

Take time
FOR
TEA



*mouth
watering
recipes
by Gary
Rhodes...*



Black Cherry Victoria Sponge Cake

SERVES EIGHT

INGREDIENTS

175g (6oz) self-raising flour
1 level teaspoon baking powder
175g (6oz) butter, at room temperature, plus extra for greasing
175g (6oz) caster sugar
grated zest of 1 orange or 1 lemon
a few drops of vanilla essence
3 eggs, at room temperature
milk, to loosen
icing sugar, for dusting

FOR THE FILLING

150ml (5fl oz) double cream
200g (7oz) black cherry jam

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 170°C/325°F/gas 3. Lightly grease two 20cm (8 inch) in diameter and 2.5cm (1 inch) deep cake tins with a little butter and line the bottoms with grease-proof paper.

Sift the flour and baking powder into a bowl. Put the butter, caster sugar, zest and vanilla essence in another bowl and, using an electric hand whisk, beat together for 1 to 2 minutes until light and creamy. Add the eggs one at a time and beat until totally combined. Fold in the flour. The mixture should drop off a spoon easily, but if it is too thick, loosen with a little milk.

Divide the mixture between the two tins, smoothing the tops. Bake in the centre of the oven for 20 to 25 minutes. To check the sponges are cooked, press your finger gently on top and the imprint should spring back. If it doesn't, bake for a further 5 minutes.

Remove the cakes from the oven and leave to rest for a few minutes, then run a knife around the edges, turning the cakes out on to a wire rack. Remove the greaseproof paper and leave to cool completely.

Whip the double cream to a soft peak and fold in the cherry jam. Spread the cherry cream over one of the sponges and sit the other sponge on top, then dust with icing sugar.

More...

A splash of Amaretto liqueur stirred into the cherry cream enriches the flavour of the cherries.

Buttermilk Mini Scones

Having made many scones over many years, I've found this recipe produces the best of the lot. The buttermilk gives a rich finish and they are very moist too. The dough can be made up to 24 hours in advance. Simply wrap in clingfilm and refrigerate until needed.

MAKES ABOUT 15
MINI SCONES

INGREDIENTS

225g (8oz) plain flour
15g (½ oz) baking powder
25g (1oz) caster sugar
50g (2oz) butter, cut into cubes
150ml (5fl oz) buttermilk
1 egg, beaten

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 220°C/425°F/gas 7. Sift the flour and baking powder into a bowl. Add the sugar and rub in the butter until it resembles fine breadcrumbs. Stir in the buttermilk, a little at a time, to form a smooth dough.

Wrap in cling film and rest in the refrigerator for an hour or two. Unwrap the mixture and roll out on a lightly floured surface until 1–1.5cm (½ – 5/8 inch) thick. The scones can now be cut using a 3cm (1¼ inch) pastry cutter, not twisting the cutter as this tends to create an uneven rising. Brush each scone lightly with the beaten egg.

Place the scones on a greaseproof-paper-topped baking tray and bake for 8 to 10 minutes until golden. Remove and allow to cool slightly.

Serve the scones while still warm (they can be left to completely cool and microwaved quickly to rewarm), preferably with our British classics of strawberry jam and clotted cream.



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Once the scones are cut, any pastry trimmings can be re-rolled and a few more scones cut.



Blackberry and Almond Tart

SERVES SIX

INGREDIENTS

275–350g (10–12oz) readymade shortcrust or puff pastry
3 tablespoons blackberry or blackcurrant jam
2 eggs
100g (4oz) caster sugar
100g (4oz) softened butter
100g (4oz) ground almonds
175g (6oz) blackberries

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 170°C/325°F/gas 3.

Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface into a circle large enough to line a 23cm/9 inch non-stick tart tin (preferably loose bottomed). Lift the pastry on to the rolling pin and place in the tart tin, easing the pastry into the bottom and corners of the tin and trimming off any excess overhanging pastry.

Prick the base well with a fork. Spoon and spread the jam over the base, then refrigerate for 20 minutes.

In a food processor, blend together the eggs, sugar, butter and almonds until totally combined. Spread the almond mix into the tart case and place the blackberries on top.

Bake the tart for 40 to 45 minutes until golden brown and firm to the touch.

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Eat warm or cold with serving cream. The tart can be dusted with icing sugar before serving.