

THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES



Spiced Layer Cake (slightly adapted from Bon Appetit via epicurious)

I frosted the cake with cream cheese frosting.

- 2 cups (9.6 ounces) all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 cup sour cream, preferably room temperature
- ½ cup whole milk, preferably room temperature
- 2 cups (14 ounces) granulated sugar
- 1½ teaspoons grated orange zest
- 16 tablespoons (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 4 large eggs, preferably room temperature

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 350 degrees. Spray three 9-inch round pans with baking spray and line with parchment paper. In a medium bowl, combine the flour, baking soda, baking powder, and spices. In a small bowl or measuring cup, use a fork to combine the milk and sour cream.
2. With a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment (or in a large bowl if using a hand mixer), beat the sugar and orange zest until fragrant. Add the butter and salt, and beat on medium speed until fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating until each is incorporated before adding another. Reduce the mixer speed to low and add one-third of the flour mixture, immediately followed by half of the sour cream mixture. Repeat with another one-third of the flour mixture and the remaining sour cream mixture, then the remaining flour mixture. Beat on low speed for 30 seconds, until evenly combined.
3. Evenly divide the batter between the prepared pans. Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center of a cake comes out clean, about 25 minutes. Transfer the pan to a cooling rack for 10 minutes, then invert the pans to remove the cakes. Peel off the parchment paper. Let cool completely before frosting.

Simple Peach Jam (rewritten from Cook's Illustrated)

Makes about 1 cup

This jam cannot be canned. It probably makes a little more than 1 cup; I used it all in the tart.

8 ounces peaches, pitted, sliced, peeled if desired

½ cup plus 2 tablespoons (4.4 ounces) granulated sugar

1 tablespoon lemon juice

Combine the peaches, sugar, and lemon juice in a medium saucepan; bring to a simmer over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer, stirring occasionally, until thickened and syrupy, 10 to 15 minutes. Cool to room temperature before using in the tart.