

LEMON CAKE

Advisory: Even if you don't have blood sugar issues, you are going to want to have insulin on-hand just to read this recipe!

INGREDIENTS

2 sticks of butter at room temperature	1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
2 cups granulated sugar	3/4 cup milk (or buttermilk)
4 eggs	1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1/3 cup grated lemon zest tossed with one teaspoon flour (6 to 8 large lemons)	1/2 cup granulated sugar
3 cups flour	1/2 cup plus 3 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice, divided
1/2 teaspoon baking powder	1/2 vanilla bean, sliced lengthwise (optional, but worth the investment)
1/2 teaspoon baking soda	2 cups powdered sugar, sifted
1 teaspoon salt	

LET'S MAKE IT!

Preheat the oven to 350° F.

Grease and flour 2 loaf pans or 6 mini loaf pans.

Cream the butter and 2 cups granulated sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes.

Add eggs, one at a time, and the lemon zest (be sure zest gets evenly distributed)

Sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a bowl.

In a separate bowl, combine 1/4 cup lemon juice, milk and vanilla extract.

Add the flour and buttermilk mixtures alternately to the batter, beginning and ending with the flour.

Divide the batter evenly between the pans (I use an ice cream scoop to portion evenly). Smooth the tops and bake for 45 minutes to 1 hour, until a toothpick comes out clean.

While cakes are baking, combine 1/2 cup granulated sugar with 1/2 cup lemon juice and vanilla bean in a small saucepan and cook over low heat until the sugar dissolves.

When the cakes have cooled for 10 minutes, poke holes in them with a skewer. *Remove from the pans and set them to a rack set over a sheet pan (I don't remove cakes from the mini loaf pans if I'm gifting them). Slowly spoon the syrup on top of cakes, aiming for as little waste as possible.

Allow the cakes to cool completely.

Combine the confectioners' sugar and the lemon juice in a bowl, mixing with a wire whisk until smooth. Pour over the tops of the cakes. These lemon cakes freeze beautifully. (guilty pleasure: eating a hunk of cake FROZEN. Yumm!)