

GÂTEAUX AU THÉ AUX AGRUMES/CITRUS TEA CAKES (CHOCOLATE OPTION NOTED AT BOTTOM)

Similar to *financiers* in ingredients, these lovely cakes are made with melted rather than browned butter and granulated sugar rather than confectioners.

The recipe makes approximately thirty 35 g/1.25 ounce petite cakes or fifteen 70 g/2.5 ounce medium cakes.

My preferred molds are Silikomart 11-well muffin SF022 (well volume ~48 g/1.7 oz) and 8-well muffin SF028 (well volume 85 g/3 oz). I place the molds on a wire grid set in a half sheet pan. That allows good air circulation around the molds for even baking.

Note: yields will vary depending on molds used; standard muffin tin wells typically have a volume of 100 g/3.5 oz and mini muffin tins 30 g/1 oz. Remember: wells are typically filled 2/3 to 3/4 full.

As always, I highly recommend weighing ingredients for accuracy.

- 240 g / 8 large egg whites, room temperature (OK to use pasteurized whites – weigh out 240 g or 8 ounces)
 - 320 g / 1 cup plus slightly mounded 1/2 cup granulated cane sugar
 - 280 g / 10 oz unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly
 - 65 g / 1/2 cup whole wheat pastry flour (sub all purpose if you'd like)
 - 65 g / 1/2 cup all purpose flour
 - 88 g / scant cup almond flour (preferably blanched but natural almond meal is OK too)
 - 20 g / 2 tablespoons cornstarch or rice flour
 - citrus zest of choice (from 2 medium lemons, 3 small limes or 1 large orange)
1. Heat oven to 375°F. Have silicone molds placed on a wire grid on a half sheet pan (or butter or paper muffin tins). Note: two Silikomart molds fit on a half sheet pan.
 2. Sift flours and cornstarch (or rice flour if using) into a medium bowl and set aside.

the french tarte

the sweet taste of france

3. Rub citrus zest into the sugar then place it along with the egg whites in the bowl of a stand mixer with the whisk attachment. Beat on medium high for 2-3 minutes until starting to thicken, looking more glossy and the sugar crystals loose their grit (rub mixture between fingers to assess).
4. Continue on medium high as you slowly pour in the melted butter (drizzle from the edge down the inside of the bowl and it will splash less), scraping down half way and whisking to blend.
5. On low, blend in the dry ingredients in three additions, scraping down the bowl after each.
6. Fill molds of choice 2/3 to 3/4 full.
7. Bake approximately 10-12 minutes for petite and 15-18 minutes for medium cakes. Rotate trays 180° half way through and keep an eye on things!
8. Cool about 10 minutes then remove from the molds and continue to cool on a wire rack.

For the chocolate version of these cakes: delete the citrus; for the dry ingredients delete the cornstarch and use 80 g / 2/3 cup all purpose flour, 80 g / 3/4 cup almond flour and 100 g / 1 cup Dutch process cocoa powder. The steps remain the same.

Once cooled these cakes freeze well for several weeks. When ready to use, place at room temperature to thaw and then garnish as you wish.

I love Swiss meringue buttercream swirls atop these cakes. Some of my favorite combos are lime cake (OPT - add fresh blueberries!) with roasted strawberry or tart cherry SMBC; orange cake with honey orange SMBC; lemon with raspberry SMBC.

For the chocolate version you can't go wrong with sea salt caramel SMBC or a simple swirl of dark chocolate ganache. Have fun with it.

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