

Eitan's Honey Layer Cake with Caramelized Apples

This recipe appeared in my book *How to Keep Kosher*.

Dairy

Makes 12 servings

Adapted from *How to Keep Kosher* by Lisë Stern

My son Eitan's birthday is in April, and it seems every other year he has to make do with a kosher-for-Pesach cake – and I try to come up with creative, non-Pesachdic tasting variations. But one year, when his birthday was not during Pesach, he was very precise as to the kind of cake he wanted: A honey-flavored layer cake, with honey-flavored frosting between the layers, topped with apples sautéed with butter and brown sugar. No spices. I like a culinary challenge. We also have lots of September birthdays in our family, and the flavor combination of this cake seems perfect for Rosh Hashanah.

This honey cake is quite different from traditional honey cakes, which I usually find have a gingerbread flavor to them. Use a flavorful honey, as this cake really tastes like the honey you use. The only additional flavorings are vanilla – no spices – and butter. You can make it pareve with margarine, but I don't recommend it, as the butter contributes to the flavor.

1 large egg
1 cup honey
1 cup yogurt, stirred until smooth
1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted and cooled
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 1/3 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
Honey Cream Frosting (recipe follows)
Caramelized Apples (recipe follows)

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray or lightly grease two 8-inch round cake pans.
2. Combine the egg, honey, yogurt, melted butter, and vanilla in a large bowl. Using an electric mixer, beat on medium speed until well blended.
3. Put the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a sifter. Sift half the flour into the honey mixture. On low speed, blend until fully incorporated. Sift in remaining flour and blend in until smooth.
4. Divide the batter into the prepared pans. Bake at 350°F for 25 to 30 minutes, until pale gold in color and a tester inserted into the center of the cakes comes out clean.
5. Cool in pans for 20 minutes, then remove and cool on racks.
6. When fully cool, spread Honey Cream Frosting (recipe below) between the layers and on the top of the cake (not on the sides). To serve, slice into wedges and put on individual plates. Top each slice with a spoonful of Caramelized Apples.

Honey Cream Frosting

The tang of the cream cheese offsets the sweetness of the honey. It's important to sift the confectioner's sugar, otherwise the frosting will be lumpy, and no amount of beating will smooth out those sugar lumps.

8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
2 tablespoons salted butter, at room temperature
Pinch salt
3 tablespoons honey
1/2 cup sifted confectioner's sugar

Cream together the cream cheese, butter, and salt until smooth using an electric mixer or a wooden spoon. Blend in the honey, then the confectioner's sugar. The frosting should be of an easily spreadable consistency. If it seems too thin, add additional sifted confectioner's sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time.

Caramelized Apples

I prefer to use Pink Lady or Gala apples for this recipe, as they hold their shape well and have a tangy flavor that complements the honey in the cake.

2 tablespoons salted butter
3 apples, peeled, cored, and cut into 1/2-inch chunks
1/4 cup light brown sugar

Melt the butter over medium heat in a medium saucepan. Add the apples and sauté for 2 minutes. Sprinkle the brown sugar over the apples. Bring to a simmer, then lower the heat and simmer over low heat for 10 to 15 minutes, until the apples are softened but still hold their shape. Serve warm; the compote may be reheated.

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