

Red velvet cake

serves: 14 to 16

preparation: 30 minutes

baking: 30 minutes

cooling: 45 minutes

freeze: No

for the cake mixture

120g (4½oz) hazelnuts
240ml (8fl oz) soya milk
1½ tbsp lemon juice
120g (4½oz) dairy-free spread
300g (10½oz) caster sugar
2 large eggs, beaten
20g (¾oz) cocoa powder
40ml (½fl oz) red food
colouring (Silver Spoon
or Dr. Oetker)
1 tsp vanilla extract
3 tsp white wine vinegar
300g (10½oz) wheat-
and gluten-free
self-raising flour
2 tsp xanthan gum
1 tsp salt
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

ingredients continue...

The most amazing cake you will ever bake – a real showstopper that loves nothing more than being the centre of attention (see picture on page 60). The chocolate and hazelnut filling is totally delicious on its own, but sandwiched between layers of rich, red sponge, it has been known to bring seasoned cake-eaters to their knees. Best of all, it's a really easy cake to make.

- Preheat the oven to 170°C/150°C fan/Gas 3. Grease the tins and then line the bases with baking parchment.
- Toast all the hazelnuts by spreading them out on a baking sheet and placing in the oven for 7 to 8 minutes. Once toasted, chop and put to one side.
- Heat the soya milk in a small saucepan over a gentle heat until warm or heat in a microwave on high for 40 seconds. Take the milk off the heat, add the lemon juice and stir until the milk begins to thicken and look curdled, then put to one side. You now have dairy-free buttermilk.
- Using a hand-held electric mixer on a high setting, cream the dairy-free spread and sugar together for about 5 minutes in a large mixing bowl until light and fluffy.
- Gradually add the eggs on a medium speed setting, mixing well between each addition. Don't worry if it curdles slightly; just turn the mixer setting to high for a couple of seconds and the mixture will become smooth again.
- In a separate bowl, mix together the cocoa powder, red food colouring, vanilla extract and white wine vinegar to make a thick, dark paste. Add to the egg mixture and mix thoroughly until combined.
- Sift the flour, xanthan gum, salt and bicarbonate of soda together into a small bowl.
- Using a large metal spoon, fold half the soya milk into the mixture, followed by half the flour, then repeat the process until all the milk and flour have been incorporated.

recipe continues...

Scandinavian Pecan Cookies

We enjoyed these rich, buttery cookies at a bed-and-breakfast in Galena, Illinois, and the hostess was kind enough to share her simple recipe. The pretty nut-topped treats make delicious home-baked holiday gifts.

—Laurie Knoke, DeKalb, IL

Prep: 20 min. • Bake: 10 min./batch
Makes: 5 dozen

- 1 cup butter, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 large egg, separated
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely chopped pecans

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg yolk. Gradually add flour until blended.
 2. Shape into 1-in. balls. In a small bowl, beat egg white. Dip the balls in egg white, then roll in pecans. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets; flatten slightly. Bake at 375° for 8-12 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Remove cookies from pans to cool on wire racks.
- 1 COOKIE: 60 cal., 4g fat (2g sat. fat), 11mg chol., 26mg sod., 6g carb. (3g sugars, 0 fiber), 1g pro.

Hazelnut Yule Logs

Besides being irresistibly nutty, these travel well and are a snap to make!

—Barbara Burge, Los Gatos, CA

Prep: 30 min. • Bake: 10 min./batch
Makes: 4½ dozen

- 1 cup butter, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. grated lemon zest
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt
- 1½ cups finely chopped hazelnuts
- 2 Tbsp. water

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in lemon juice and zest. In another bowl, mix flour and salt; gradually beat into creamed mixture.
2. Place hazelnuts in a small bowl. On a lightly floured surface, roll $\frac{1}{2}$ cupfuls of dough into $\frac{1}{2}$ -in.-thick ropes, about 22-in. long. Cut ropes into 2-in. logs. Lightly brush each log with water; roll in hazelnuts to coat. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets.
3. Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until light brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.



HAZELNUT YULE LOGS
Barbara Burge
Los Gatos, CA

1 COOKIE: 82 cal., 5g fat (2g sat. fat), 9mg chol., 38mg sod., 8g carb. (3g sugars, 0 fiber), 1g pro.

thomas the tiger

Ingredients

- 4 x 340g packets butter cake mix
- 1 quantity butter cream icing (see page 5), refrigerated for 30 minutes
- orange icing paste

Cake Tins

- 1 x 22cm round tin
- 1 x No. 1 rectangular tin

Decorations

- 1 clinker
- 1 white baby marshmallow, cut in half
- 2 giant black Smarties
- 10 pieces soft liquorice



Method

- 1 Preheat oven to 180°C. Prepare 2 packets of cake mix, following directions on packet, and pour into the round tin. Prepare remaining 2 packets of cake mix and pour into the rectangular tin. Bake for 30 minutes, cover with foil and bake for another 30 minutes. Test with a skewer to make sure the cakes are cooked. Leave to cool for 10 minutes, then turn onto a cooling rack.
- 2 While cakes cool, divide the icing in half, colour half dark orange. Divide remaining icing in half again, colour half light orange, leave the remaining half plain.
- 3 Use a serrated knife to level the cakes. Using the template (see page 4), cut out ear and nose from rectangular cake. Cut ear and nose in half horizontally and discard one piece of the nose.
- 4 Roll out the dark orange icing between 2 sheets of cling wrap to 1cm thick. Make a 22cm circle and long rectangular pieces for the sides, carefully place on the cake and mould the joins together with your hands. Cover the ears using the same technique. Roll out the plain icing, cover the nose and position on the cake.
- 5 Using the same technique, roll out the light orange icing. Using a 6cm cutter, cut one circle for ears. Cut in half and place onto the ears. Using an oval cutter, cut two ovals for the eyes. Place in position on the head. Position the clinker on the nose.
- 6 Attach the marshmallow halves to the giant Smarties with icing, position on the ovals to make eyes. Attach the ears to the top of the head with skewers and icing. If necessary, fill a piping bag with leftover icing and seal the joins of the nose and ears. Roll the liquorice out flat, cut out stripes and whiskers, and attach with icing.

skull & crossbones

Would-be pirates will go goggle-eyed over this skull and crossbones

MATERIALS

- 1 x 20cm (8in) & 1 x 15cm (6in) round cakes, see page 9
- 35cm (14 in) square cake board
- 2kg (4lb) sugarpaste/rolled fondant
 - black food colouring paste
 - icing/confectioners' sugar in a sugar shaker
- 375g (12oz/1½ cups) buttercream

EQUIPMENT

- large rolling pin
- sharp knife
- templates, see page 109



Use black sugarpaste to fill the eyes, nose and mouth.

1 Colour 625g (1¼lb) of sugarpaste black. Using icing sugar to prevent sticking, roll out 500g (1lb) of black sugarpaste and cover the cake board, trimming the excess from around the edge. Put the covered cake board aside to dry.

2 Trim the crust from each cake and slice the tops flat. Cut a 2.5cm (1in) wedge away from the side of each cake, then trim around the top edge of both cakes to round off. Spread the surface of the cakes with buttercream, then position them on the cake board with the two cut edges pressed together.

3 Roll out 1kg (2lb) of white sugarpaste and cover the cake completely, trimming carefully around the base. Using the templates (see page 109), cut out the eyes, nose and mouth from the top of the cake. Thinly roll out black sugarpaste and cut shapes to fill the spaces. Roll two small balls of white sugarpaste for the eyes, then roll out and cut the teeth.

4 To make the bones, roll four thick sausages of white sugarpaste, keeping a rounded end on each. Make a small cut in each rounded end and smooth to remove ridges, then position on the cake board at the sides of the skull.

