1st Place Youth Iced Cakes by Elizabeth Gravenstein

ITALIAN CREAM CAKE

Servings : 12

Author : Melissa Sperka

Ingredients

2 cup all-purpose flour

1 tsp baking soda

1/2 tsp baking powder

1 cup salted butter softened

1 1/2 cup granulated sugar

1/2 cup light brown sugar

2 tsp pure vanilla extract

1/2 tsp pure almond extract

5 large eggs

1 cup whole buttermilk

14 oz package sweetened flaked coconut divided

1 1/2 cup pecan pieces toasted divided

Frosting:

2 [8] oz cream cheese softened

1 cup [2 sticks] butter softened

2 lb powdered sugar

2 tsp pure vanilla extract

1/2 tsp pure almond extract

reserved coconut toasted

1/2 cup reserved toasted pecans

Instructions

- Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter and flour 3 [9] inch round cake pans or spray with baking spray.
- Set aside.
- Sift the flour, baking soda and baking powder together.
- In the bowl of a stand mixer, cream together the softened butter, granulated sugar, brown sugar, pure vanilla and almond extracts. Beat until creamy and light beige in color, around 3-4 minutes
- Add the eggs 1 at a time, beating well after each addition.
- Add the sifted dry ingredients alternately with the buttermilk. After all has been added, increase the mixer speed and beat until fully combined.
- Mix in 1/2 of the coconut and 1 cup of toasted pecans by hand.
- Divide the batter evenly between the cake pans. Bake for 25-30 minutes until a toothpick inserted into the center comes back clean. Cool completely on a cooling rack.
- For the frosting: Cream together the cream cheese and butter until light, fluffy and pale yellow in color. Add the vanilla and almond extracts. Gradually add the powdered sugar, beating until creamy and smooth.
- Line the edge of the cake plate with wax paper strips.
- Frost the cake between the layers sprinkling each with reserved toasted pecan pieces. Add the final layer and frost the top and sides.
- Press toasted coconut on the sides. Decorate the top as desired with the remaining chopped pecans.
- Store chilled until serving.

Notes

a) To toast the pecans: Lay in a single layer on a baking sheet and toast in a 350°F oven for 6-8 minutes. Cool completely before adding to the batter.

b) "How to" for toasting the coconut here) Alternative frosting technique: Mix the toasted pecans into the frosting by hand and spread onto the top and sides of the cake.

*Recipe is the property of Western Pecan Growers Association