

Pound Cake Reinvented

Dense, delicious and better without all the butter

BY KATIE WEBSTER

TRADITIONAL POUND CAKE—a pound of sugar, a pound of butter, a pound of flour, a pound of eggs—would have been challenge enough, but when a friend sent in an over-the-top recipe “enhanced” with margarine, a half dozen *jumbo* eggs and cream cheese, we knew that our ovens would get a workout as we tried to devise a healthier version.

In a bold first attempt, we halved the sugar, cut the fat by two-thirds and substituted a combination of whole eggs and egg whites for the jumbo eggs. We also replaced some of the all-purpose flour with whole-wheat pastry flour. The result was an anemic-looking brick.

Although our methods had been too radical, we knew our reasoning had been sound. Rejecting the margarine and retaining the one stick of butter had been a good idea, and we decided to add $\frac{1}{3}$ cup canola oil to help recreate the mouth-feel of the original and allow the cake to turn the golden color it is meant to be. We replaced the regular cream

cheese with lower-fat Neufchâtel, using buttermilk to boost the tanginess of the cheese and add moisture. By beating the egg whites with some of the sugar (a step omitted on the first trial), we made the meringue more structurally sound, which added “lift” to the batter. We relented on the sugar, reducing it only by a third. The result was vastly improved, but still a little dry. The breakthrough? Adding a bit of corn syrup, a hygroscopic (moisture-attracting) sugar.

The final product is a cake with half whole-wheat flour, 38 percent less fat and 30 percent fewer calories—but still with the dense, fine crumb of the original. Serve this rich cake on its own, sprinkled with powdered sugar or with either sour cherry (as shown) or chocolate sauce.



Cream Cheese Pound Cake

Healthy \times Weight

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MINUTES | **TOTAL:** 3 HOURS (including cooling time) | **TO MAKE AHEAD:** Wrap and store at room temperature for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 1 month.

Although so moist and seemingly rich you can eat it unadorned, we recommend trying this pound cake topped with our quick cherry sauce (page 69).

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups whole-wheat pastry flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 large eggs
- ½ cup nonfat buttermilk
- ⅓ cup canola oil
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract

- 6 large egg whites
- 2 cups sugar, divided
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 8 ounces Neufchâtel cheese (see Note)

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Coat a 12-cup Bundt pan with cooking spray and dust with flour.
2. Whisk all-purpose flour, whole-wheat flour, baking powder and salt in a medium bowl. Whisk whole eggs, buttermilk, oil, corn syrup and vanilla in another medium bowl until well blended.
3. Beat egg whites in a large clean bowl with an electric mixer on high speed until light and foamy. Gradually beat in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar until stiff glossy peaks form.
4. Beat butter and Neufchâtel in a large bowl until creamy. Add the remaining $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar and beat, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed, until pale and fluffy, about 4 minutes. Alternately add the flour and buttermilk mixtures, beating until just smooth. Fold in

Serve Cream Cheese Pound Cake with Quick Cherry Sauce—or Chocolate Sauce (recipe at www.eatingwell.com)—or both.

about one-third of the egg whites with a rubber spatula until just smooth and no white streaks remain. Fold in the remaining egg whites. Scrape the batter into the prepared pan, spreading evenly.

5. Bake the cake until a wooden skewer inserted into it comes out clean and the top springs back when touched, 1 hour to 1 hour 10 minutes. Cool in the pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Loosen the edges with a knife and turn out onto the rack; let cool for at least 1 hour more before slicing.

MAKES 24 SERVINGS.

PER SERVING: 217 CALORIES; 10 G FAT (4 G SAT, 3 G MONO); 44 MG CHOLESTEROL; 29 G CARBOHYDRATE; 4 G PROTEIN; 1 G FIBER; 140 MG SODIUM.

ingredient note:

For this recipe, be sure to use Neufchâtel-type cream cheese that has 1/3 less fat than regular, not "light" cream cheese, which has less fat.

Quick Cherry Sauce

ACTIVE TIME: 15 MINUTES | **TOTAL:** 15 MINUTES
TO MAKE AHEAD: Refrigerate for up to 1 week.

 Frozen pitted cherries make this luscious sauce a snap to make. Try substituting frozen raspberries if you prefer.

- 2 10-ounce bags frozen pitted cherries, preferably sour cherries
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 2/3 cup plus 1/4 cup water, divided
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1/4 cup lemon juice

Bring cherries, sugar and 2/3 cup water to a boil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring often. Stir 1/4 cup water and cornstarch in a small bowl until smooth and stir into the boiling cherry mixture. Return to a boil, stirring constantly; cook until thickened, about 1 minute. Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice.

MAKES ABOUT 4 CUPS, FOR 24 SERVINGS.

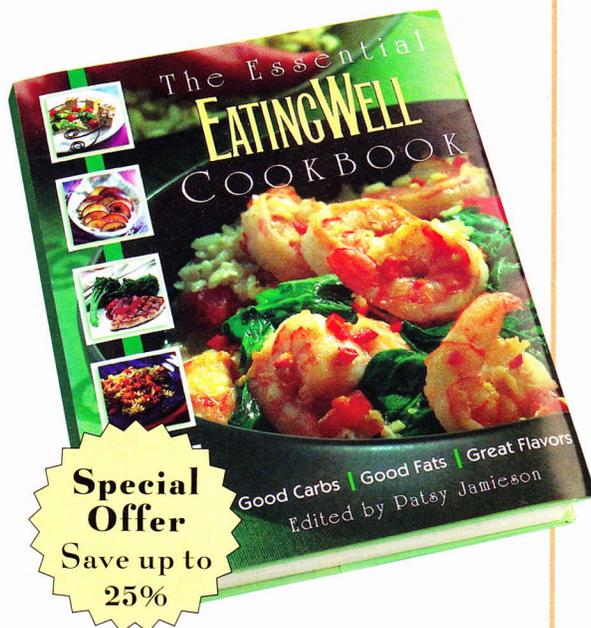
PER SERVING: 36 CALORIES; 0 G FAT (0 G SAT, 0 G MONO); 0 MG CHOLESTEROL; 9 G CARBOHYDRATE; 0 G PROTEIN; 0 G FIBER; 1 MG SODIUM.



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