

Almond Cake with Roasted Apricots

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A moist cake, ideal for apricot season

ALMOND CAKE:

4 ounces unsalted butter, room temperature
Additional butter to grease pan
3/4 cup sugar
1/2 cup almond paste, broken in small pieces
1 tablespoon orange zest
3 large eggs
1/2 cup flour
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup creme fraiche, plus sugar to taste
3 teaspoons powdered sugar
8 sprigs mint leaves
1 cup almonds, use sliced almonds, toast half of them

ROASTED APRICOTS:

10 whole apricots, firm, ripe, halved, pitted
1 whole vanilla bean, split lengthwise, seeds scraped
1/4 cup honey
1/4 cup Amaretto, or apricot brandy

Serving Ideas: You could also serve this with lightly sweetened whipped cream instead of creme fraiche.

Servings: 8

You need to use fresh apricots for this - choose firm ones, but still ripe. And don't overbake them. It's the almond paste that make this cake - it gives it a real almond punch, but far better than just almond flavoring.

1. APRICOTS: Place apricot halves in a large baking dish and gently toss with vanilla bean and the seeds, with the honey. Pour 1/4 cup water over and the Amaretto and toss again. Bake along with the cake, until the apricots are tender when pierced with the tip of a knife, 15-20 minutes. The timing will depend on the ripeness of the fruit.

2. ALMOND CAKE: Preheat oven to 325°. Butter an 8-inch round cake pan (do not use a 9-inch pan as it will be too flat). Line with parchment paper and additional butter on the parchment paper.

Cream butter and sugar in food processor until fluffly. Add almond paste and beat until smooth and fluffly. Add the orange zest and eggs, one at a time. Beat until well blended. Mix flour, baking powder and salt together and pulse in. Scrape mixture into the prepared pan, smooth top and sprinkle 1/2 cup untoasted sliced almonds on top. Bake in the middle of the oven for about 30 minutes, until the edges are golden brown and pulling away from the pan. Remove and set on a rack to cool.

3. In a small bowl combine the creme fraiche and a little bit of sugar. Invert the cake onto a cake plate and peel off parchment paper. Turn the cake back over again so the almonds are on the top. Lightly dust with sifted powdered sugar. Cut the cake into 8 pieces and put on plates. Top each slice with the roasted apricots, a dollop of creme fraiche, then sprinkle the top with the additional sliced almonds, and decorate with mint sprigs.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 561 Calories; 35g Fat (55.8% calories from fat); 10g Protein; 53g Carbohydrate; 4g Dietary Fiber; 137mg Cholesterol; 128mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1 Grain(Starch); 1/2 Lean Meat; 0 Vegetable; 1/2 Fruit; 0 Non-Fat Milk; 6 1/2 Fat; 2 Other Carbohydrates.

Carolyn T's Blog - Tasting Spoons:
<http://tastingspoons.com>