



French Butter and Jam Cake

By Dylan Sabuco

Prep Time 10 / **Cook Time** 10 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

bake: to cook food with dry heat, as in an oven.

measure: to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

mix: to thoroughly combine two or more ingredients until uniform in texture.

Equipment

- Oven
- Muffin pan
- Paper cupcake liners
- Large mixing bowl
- Medium mixing bowl
- Dry measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Liquid measuring cup
- Wooden spoon
- Whisk
- Fork or toothpick

Ingredients

French Butter and Jam Cake

- 1 3/4 C all-purpose flour **** (for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub 2 C gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour)****
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 2 eggs **** (for EGG ALLERGY sub 2 T flaxseed + 1/3 C warm water—more info below)****
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract **** (for GLUTEN ALLERGY use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor—check label)****
- 1 stick or 1/2 C unsalted butter, softened **** (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub 1/2 C dairy-free/nut-free butter, like Earth Balance brand)****
- 3/4 C granulated sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 C jam - your choice, optional
- 1/2 C water
- paper cupcake liners

Food Allergen Substitutions

French Butter and Jam Cake

Gluten/Wheat: For 1 3/4 C all-purpose flour, substitute 2 C gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour. Use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor.

Egg: For 2 eggs, substitute 2 T flax seed + 1/3 C warm water. Stir and soak flaxseeds in warm water for 5 minutes or until fully absorbed and thickened.

Dairy: For 1 stick (1/2 C) unsalted butter, substitute 1/2 C dairy-free/nut-free butter, like Earth Balance brand.

Instructions

French Butter and Jam Cake

intro

Croissants, puff pastry, and macarons: these sweet treats and more come to mind when thinking about France. The art of baking has a long history with many roots in France. In the 1800s, baking was becoming elegant, refined, and more than just making bread. At that time, chefs and bakers started to create recipes like croissants and macarons. In grocery stores and kitchens across the world, the recipes and influence from that era of French (food) history can still be seen and tasted to this day. This recipe is an ode to the buttery and decadent history of French baking.

preheat

Preheat your oven to 350 F.

measure + mix

In a large mixing bowl, add **1 stick or 1/2 cup softened butter, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, 3/4 cup sugar**, and **1/4 teaspoon salt**. Mix thoroughly with a wooden spoon. This step is called creaming, when you combine sugar and butter to form the creamy base of a batter.

crack + stir

Next, crack in **2 eggs**, add **1/2 cup water** and stir until just incorporated.

measure + mix

In a medium mixing bowl, measure **1 3/4 cup flour** and **1 teaspoon baking powder**. Whisk a few times before adding the mixture to the bowl of wet ingredients. Mix together, and once fully combined, set aside for 5 minutes to rest. Tip: Over-stirring batter and dough develops too much gluten and will result in a harder than desired cake.

scrumptious science

In the above steps, you are creating gluten inside of the cake batter. Gluten is a protein strand that forms when glutamate (a precursor to the gluten in flour) mixes with water. The act of mixing the glutamate and water together causes a reaction that results in the creation of gluten. For a moment, compare gluten to a rubber band in your mind. Both are elastic and stretchy and snap back to their original shape. These qualities are great for making cakes and other pastries. Without gluten (or a substitute), you will find there is a spongy, fluffy texture missing from your dish.

bake

Place cupcake liners in the wells of a muffin pan. Fill each one with the batter until about halfway full. Use a 1/4 measuring cup to ensure each cupcake liner has the same amount of batter. This will help ensure that your cakes all cook an even amount of time. Slide the muffin pan into the oven for 8 to 10 minutes, or until golden brown on top, and a fork or toothpick comes out cleanly when inserted into the center of the cake. Cool the cakes for a few minutes before garnishing.

garnish + serve

Once the cakes have cooled slightly, it's time to add the jam (see recipe for Black Pepper Stewed Strawberries)! Simply spread **1/2 cup of the black pepper stewed strawberries OR your favorite jam** over the top the cakes (roughly 2 teaspoons per cake). For a jam-filled cupcake, you can carve out a small hole from the top of the cake using a spoon or knife and pour the jam inside, then reseal the hole with the cake you removed. Time to dig in! Bon appétit!

Featured Ingredient: Butter!

Hi! I'm Butter!

"I'm a byproduct of churned cream used in cooking and as a spread for bread. I'm really yummy when I'm melted and poured over freshly popped popcorn! You don't have to "butter me up" (flatter me) to get me to add richness to your food!"

History & Etymology

According to Elaine Khosrova, author and pastry chef, butter may have originated 8,000 years ago in Africa. A shepherd had tied a bag of warm sheep's milk to the back of a sheep and found that after traveling a few miles, the milk had curdled, creating a tasty substance. She claims butter would have come from the milk of sheep and goats before cow's milk.

The method of churning butter eventually changed from having bags of milk dangling from domesticated animals' backs to hanging them from tree branches.

In places where olive oil was preferred with bread and cooking, as in ancient Greece and Rome, butter was seen as a food for barbarians. However, it was accepted as a medicinal ointment.

A 4,500-year-old Sumerian tablet describes making butter from cows.

Scandinavia was exporting butter by the 12th century. Butter did not spoil as quickly in northern Europe as in southern climates. In Ireland, in the 11th to 14th centuries, butter was placed in firkins (wooden vessels or casks) and buried in peat bogs to preserve it. Archaeologists can still find buried butter firkins in Ireland.

Butter was churned by hand on farms until the 19th century. Farmers would make enough for themselves and to sell in brick form for extra income.

In the 1860s, butter factories started up in the United States. In 1894, Gustaf de Laval patented the first centrifugal milk-cream separator, which sped up the butter-making process.

At home, you can make butter by shaking or whipping heavy cream, causing the butter fats to separate from the liquid until it turns into butter and buttermilk!

The latter half of the 20th century would see margarine overtake butter in popularity because it was less expensive and seen as healthier. That changed somewhat in the early 2000s, but both products have been surpassed in recent years with healthier fats, like canola and olive oils.

The United States produces the most butter worldwide, followed by New Zealand and Germany.

The word "butter" is from the Old English "butere," of West Germanic origin, from the Latin "butyrum," from the Greek "bouturon."

Composition

Butter is a dairy product made from cream, which is typically 80 percent butterfat. It is a solid substance when refrigerated, and at room temperature, it is semi-solid. When heated, it melts and becomes a liquid. Butter is most often made from cow's milk, although it can also be made from goat, sheep, buffalo, and yak milk.

How to Buy & Eat

In the US, butter is typically purchased in 1-pound packages with four 4-ounce sticks. The sticks may come in the Elgin or Eastern-pack shape: $4\frac{3}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{4}$ inches. This form was named for a dairy in Elgin, Illinois. Or, they will be in the Western-pack shape: $3\frac{1}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Butter dishes are generally designed for the Elgin shape.

Most butter has 80 percent butterfat. If your recipe calls for butter with more butterfat content, look for a European-style butter. It is churned longer and has 82 to 90 percent butterfat.

You can purchase salted or unsalted butter. In baking, recipes often call for unsalted butter. If you use salted butter in a recipe that calls for unsalted, you may not need as much or any additional salt.

The culinary uses for butter are extensive. You can spread it on bread, toast, and other baked goods. It is a cooking fat that adds flavor to pan-fried foods. Cooking vegetables in a little butter allows the sugars in the veggies to caramelize. Adding butter when finishing a sauce makes the sauce rich and creamy. Baking with butter will add texture and richness to cakes, cookies, and pastries and make them more tender. Mix it with powdered sugar, and you have buttercream frosting!

Several foods have "butter" as an ingredient and in their names, including butter cookies, butter cake, butter chicken, butter rice, butter pecan ice cream, buttercream, butterscotch (candy), butter pie, bread and butter pudding, and cookie butter (a sweet food paste). The French "beurre blanc" ("butter white") is a rich white butter sauce.

Nutrition

One tablespoon of butter has 102 calories, 12 grams of fat (7 grams saturated fat), one-tenth gram of protein, and no carbohydrates, fiber, or sugar. It has 355 IU of vitamin A and small amounts of calcium, magnesium, and potassium. Salted butter has 91 milligrams of sodium.

Eating butter may increase the absorption of other nutrients in the foods it is in.

Butter is not a heart-healthy fat, so it should be eaten in moderation.