

Gateau Invisible Apple Cake

Makes 6 Servings

A delicate French dessert that appears to vanish as it bakes, creating a layered cake with a custard-like texture.



2/3 cup sugar
1 whole vanilla beans
2 large eggs
1/2 cup flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon table salt

2 1/2 pounds Granny Smith apples, peeled
2 teaspoons apple jelly, melted
WHIPPED CREAM:
1 cup heavy cream
2 tablespoons brown sugar, dark
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1. **CAKE:** Place sugar in a large bowl. Cut the vanilla bean in half lengthwise, then using the tip of a sharp paring knife, scrape out the seeds and add to the sugar. Discard vanilla bean - or reserve for another use. Add eggs to sugar and whisk until smooth. Whisk in flour, baking powder and salt until smooth. Batter will be thick.
2. Using a mandoline (important, as the apple slices must be uniform), slice one side of the peeled Granny Smith apple 1/10" thick (2 1/2 millimeters) until you reach the core. Turn apple 90 degrees and slice until you reach the core. Continue on remaining sides; discard core. Repeat with remaining apples. Reserve 18 well-shaped slices for the top. Add remaining slices to batter and fold gently to coat. Set aside for 15 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, adjust two oven racks to middle and lower-middle position. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil or parchment paper, place on lower rack to catch drips. Heat oven to 350°F. Grease a 8 1/2 x 4 1/2" loaf pan with vegetable oil spray. Line with an 8x12" piece of parchment, smoothing so parchment is flush with pan sides and letting excess hang over long sides of pan. Lightly grease parchment.
4. Stir apple mixture, breaking up clumps of slices as needed (batter will have loosened) until all apple surfaces are lightly coated.
5. Using large slotted spoon, lift about 1/4 cup of apples, letting excess batter drain back into bowl. Transfer apples to prepared loaf pan, keeping most apple slices flat (its OK if some fold) and leveling with back of spoon. Continue until all apples have been transferred to pan and 2 to 3 tablespoons of batter remains in bowl.
6. Dip 1 side of reserved slices in remaining batter and shingle, batter side down, in 6 rows of 3 slices on top of cake. Press firmly on apples with back of spoon to level. Spread any remaining batter over top and smooth with back of spoon. Bake on upper rack until top is well browned and apples can be easily pierced with skewer, 1 1/2 to 1 3/4 hours, rotating pan halfway through baking. Transfer to wire rack.
7. Run knife around each short side of cake. Brush top with 2 teaspoons melted apple jelly. Let cool for 1 1/2 hours (cake will deflate). Using parchment as sling, carefully lift cake out of pan and place on rack. Let cool completely, at least 2 hours.
8. **WHIPPED CREAM:** Combine 1 cup heavy cream, 2 tablespoons packed dark brown sugar, and 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon in stand mixer fitted with whisk attachment. Whip on medium-low speed until foamy, about 1 minute. Increase speed to high and whip until soft peaks form, 1 to 3 minutes.
9. **SERVING:** Using sharp chef's knife, slice cake and serve with cream. Source: americastestkitchen.com