

Baking with Granny

CAKES AND CUPCAKES

Sponge, syrup, lemon drizzle and banana... let them all eat cake!

GROWING up I was never a great fan of cake. Shocking I know, for someone whose life now revolves around baking. But raised by a professional baker mother, who had her own cake baking and decorating business, cakes were rarely a novelty to me.

A house with a constant aroma of freshly baked sponge was simply home; I never understood why people were excited when they came through our door.

At any celebration I would find myself being questioned about my reluctance to have a slice of cake, even more so when it was my mother who had baked it.

Talk about too much of a good thing. So much so that my mother Christine, pictured above with my sons David, John and me, would have literally dozens of Tupperware boxes filled to the brim with sponge cut-offs – a dream for most kids.

If they were not collected by friends and neighbours for snacking or using in trifles,

they would simply end up in the bin, given our family's indifference to the one treat which was always on tap.

Fast forward many years and I found myself yearning for the familiar cakes of my childhood. I would ask my mother – now Granny – for her recipe for Banana Loaf and Vanilla Cupcakes, just to relive that comforting smell of home. She was

always happy to oblige and her years of cake-making experience always guaranteed a perfect result.

Our family's favourite tea-time treat, Angel Cake, requires planning to achieve the perfect trio of layers but it's well worth it. Golden Syrup Cake is another winner with young and old. Or if you fancy something a little lighter, try Lemon Drizzle

Cake and Lemon Cupcakes, both a summery favourite.

Whatever your cake of choice, you'll find one here to accompany your cuppa, help you celebrate any occasion or simply bring a piece of delicious comfort to your day. Let them eat cake!

Amy Lorimer

ANGEL CAKE

A big favourite of Papa and mine. The original layer cake, instantly recognisable by its pink, yellow and vanilla sponge colours.

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE SPONGE

- 145g butter (at room temperature)
- 145g caster sugar
- 3 eggs
- ½ tsp vanilla extract/paste
- 230g self-raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 2 tbsp whole milk
- pink and yellow food colouring gel

FOR THE ICING

- 55g butter (at room temperature)
- 110g icing sugar
- splash of milk

METHOD

For the sponge

1. Pre-heat your oven to 180°C (160°C for fan assisted oven or Gas Mark 4) and line a 20x30cm tray bake tin with greaseproof paper, folding the paper into 3 individual sections. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy.
3. Add the eggs one at a time, mixing until combined before

adding the next. Stir in the vanilla.

4. Sift in the flour and baking powder and mix until you have a smooth batter. Add the milk and mix until combined.

5. Evenly separate the batter into three bowls. Leave one as it is and add a small amount of yellow and pink food colouring gel to the others, adding enough until you have your desired hue.

6. Spread the batter in your prepared cake tin and bake in your pre-heated oven for 20-25 minutes, until risen and golden.

7. Allow to cool slightly in the tin before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

For the Icing

1. Mix the butter, icing sugar and milk in a large bowl until light and fluffy.

2. Trim the edges of the cake and the top of the yellow and pink layers.

3. Spread half of the buttercream icing on the top of the yellow layer before sandwiching the pink layer on top. Repeat on the pink layer and sandwich the plain layer on top.



GINGERBREAD

A winner for when it's a bit colder outside and you want something warming and filling. Gingerbread that is flavourful and sticky – best buttered!

INGREDIENTS

- 110g butter
- 100g golden syrup
- 100g treacle
- 150ml milk
- 225g self-raising flour
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 55g soft brown sugar
- 4 tsp ground ginger
- 1tsp ground mixed spice
- 2 eggs
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg

METHOD

1. Pre-heat your oven to 160°C (140°C for fan assisted oven or Gas Mark 3), line a 2lb loaf tin



with some greaseproof paper. Set aside.

2. In a saucepan, warm the butter, golden syrup and treacle over a low heat until melted and just combined.

3. Remove from the heat and stir in the milk. Set aside to cool.

4. In a large bowl, sift in the flour, baking

powder, sugar, ginger and spices. Add the melted mixture to the dry ingredients and mix until combined.

5. Add the eggs to the batter and mix until combined.

6. Transfer the batter to your pre-lined loaf tin and bake in your pre-heated oven for 1 hour 30 mins.

7. Loosely cover the top of the loaf with a sheet of tinfoil and allow to cool in the oven.



MARMALADE CAKE

A great cake for when you fancy something a little different, with minimal effort. It's also a perfect way to use up the last few spoonfuls of a jar of marmalade.

INGREDIENTS

- 225g self-raising flour
- 115g butter
- 85g caster sugar
- zest of 1 orange
- 2 eggs
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp orange marmalade
- 2 tbsp milk



METHOD

1. Preheat your oven to 180°C (160°C for fan assisted oven or Gas Mark 4) and grease a round 6 inch cake tin. Set aside.

2. Sift the flour into a large bowl. Rub in the butter until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs.

3. Stir in the sugar and half the orange zest. Add the eggs, vanilla, marmalade and milk then mix to create a thick batter.

4. Transfer to your pre-greased cake tin and bake in your pre-heated oven for about one hour or until a skewer inserted comes out clean.

5. While still warm, sprinkle the remaining orange zest on top. Leave to cool in the tin for a few minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

LEMON CUPCAKES

A subtle lemon cupcake with a zesty icing and surprise lemon curd centre. The perfect cake to brighten up a dull day.

METHOD

For the cupcakes

1. Pre-heat your oven to 180°C (160°C for fan assisted oven or Gas Mark 4) and line a muffin tin with nine cupcake cases. Set aside.

2. Cream together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.

3. Add the eggs one at a time and mix until combined. Then add the milk and lemon zest.

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 125g butter (at room temperature)
- 125g caster sugar
- 2 eggs
- 100g self-raising flour
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 2 tbsp whole milk
- zest of one lemon
- lemon curd

FOR THE ICING

- 150g butter (at room temperature)
- 300g icing sugar
- 1-2 tsp lemon extract

4. Sift in the flour and baking powder. Mix until you have a smooth batter.

5. Using an ice cream scoop, fill your cupcake cases to two-thirds full, ensuring the batter is evenly distributed between.

6. Bake in oven for around 15 minutes until they have risen, are golden on top and until a skewer comes out clean.

7. Once cool enough to touch, transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

8. When completely cool, hollow out a small circle from the top of the cupcakes with a sharp knife. Spoon in enough lemon curd to fill.

For the icing

1. In a medium bowl mix the butter and icing sugar together until light and fluffy. Add the lemon extract to taste. If you prefer a more intense lemon flavour you can also add a little extra lemon zest to the icing.

2. Spread or pipe the icing on top of the cupcakes, covering the lemon curd.

3. Sprinkle with a little yellow sugar or some lemon zest to finish.

VICTORIA SPOON CAKE

Victoria spoon cake is a classic of cake making. It's a simple recipe to prepare for a special occasion or a traditional Sunday roast.

METHOD

1. Pre-heat your oven to 170°C (150°C for fan assisted oven or Gas Mark 4) and line a 7 inch cake tin with greaseproof paper. Set aside.

2. In a large bowl cream together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.

3. Add the eggs one at a time, ensuring each is well mixed through before adding the next.





LEMON DRIZZLE

For when you want a cake that screams summertime! The perfect lemon drizzle with the delicious crunch of zesty icing on the top.

INGREDIENTS

- 170g self-raising flour
- 115g butter
- 170g caster sugar
- 2 eggs
- 5 tbsp milk
- 1 lemon
- 85g icing sugar

METHOD

1. Pre-heat your oven to 170°C (150°C for fan assisted oven or Gas Mark 4) and line a 2lb loaf tin with greaseproof paper. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, sift the flour over the butter, caster sugar, eggs, milk and zest of your lemon. Mix well until all the ingredients are combined and smooth.
3. Transfer to your pre-lined tin and bake for 45-50 minutes until golden on top and skewer inserted comes out clean.
4. Allow to cool in the tin for five minutes before piercing the top of your cake all over with a skewer.
5. In a small bowl, mix half the icing sugar with the juice of your lemon to create a syrup then brush or spoon half the syrup over the entire cake.
6. Add the other half of icing sugar to the remaining syrup to create a thin icing. Spoon over the top while the cake is still warm to finish with an icing glaze.
7. If desired, top with a little extra lemon zest or some yellow sugar.

A SPONGE

... perhaps the most cakes. Easy enough to any occasion and made to standards – no cream and raspberry jam filling.



INGREDIENTS

- 115g butter
- 115g caster sugar
- 115 self-raising flour
- 2 eggs
- raspberry jam

4. Sift in the flour and gently fold to create a batter.

5. Transfer the batter to your pre-lined cake tin and bake in your pre-heated oven for

30-40 minutes until risen, golden and a skewer inserted comes out clean.

6. Leave to cool in the tin for a few minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

7. Once cool, cut the sponge in half and sandwich with some raspberry jam. Top with a generous sprinkling of caster sugar.

Delicious: Victoria sponge

CHERRY CAKE

A cake which I was surprised to find the kids absolutely loved. Perfect for any tea party, and it gives great satisfaction to see the cherries evenly dispersed throughout the cake – the flour is an important step.



METHOD

For the cake

1. Pre-heat your oven to 180°C (160° for fan assisted oven or Gas Mark 4) and generously grease a 9 inch bundt tin with some butter. Set aside.
2. Cut your cherries in half, place into a sieve and rinse them well under running water. Drain and dry well on some kitchen roll. Toss the cherries in a couple of tablespoons of flour and set aside.
3. Cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time and mix until combined. Add the vanilla and mix

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE CAKE

- 200g glacé cherries
- 175g butter (at room temperature)
- 175g caster sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract/paste
- 3 eggs
- 250g self-raising flour

FOR THE DECORATING

- 175g icing sugar
- boiling water
- handful of glacé cherries

- until everything is combined.
4. Sift in the flour and gently fold together to create a batter. Once combined, gently fold in the cherries

until evenly distributed.

5. Transfer the mixture to your pre-greased bundt tin and bake in your pre-heated oven for 30-35 minutes until risen, golden and a skewer inserted comes out clean.
6. Leave to cool in the tin for at least ten minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

To decorate

1. Once your cake is completely cool, mix the icing sugar with a small amount of boiling water, adding more as required to create a gloopy icing.
2. Pour the icing over your cake and top with some extra halved cherries.

THE BEST VANILLA CUPCAKES

It became a bit of a personal mission to create the perfect vanilla cupcake and after some trial and error, we got there. Don't be put off by the surprise ingredient – it really makes a world of difference!

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 240g plain flour
- 270g caster sugar
- 3 tsp baking powder
- large pinch of salt
- 80g butter (at room temperature)
- 200ml milk (whole or gold top)

- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla paste/extract
- 40ml sour cream

FOR THE ICING

- 500g icing sugar
- 160g unsalted butter
- 50ml milk (whole or gold top)
- 1 tsp vanilla paste/extract

METHOD

For the cupcakes

1. Preheat your oven to 180°C (160°C for fan assisted oven or Gas Mark 4) and line a muffin tray(s) with 18 cupcake cases. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, mix the butter, sugar, flour and baking powder until mixture resembles breadcrumbs.



3. In a separate bowl beat the eggs, milk and vanilla. Add half the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and mix until combined. Continue to gradually add the rest of the wet ingredients to create a batter.

4. Add the sour cream right at the end, mixing to combine, before spooning the batter into your prepared cupcake cases, filling to ¾ full.

5. Bake for around 20 minutes until a skewer inserted comes out clean.

6. Once cool enough to touch, transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

For the icing

1. Mix together the butter and icing sugar, gradually adding the milk and vanilla until light and fluffy.
2. Spread or pipe the icing on top of the cupcakes.
3. Top with sprinkles of your choice to finish.



BANANA LOAF

If it contains fruit, surely it's healthy? Let's just ignore the amount of sugar and say the bananas make it one of your five a day. And the browner your bananas, the better the flavour.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 bananas (over-ripe is best)
- 140g caster sugar
- 55g butter or margarine
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 170g self-raising flour
- 1/2 tsp baking powder

METHOD

1. Pre-heat your oven to 190°C (170°C for fan assisted oven or Gas Mark 5) and grease and line a 2lb loaf tin with greaseproof paper. Set aside.

2. In a large bowl, mash the bananas with a fork. Add sugar, butter or margarine, egg and vanilla extract and mix until combined.

3. Gradually add the flour and baking powder, mixing until everything is combined.

4. Pour into your pre-lined loaf tin and smooth into the corners.

5. Bake in your pre-heated oven for 40 minutes until golden on top. Leave to cool in the loaf tin and serve in slices.

CHOCOLATE CARAMEL CUPCAKES

I'm not sure there's any combination I love more than chocolate and caramel. These rich cupcakes, topped with a caramel-infused icing and surprise caramel centre, are the cupcakes of my dreams.

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE CUPCAKES

- 100g plain flour
- 20g cocoa powder
- 140g caster sugar
- 1½ tsp baking powder
- pinch of salt
- 40g unsalted butter (at room temperature)
- 120ml whole milk
- 1 egg (at room temperature)
- 1 tin of dulce de leche

FOR THE ICING

- 300g butter (at room temperature)
- 150g icing sugar
- few spoonfuls of dulce de leche

METHOD

For the cupcakes

1. Pre-heat your oven to 170°C (150°C for fan assisted oven or Gas Mark 3) and line a muffin tray with nine cupcake cases. Set aside.
2. Sift the flour, cocoa powder, sugar, baking powder and salt into a large bowl and add the butter. Mix together until you get a sandy consistency.

3. In a separate bowl whisk the egg and milk before gradually adding it to the flour mixture, a little at a time.

4. Once both mixtures are just combined, use an ice cream scoop to fill the cases two-thirds full, ensuring the batter is distributed evenly between the cases.

5. Bake for 20 minutes until a skewer inserted comes out clean.

5. Once cool enough to touch, transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

6. When completely cool, hollow out a small circle from the top of the cupcakes with a sharp knife. Spoon or pipe in enough dulce de leche to fill.

For the icing

1. Mix together the butter and icing sugar until the mixture is light and fluffy. Add a

good spoonful of your dulce de leche/caramel (this is optional but it is really tasty).

2. Spread or pipe the icing on top of the cupcakes, making sure you cover the caramel-filled hole.

3. Drizzle some more dulce de leche or caramel on top of your cupcakes to finish.



GOLDEN SYRUP CAKE

Golden Syrup Cake – one for those of us with the sweetest sweet tooth. A sticky soft sponge cake which is best made a little in advance and left to mature for a few days. I promise it'll be one you will be asked to make again and again.

METHOD

1. Pre-heat your oven to 160°C (140°C for a fan assisted oven or Gas Mark 3) and grease and line a 2lb loaf tin with greaseproof paper. Set aside.
2. Place the butter, syrup and sugars into a medium pan and heat gently until the ingredients are just melted together, stirring occasionally. Once melted together, set aside and allow to cool for at least 10 minutes.
3. In a small bowl or jug beat the milk and egg together. Set aside.
4. In a large bowl, sift the flour. Add the egg/milk mixture and the cooled syrup mixture and beat until combined and you have a lump-free batter.
5. Pour the mixture into your pre-lined loaf tin.
6. Bake in your pre-heated oven for around one hour until golden on top and a skewer inserted comes out clean.

INGREDIENTS

- 100g butter
- 50g caster sugar
- 50g soft brown sugar
- 200g golden syrup
- 200g self-raising flour
- 1 egg
- 150ml milk
- 2 tbsp golden syrup

7. Leave to cool for ten minutes before piercing the cake all over with a skewer and spreading two tablespoons of golden syrup over the top.

8. Allow to cool completely before serving. For best results, leave the cake in the greaseproof lining and add a piece of extra greaseproof paper to the top, before wrapping in tinfoil for a few days before serving. This will give a deeper flavour to the cake.



SULTANA CAKE

Sometimes it's a simple cake that has the biggest impact. I love a good slice of Sultana Cake whenever I have five minutes to myself, accompanied by a hot cup of tea.

INGREDIENTS

- 140g butter
- 140g caster sugar
- 3 eggs
- 225g self-raising flour
- ¼ tsp lemon extract
- 170g sultanas



METHOD

1. Pre-heat your oven to 170°C (150°C for fan assisted oven or Gas Mark 4) and line a 7 inch cake tin with greaseproof paper. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
3. Add the eggs one at time, ensuring they are mixed through before adding the next. Add the lemon extract.
4. Sift in the flour and

gently fold to create a batter. Add the sultanas and mix to ensure they are evenly distributed.

5. Transfer the batter to your pre-lined cake tin and bake in your pre-heated oven for about one hour until risen, golden and a skewer inserted comes out clean.

6. Leave to cool in the tin for a few minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

TOMORROW: MOUTHWATERING BISCUITS