar mixture

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Method:

- 1) Position oven shelves; preheat oven to moderately slow. Grease deep 23cm-square cake pan; line base with baking paper.
- 2) Sift dry ingredients into large bowl of electric mixer, add remaining ingredients. Beat mixture on low speed until ingredients are combined, then beat on medium speed until mixture is smooth and changed to a paler colour. Using metal spatula, spread mixture into prepared pan.
- 3) **Bake Cake** in moderately slow oven about 1 ½ hours. Stand cake 10 minutes, turn onto wire rack, turn top side up to cool. Spread cold cake with lemon frosting.
- 4) **Lemon Frosting:** Using wooden spoon, beat butter and rind together in small bowl; gradually beat in juice and icing sugar.

Tips:

- Cover cake loosely with foil about halfway through baking time if cake is over browning.
- If you like the stronger flavours of treacle or molasses, substitute either one for the golden syrup.
- **Storage:** Frosted, this cake can be made 1 day ahead and kept in an airtight container; unfrosted, the cake will keep in an airtight containing for up to 3 days.
- Frosted or unfrosted this cake can be frozen for up to 3 months.



Cardamom-Spiced Cake

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Baking Time: 1 Hour

**Serves: 15*

Ingredients:

- 1 cup (150g) self-raising flour
- 1 cup (150g) plain flour
- 1 ¼ cups (250g) firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- 125g butter, chopped
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- ¾ cup (180ml) milk
- ½ cup (75g) shelled unsalted pistachios, chopped coarsely

Method:

- 1) Position oven shelves; pre-heat oven to moderate. Grease 20cm x 30cm lamington pan; line base and long sides of pan with baking paper

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- 2) Blend or process flours, sugar, spices and butter until ingredients resemble fine breadcrumbs. Transfer mixture to medium bowl.
- 3) Firmly press 1 ½ cups of the flour mixture evenly over base of prepared pan.
- 4) Use fork to combine egg, soda and milk in jug; add to remaining flour mixture with nuts, mix well with wooden spoon. Pour mixture over base in pan.

- 5) Bake cake in moderate oven about 1 hour. Stand cake 10 minutes then turn onto wire rack; turn cake top-side up to cool.

Tips:

- Any nuts, such as almonds, pecans, walnuts or hazelnuts, can be substituted for the pistachios
- Butter should be chopped while still refrigerator cold
- Using a medium to large sized food processor or large blender will help make mixing of the butter through the dry ingredients quicker and easier; an alternative, however, is to finely chop or coarsely grate the cold butter then rub it through the dry ingredients with your finger tops
- **Storage:** Cake can be kept in an airtight container for up to 3 days. Cake can be frozen for up to 1 month



Best-Ever Sponge Cake

Preparation Time: 25 minutes

Baking Time: 25 minutes

*Serves: 8

Ingredients:

- 4 eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (165g) caster sugar
- 1 cup (150g) self raising flour
- 1 tablespoon corn flour
- 10g butter
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (80ml) boiling water
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (110g) lemon butter
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (180ml) thickened cream
- 1 tablespoon icing sugar mixture

Method:

- 1) Position oven shelves; pre-heat oven to moderate. Grease two deep 20cm-round cake pans.
- 2) Beat eggs in large bowl with electric mixer until thick and foamy. Gradually add sugar, about a tablespoonful at a time, beating until sugar is dissolved between additions. Total beating time should be about 10 minutes

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- 3) Sift flour and corn flour together three times onto paper.
- 4) Sift flour mixture over egg mixture; using one hand like a rake, quickly and lightly fold and pull flour mixture through egg mixture, using side of your hand as a scraper to make sure all the ingredients are combined.
- 5) Pour combined butter and the water down side of bowl; using one hand, fold through egg mixture. Pour mixture evenly into prepared pans, using metal spatula, spread mixture to edges of pans.

Tips:

- Beating the eggs and sugar well helps correctly aerate the mixture. Caster sugar dissolves the fastest; while crystal sugar can be used, it requires longer beating to be incorporated.
- It is important to create volume in the egg and sugar mixture; if you don't have a bowl like the one pictured, use a small bowl with deep sides and beat the mixture with either a hand help or stand mixer. You will get better results this way, even though you have to transfer the sponge mixture to a larger bowl to fold in the flour and water.
- If you don't like using your hand to mix ingredients, use a rubber or plastic spatula, or a large metal spoon.
- When the sponge is cooked, it will feel springy when touched gently with fingertips, and will have shrunk slightly away from the side of pan
- Turn the sponge from cake pan as soon as it is baked, or heat from the pan will continue to cook it, giving it a too-crisp crust.

Storage: Sponge is best made on day of serving. Refrigerate if it is to be filled more than an hour ahead. Unfilled sponge can be frozen for up to 1 month.



Perfect Honey Roll

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Baking Time: 15 minutes

**Serves 8*

Ingredients:

- 1 egg, separated
- 3 egg whites
- 2 tablespoons treacle
- 1.2 cup (175g) golden syrup
- ½ cup (75g) corn flour
- ⅓ cup (50g) self raising flour
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground clove
- 2 tablespoons boiling water
- ½ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 1/3 cup (30g) desiccated coconut

Mock Cream:

- ½ cup (110g) caster sugar
- ½ teaspoon gelatine
- 1 tablespoon milk

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- 1/3 cup (80ml) water
 - 125g butter, softened
 - ½ teaspoon vanilla essence
-

Method:

- 1) Position oven shelves; pre-heat oven to hot. Grease 25cm x 30cm swiss roll pan; line base and short sides with baking paper, bringing paper 5 cm over edges. Grease the baking paper.
- 2) Beat the four egg whites in small bowl with electric mixer until soft peaks form; with motor operating, gradually add combined treacle and golden syrup in a thin stream.
- 3) Add egg yolk; beat until pale and thick. Transfer mixture to large bowl; using a metal spoon, fold in combined triple-sifted flours and spices, and combined water and soda. Pour mixture into prepared pan; gently spreading mixture evenly into corners.
- 4) Bake cake in hot oven about 15 minutes
- 5) Meanwhile, place a piece of baking paper cut slightly larger than the cake on bench; sprinkle evenly with coconut. When cake is cooked, turn immediately onto paper, quickly peeling away the lining paper. Working rapidly, use serrated knife to carefully cut away crisp edges from all sides of cake.
- 6) Carefully roll cake loosely from one short side by lifting paper and using it to guide roll into shape; stand 10 seconds then unroll. Re-roll cake; cool to room temperature.
- 7) Gently unroll cake, spread with mock cream, carefully re-roll cake.
- 8) **Mock Cream:** Combine sugar, gelatine, milk and water in small saucepan; stir over low heat, without boiling until sugar and gelatine dissolve. Cool to room temperature. Beat butter and essence in



small bowl with electric mixer until white and fluffy; this will take up to 15 minutes. Mock cream thickness on standing.

Tips:

- While this is easy to make, it may take a bit of experimentation with your oven to determine the best temperature and to perfect the timing – two elements that are critical for the success of this sponge cake. Every oven is slightly different to another; be guided by your oven manufacturers instructions. As a guide, the second shelf up from the oven floor is usually the best position for the cake pan and the temperature should be 200°C in a fan-forced oven.
- Gentle folding of the water and flour mixtures through the egg mixture is also important for success; heavy handling of the mixture equals a heavy sponge cake.
- Use whatever kitchen tool you feel most comfortable with to incorporate the ingredients. Some people prefer to use a large metal spoon, some their hand or rubber or plastic spatula. It doesn't matter what you use, its how you use it.
- Mock cream is a smooth mixture suitable for cream buns and other similar cakes but not thick enough to use for piping. It should not be refrigerated; because of the butter content, it will become rock hard. Cake can be filled up to 2 hours before required.
- **Storage:** Cake is best made on the day it is served.



Welcome to Your Luxury Hideaway in Donegal

Marble Cake

Preparation Time: 30 minutes

Baking Time: 1 hour

**Serves 12*

Ingredients:

- 250g butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 1 ¼ cups (275g) caster sugar
- 3 eggs
- 2 ¼ cups (335g) self raising flour
- ¾ cup (180ml) milk
- pink food colouring
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 1 tablespoon milk, extra

Pink Butter Frosting

- 90g butter
- 1 cup (160g) icing sugar mixture
- 1 tablespoon milk
- pink food colouring

Method:

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- 1) Position oven shelves; pre-heat oven to moderate. Grease deep 22cm round cake pan; line base with baking paper.
- 2) Beat butter, essence and sugar in medium bowl with electric mixer until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until combined. Using wooden spoon, stir in flour and milk, in two batches.
- 3) Divide mixture evenly among three bowls; tint mixture in one bowl pink by stirring through a few drops of colouring with a wooden spoon.
- 4) Using a teaspoon, blend sifted cocoa with extra milk in a cup; stir into the second bowl of mixture.

- 5) Drop alternate spoonfuls of the three coloured mixtures into prepared pan.
- 6) Pull a skewer backwards and forwards through cake mixture several times for a marble effect; smooth surface with metal spatula.
- 7) Bake cake in moderate oven about 1 hour. Stand cake 5 minutes then turn onto wire rack; turn cake top-side up to cool
- 8) **Pink butter frosting:** Beat butter in small bowl with electric mixer until light and fluffy; beat in icing sugar and milk, in two batches. Using wooden spoon beat in a few drops of colouring to tint frosting pink.

Tips:

- There are many types of food colourings available – pastes, gels, powders and liquids. Since they all vary greatly in strength, start tinting by using only a drop of a tiny amount then increase the amount until you get the strength of colour you desire.
- **Storage:** Cake will keep for up to 2 days in an airtight container at room temperature or in the refrigerator for up to 4 days. Frosted or unfrosted, this cake can be frozen up to 1 month.