

Desserts of the World: Spain

Presented July 16, 2019, by Gabriela Langhoff

Basque Cake / Gâteau Basque Recipe

Adapted from brunoskitchen.net

Makes one 9-inch cake

Basque Cake custard

3 (60 g) egg yolks (save and freeze egg whites for later use)

1 vanilla bean, scrape out the seeds **or** 1 teaspoon (5 ml)

vanilla extract or paste

¼ cup (40 g) brown sugar

1 Tablespoon (10 g) potato starch or cornstarch

1¼ cup (300 ml) milk

1½ Tablespoons (20 g) brown sugar

Zest of 1 lemon

1½ Tablespoons (20 g) semolina or fine-ground cornmeal

1 Tablespoon (15 ml) dark rum (optional)

⅓ cup (80 ml) heavy cream, heated to boiling



Basque Cake custard directions

1. Line a rimmed cookie sheet with plastic wrap and set aside.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together egg yolks, vanilla, ¼ cup (40 g) brown sugar and cornstarch.
3. Meanwhile in a small saucepan, combine milk, 1½ Tablespoons brown sugar, lemon zest and semolina/cornmeal. Cook over medium heat until mixture comes to a simmer.
4. Whisking constantly, slowly pour the hot-milk mixture into the egg-yolk mixture until it is incorporated. Pour the mixture back into saucepan and cook over medium-high heat, whisking constantly, until it thickens. Boil for 1 minute.
5. Turn off the heat and whisk in the hot heavy cream. Add the dark rum, if using.
6. Transfer the custard to the lined baking tray. Cover the top of the custard with additional plastic wrap to prevent a skin from forming.
7. Let cool to room temperature before using. You may need to beat the custard before piping it.

Basque Cake crust

16 Tablespoons (2 sticks) (250g) unsalted butter, very soft but not melted

1 teaspoon (kosher salt

1 cup (160 g) brown sugar

1 vanilla bean, scrape out the seeds **or** 1 teaspoon (5 ml) vanilla extract or paste

1 cup plus 2 Tablespoons (125 g) almond meal

3 (150 g) eggs, room temperature

2 cups plus 2 Tablespoons (280 g) all-purpose flour or cake flour, sifted

1 teaspoon (4g) baking powder (to sift with flour)

Basque Cake crust directions

1. In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the softened butter with the brown sugar, salt, vanilla and almond meal on high speed until fluffy in texture, about 3 minutes.
2. Add the eggs one at a time, fully incorporating each one before adding the next egg.
3. Scrape down the sides of the bowl, and add the sifted flour with baking powder. Mix on low speed until evenly combined.

Build the Basque Cake

1. Grease one 9-inch cake pan generously with softened butter or cooking spray. Place a disc of parchment paper on the bottom, and grease the paper.
2. Using a pastry piping bag (or a Ziploc bag with the corner snipped off) pipe ½-inch-thick (1.25 cm) disc of crust batter at the bottom of the cake pan.
3. Pipe a ring of crust batter on top of that layer, along the inside perimeter of the pan. This will hold the custard.
4. Spoon all the custard into the space you've created.
5. Pipe another disk of crust batter on top the whole thing, sealing the pastry cream into the cake. Cover the top of the cake with plastic wrap and smooth out the surface with your hand. Refrigerate until firm. Brush cake twice with egg wash (in a small bowl, beat 1 egg, 2 Tablespoons water and pinch of salt). With a fork, lightly score the top of the cake in a diamond pattern.

Baking

1. Set the oven rack to the middle position and preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit (180C).
2. Bake for 45-50 minutes.
3. Remove the cake from the oven and let cool 20 minutes before unmolding to a cooling rack. Cool completely. Serve at room temperature or just warm. The cake can be kept in the refrigerator for up to four days.