

Nigella Lawson's STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKES

Ingredients

For the shortcakes

- 325g plain flour
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 5 tbsp caster sugar
- 125g unsalted butter, frozen
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 125ml single cream
- 1 large egg white, lightly beaten
- 1 baking tray, greased or lined
- 6½ cm round cutter

For the filling

- Approx 300g strawberries
- 1 tbsp caster sugar
- Few drops of balsamic vinegar (optional)
- 250ml double cream or crème fraîche



Instructions

Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7. Mix the flour, salt, baking powder and three tablespoons of the sugar in a bowl. Grate the butter into these dry ingredients and use your fingertips to finish crumbling the butter into the flour. Whisk the egg into the cream, and pour into the flour mixture a little at a time, using a fork to mix. You may not need all of the eggy cream to make the dough come together, so go cautiously.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface, and roll gently to a thickness of about 2cm. Dip the cutter in flour and cut out as many rounds as you can. Work the scraps back into a dough, re-roll and finish cutting out – you should get eight in all.

Place the shortcakes about 2½ cm apart on the baking sheet, brush the tops with the egg white, and sprinkle them with the remaining two tablespoons of caster sugar. If it helps with the rest of your cooking, or life in general, you can cover and refrigerate them now for up to two hours.

Bake for 10-15 minutes, until golden-brown, and let them cool for a short while on a wire rack. Meanwhile, crush half the strawberries with the spoonful of sugar and the few drops of balsamic vinegar if using, and halve or quarter the remaining strawberries, depending on their size. Whip the double cream, if you're using.

The shortcakes should be eaten while still warm, so split each one across the middle and cover with a spoonful of the crushed strawberry mixture, a few halved or quartered strawberries, then dollop some whipped cream or crème fraîche on top, and set the top back on.

Serves 8.



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Angela Hartnett's BANANA BREAD

Ingredients

- 100g sultanas
- 75ml rum
- 4 small, ripe bananas
- 225g plain flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 25g butter, plus extra for greasing the tin
- 150g caster sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 60g walnuts, roughly chopped

Instructions

Put the sultanas in a bowl with the rum and leave to soak.

Grease a 900g loaf tin with butter and line it with greaseproof paper. Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas Mark 3½.

Peel and mash the bananas – you need about 300g in all.

Sift the flour with the baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and salt.

Melt the butter, then mix it with the sugar in a large bowl. Beat in the eggs, then add the flour mixture and stir well.

Add the mashed bananas, walnuts, sultanas and rum.

Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and bake for 45–60 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin, before turning out.

Store in an airtight cake tin.

Serves 12.



Levi Roots' PECAN PIE

Ingredients

For the pastry

- 100g cold butter
- 80g icing sugar
- 1 free-range egg, refrigerator-cold
- 200g plain flour

For the filling

- 5 free-range eggs
- 250g light muscovado sugar
- 200g golden syrup
- Pinch of salt
- 70g butter, melted
- 6 cloves, crushed
- ½ tsp grated nutmeg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 tbsp plain flour
- 200g pecans, half roughly chopped, half left whole
- Crème fraîche
- Grated nutmeg

Instructions

To make the pastry, cream the butter and icing sugar together until smooth. Add the egg and flour and mix to combine. Bring the pastry together in a ball with your hands. Wrap in clingfilm and chill in the refrigerator for 30–60 minutes.

Roll out the dough and use it to line a 30cm diameter loose-bottomed flan tin. Refrigerate for 20 minutes.

Preheat oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6.

Line the pastry case with nonstick baking paper, fill with baking beans and bake blind for 15 minutes. Remove the paper and beans and return to the oven for a further five minutes. Remove the pastry case and reduce the heat to 150°C/Gas Mark 2.

Meanwhile, make the filling. Whisk the eggs in a bowl then whisk in the sugar, golden syrup, salt, melted butter, cloves, nutmeg, vanilla extract and flour. Stir in the chopped pecans. Pour into the pastry case and arrange the whole pecans on top.

Bake in the oven for 30 minutes or until just set. Serve with crème fraîche sprinkled with a little nutmeg.

Serves 8.

