

Berry Trifle with Sponge Cake



*Makes 4 - 5 individual trifles or one large 8" round trifle

Ingredients

For the Sponge Cake

- ½ cup PLUS 1 tablespoon sugar
- 4 extra large eggs, at room temperature
- A pinch of salt
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup PLUS 1 tablespoon cake flour, sifted

For the Pastry Cream Filling

- 3 cups milk, divided
- ½ cup sugar
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 3 egg yolks, lightly beaten
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

For the Whipped Cream

- 1 ½ cups whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract

For the Filling and Topping

- 3 cups total - berries of your choice (sliced strawberries are a classic)
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

Steps

1. Preheat oven to 330°F.
2. **To make the sponge cake:** Make sure you are starting with room temp eggs. Prepare two 8" cake pans with baking spray. Put the eggs, sugar, salt and vanilla extract in the bowl of a stand mixer and beat on high for at least 10-15 minutes. You want to make sure the eggs are super light and fluffy and a very pale yellow. To test if your mixture is ready for the next step, lift the whisk up and let some of the mixture fall on top of itself. If it remains sitting on top then it's ready. Now sift the cake flour (a little at a time) over the bowl of beaten eggs and fold the flour in with a spatula. Be careful not to over mix because you don't want to deflate the batter. Pour the batter equally between the two pans.
4. Bake for about 25 minutes or until you can see the edges turn golden brown. Do not open the oven door during this process. Turn the oven off and leave cakes in for another 10 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool before loosening edges with a knife and flipping them out to cool further on a wire rack.
5. **To make the pastry cream:** In a medium-size saucepan, combine 2 ½ cups milk, sugar and salt and cook over medium-high heat until the sides simmer and the sugar is dissolved.
6. In a large bowl whisk together the remaining ½ cup milk, cornstarch, flour and egg yolks.
7. Temper the egg mixture by adding a little of the hot milk/sugar mixture in at a time while continuing to whisk vigorously. Once all the milk has been incorporated into the egg mixture, you will need to pour it carefully through a strainer back over the pot you started with. Return the pot to the stove and continue to cook on medium-high heat, whisking constantly, until the mixture has become very thick. Remove from heat and add the butter and vanilla extract and transfer the pastry cream to a medium bowl. Wrap in plastic ensuring the plastic wrap touches the cream so as not to form a "skin" and refrigerate for at least four hours before using.
8. **To prepare the berries:** In a medium bowl combine whatever kind of berries you'd like (or a combination) with 2 tablespoons sugar and 1 tablespoon lemon juice. Let the berries hang out for about an hour before using. This will give them time to release their juice and create a bit of a syrup for the trifle.
9. Make the whip cream by whipping together (in a stand mixer or hand beaters) whip cream, sugar and vanilla extract until medium-size peaks form.
10. Using the cooled sponge cake you can cut circles out that are the same size of the serving cup you will be using. Then you can pipe or spoon portion of the pastry cream, followed by the berries, followed by whipped cream and repeat the process - ending with whip cream (or some berries) on top. Do the same thing with the remaining cups. Sprinkle the tops of the cups with confectioners' sugar. You can refrigerate for a few hours before serving.