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Ina Garten's Lemon Cake

Recipe created by Ina Garten

From the book *Barefoot Contessa Parties!*

From the show *Oprah Throws a Party*

Makes two 8-inch loaves

A photograph of this cake in *The Barefoot Contessa Cookbook* prompted dozens of people to request the recipe. Here it is! This is such a versatile cake. Ina likes to serve it with lemon curd and fresh raspberries, but a slice with a cup of tea in the afternoon is also just fine.

INGREDIENTS

- ½ pound unsalted butter
 - 2 ½ cups granulated sugar
 - 4 extra-large eggs (at room temperature)
 - 1/3 cup grated lemon zest (6 to 8 large lemons)
 - 3 cups all-purpose flour
 - ½ teaspoon baking powder
 - ½ teaspoon baking soda
 - 1 teaspoon kosher salt
 - ¾ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
 - ¾ cup buttermilk at room temperature
 - 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
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- 2 cups confectioners' sugar
 - 3 ½ tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease two 8 ½ x 4 ½ x 2 ½ -inch loaf pans. Cream the butter and 2 cups granulated sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment for about 5 minutes or until light and fluffy. With the mixer on medium speed, add the eggs, one at a time, and the lemon zest.

Sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a bowl. In another bowl, combine ¼ cup lemon juice, the buttermilk and vanilla. Add the flour and buttermilk mixtures alternately to the batter, beginning and ending with the flour. Divide the batter evenly between the pans, smooth the tops, and bake for 45 minutes to an hour, until a cake tester comes out clean.

Combine ½ cup granulated sugar with ½ cup lemon juice in a small saucepan and cook over low heat until the sugar dissolves and makes a syrup. When the cakes are done, let them cool for 10 minutes, then invert them onto a rack set over a tray, and spoon the lemon syrup over the cakes. Allow the cakes to cool completely.

For the glaze, combine the confectioners' sugar and lemon juice in a bowl, mixing with a wire whisk until smooth. Pour over the top of the cakes and allow the glaze to drizzle down the sides.