Sandra Monger

cake design

A Naked Wedding Cake

Text by Sandra Monger & Robin Pakes.
Photographs by Robin Pakes

This 2014 favourite is easy to make and perfect for an informal summer wedding. A classic combo of moist vanilla sponge and lashings of scrummy jam and buttercream is sandwiched into deep tiers and dusted with icing sugar before being decorated with delicious soft summer berries.

You will need.

4 layers of 6 inch vanilla sponge cake and 4 layers of 8 inch vanilla sponge cake
1 quantity of vanilla buttercream
1 quantity of vanilla syrup
1 jar of strawberry or seedless raspberry jam
icing sugar for dusting
fresh berries of your choice, washed and dried thoroughly on kitchen paper
6 and 8 inch round hardboard
cake dowels
palette knife
serrated knife
10 inch base drum board or cake stand

To make the vanilla sponge cakes you will need.

(6 inch round quantities to bake 4 layers)
8oz caster sugar

8oz stork

4 large free range eggs

10 oz self raising flour

2 teaspoons vanilla bean extract

(8 inch round quantities to bake 4 layers)
16oz caster sugar

16oz stork

8 large free range eggs

20 oz self raising flour

4 teaspoons vanilla bean extract

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C fan, 180°C electric oven or gas mark 4.
2. Grease and line the cake tins.
3. Cream together the stork and caster sugar until pale and fluffy.
4. Add the vanilla bean paste and beat in the eggs one at a time.
5. Sieve and fold in the flour.
6. Divide the mix equally between the prepared cake tins.
7. Bake for between 20 to 30 minutes until golden brown and firm to touch.

8. Carefully turn the cakes out of the tins onto wire racks, taking care not to damage the baked edges.
9. Allow to cool.

TIP – A non-stick baking spray will help ensure that your cakes will turn out easily and prevent damage to the baked sides.

To make the vanilla syrup you will need.

1 mug of Granulated sugar
1 mug of Water
2 teaspoons Vanilla bean paste

Method

1. Place the sugar and water into a heavy based saucepan.
2. Bring to the boil, stirring until the mixture begins to boil.
3. Stop stirring and allow to simmer 5 minutes.
4. Allow to cool and stir in the vanilla bean paste.

To make the buttercream you will need.

500g softened butter
1kg icing sugar
Splash of milk
2 teaspoons vanilla bean paste

Method

1. Beat together the butter, vanilla bean paste and sieved icing sugar until and creamy
2. If the buttercream feels too stiff, add a splash of mild to achieve a spreading consistency

How to assemble the tiers and cake.

1. Trim and level the cake layers with the serrated knife, gently brushing off any loose crumb.
2. Place the bottom layer of one tier onto the same sized hardboard and drizzle with a little vanilla syrup.

3. Spread the buttercream and jam onto the layer. Position the next same sized layer on top, drizzle with vanilla syrup and spread with jam and buttercream.

4. Position the third layer and drizzle and spread.
5. Flip the top layer over so that the bottom baked surface is uppermost and position it on top of the assembled layers to complete the tier.
6. Once the tier is assembled, extra jam can be piped between the layers to form a soft oozing look.
7. Repeat steps 1 to 6 for the next sized tier.
8. Dowel the bottom tier with at least 5 cake dowels. If the cake is larger or has more tiers, hollow cake dowels should be used for extra stability.

9. The cake tiers should be stacked onto the cake stand or base drum board at the venue as this style of cake is not suitable for transportation once it is assembled.
10. Dust the cake with icing sugar.
11. Decorate with your choice of summer berries.

TIP – Naked cakes are best assembled on the morning of the event to keep them fresh. The sponge layers can be baked ahead of time and frozen until required. It is easier to work with semi-frozen or refrigerated layers as it helps keep the crumb intact when trimming and spreading.

It is advisable to set this style of cake up as close to the event as possible to prevent drying.