

Mary Berry's Apple & Almond Cake Recipe

SERVES 10 - 12

INGREDIENTS:

4 medium apples (approx. 1 lb)
1 tablespoon lemon juice
2 tablespoons superfine sugar
For the cake
Butter, for greasing
10 oz whole blanched almonds
½ teaspoon almond extract
6 large eggs

9 oz superfine sugar
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon baking powder
2 tablespoons corn starch
To decorate:
2 tablespoons confectioners sugar

OVEN: 350F

Directions:

1. Peel and core the apples then cut into small dice.
2. Pour the apples into a pan with the lemon juice and sugar and cook over a low heat for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally until soft and all the liquid that is released during cooking has evaporated. Then remove from the heat and leave to cool completely.
3. For the cake batter, preheat the oven to 375F. Grease a 9-inch spring form cake pan with butter and line the base and sides with greaseproof paper.
4. Pour the almonds onto a baking tray and bake for 5 to 8 minutes until lightly golden. Make sure to keep an eye on them as they burn easily. Remove from the oven and leave to cool completely.
5. Once the almonds are cool, pour the almonds into a food processor, and grind to a fine sand texture. Once they reach the fine sand texture remove from the bowl and set aside.
6. Take the cooled apples and place them in the bowl of a food processor, with the almond extract, eggs and sugar. Blend until combined.
7. Add the ground almonds, cinnamon, ginger, baking powder and cornstarch and blend to combine. Make sure not to over mix.
8. Pour the batter into the lined pan and smooth the surface with a palette knife.
9. Bake for 50 minutes to 1 hour, until a skewer comes out clean. Cover with foil half way through cooking if the cake is browning too much on the top.
10. Remove from the oven and place on a wire rack to cool. After 10 minutes, remove the cake from the pan and leave to cool completely.

For Snowflake decoration on top:

1. Cut snowflake stencil out of a sheet of 8x11 paper and dust with icing sugar.
2. Place the cake on a serving plate.
3. Lay the stencil over the top of the cake and dust with icing sugar.
4. Lift off the stencil and serve.

Notes:

1. If the apple chunks are too big they will take a long time to cook down and may result in a lumpier puree.
2. Make sure all water is released during cooking before blending the apples. Any water that remains will make the cake soggy and wet.
3. Burned almonds add an unpleasant bitter flavor to the cake. If the almonds are over baked too much oil may be released and will make the cake greasy.

4. If the remaining cake ingredients are blended too long the texture of the cake will be affected, causing it to rise and then sink in the middle during baking.
5. Cooking time for the cake can be tricky, as it needs to be cooked between 50 minutes and an hour. It will appear to be cooked after 40 minutes; if it is taken out early it will be undercooked, wet and heavy in the texture in the middle.