



ANSON MILLS

Classic Angel Food Cake

Yield

One 10-inch cake

Time

About 30 minutes to prepare the cake, 35 to bake it, and 10 minutes to make the glaze

Baking Notes

Get your operating theater in order before you even *think* about whipping up this cake. Make sure your mixing bowl and whisk are scrupulously clean, and free of oil residue. Weigh or measure the egg whites into the bowl in which you plan to beat them and allow them to reach 60 degrees before putting the mixer in gear. Sift the flour and sugar together three times and set them aside. Line up the remaining tools and ingredients with surgical precision. *Begin.*

You may be inclined to overwhip the egg whites. *We* were. If you do, the flour and sugar mixture being folded into the meringue will bunch up in little knots and pock the crumb of the cake. Instead of a pushing the meringue to its most strident peaks, stop whipping when the egg whites are voluminous but languid.

An angel food cake pan is never greased—during baking, the cake batter climbs up the sides of the pan, growing higher and higher. You literally have to cut it free when it's cool. We purchased a two-piece 10-inch aluminum Nordic Ware Angel Food Cake pan (with cooling feet!) from Chef's Catalogue online.

One thing we *did* find helpful was to trace the diameter of the removable base on a piece of parchment paper, cut it out, then trace the diameter of the base of the tube (this is a bit tricky) in the center of the parchment circle, and cut that out. Press the cut-out parchment round into the bottom of the pan.

Equipment Mise en Place

For the cake, you will need a digital kitchen scale, a stand mixer with a whisk attachment, an instant-read thermometer, a fine-mesh strainer or flour sifter, parchment or waxed paper, a medium bowl, a rubber spatula, a 10-inch angel food cake pan with a removable bottom, a metal spatula, toothpicks or a wooden skewer, a long-necked bottle (such as a wine bottle) if your cake pan doesn't have feet, a 9-inch cardboard cake round, a wire cooling rack, and a baking sheet over which to set the rack.

For the glaze, you will need a rasp-style grater, a medium bowl, a small saucepan, a tea strainer, and a whisk.

For cutting the cake, an electric or serrated knife is recommended

Ingredients

for the cake

13.6 ounces (1½ cups) fresh egg whites (10 to 12 large eggs)
5.6 ounces (about 1½ sifted cups) Anson Mills Artisan Fine Cloth-Bolted White Lammas
Cake Flour
10.5 ounces (1½ cups) superfine sugar
1 teaspoon cream of tartar
½ teaspoon fine sea salt
1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon almond extract

for the glaze

6 ounces (about 1½ sifted cups) confectioners' sugar
3 ounces (6 tablespoons) unsalted European-style butter
Grated zest of 1 orange
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
Pinch of fine sea salt
3 to 4 tablespoons whole milk, hot

Directions

- 1. *Make the cake:*** Have ready a 10-inch angel food cake pan with a removable bottom. If you've decided to line the bottom of the pan with a parchment round, do so now (see Baking Notes). Weigh or measure the egg whites into a scrupulously clean mixer bowl and allow them to reach about 60 degrees before you begin to whip them. During the wait-time, sift the flour and sugar: turn the flour and 5.25 ounces (¾ cup) of the sugar into a fine sifter set over a bowl. Have a piece of parchment or waxed paper nearby. Sift the flour and sugar 3 times (onto the parchment, and then into the bowl and then back onto the parchment). Set the mixture aside. Adjust the oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 350 degrees.
- 2.** With the mixer on low speed, beat the egg whites with the whisk attachment until foamy, about 40 seconds. Add the cream of tartar and salt, and continue to beat on medium speed until the egg whites form very soft, loopy peaks, 2 to 2½ minutes. Beat in the remaining sugar a little at a time until the egg whites are glossy and meringue-like, but still languid, about 1 minute more. Beat in the vanilla and almond extract, and then detach the bowl from the mixer.
- 3.** Sift one third of the sifted flour mixture over the whites and fold with a rubber spatula to incorporate. Sift the remaining flour mixture over the whites in 2 additions, folding gently but thoroughly after each. Turn the batter into the pan, smooth the top with a small offset spatula or spoon, and rap the cake pan on the counter once to eliminate any air bubbles. Bake the cake until it is golden brown, has pulled away from the sides of the pan slightly, and tests clean with a tester, about 35 minutes. Remove from the oven and invert the pan on a counter (if it has feet) or over a bottle (if it doesn't). Let the cake cool completely, about 2 hours.
- 4.** To remove the cake from the pan, set the pan on the counter right side up and ease a small metal spatula between the pan sides and the cake, moving it around the pan in a smooth motion,

and holding the spatula flush against the sides of the pan. Lift the base of the pan with the cake away from the outer pan. If you have not made a parchment round for the pan, run a spatula between the bottom of the cake and the base to loosen it. Lift the loosened cake from the base and invert it onto a 9-inch cardboard cake round. Lift off the parchment round. Place the cake on a wire rack set over a baking sheet.

5. *Make the glaze:* Sift the confectioners' sugar into a medium bowl. Melt the butter in a small saucepan over low heat, and then stir in the orange zest, vanilla, and salt. Remove the pan from the heat and let stand for 5 minutes to infuse the flavors. Pour the butter mixture through a fine tea strainer into the confectioners' sugar, pushing on the zest with a spoon; discard the zest. Whisk until smooth, then whisk in 2 tablespoons of the hot milk. Add additional milk a little at a time, whisking until the glaze is fluid but still quite thick. Pour the glaze over the cake, allowing it to drip down the sides. While the glaze is still warm, use a metal spatula to smooth the top and encourage the glaze to drip. Let the glaze harden before serving. Transfer the cake to a serving platter. To serve, cut slices with an electric or serrated knife.