

Delicious Death

Delicious Death, a chocolate cake worth
dying for!



#tksclubbox

Agatha Christie's 'A Murder is Announced ' was published in 1950 when Britain was still in the grip of rationing so chocolate cake and especially a deep, rich celebration cake would be the food of dreams.

Well this recipe is not quite on the rations but it is deceptively economical and makes the most splendidly moist, chocolatey cake, big enough for a party. It uses just 2 eggs and 5oz of butter, you would have had to pool some of your sugar ration but we think it would be worth it.

We're just not sure we'd care to meet death just for a slice of chocolate cake!



Rationing made icing sugar very scarce so the sumptuous icing on this cake is actually a sweet chocolate custard. Make the icing first so it has time to chill before decorating the cake.

You will need:

2 x 20cm / 8in sandwich tins, greased and lined.

For the icing:

30g / 1oz cornflour or custard powder

30g / 1oz cocoa

200g / 7oz caster sugar

300ml / ½ pint milk

30g / 1oz butter

For the cake:

250g / 9oz plain flour

75g / 2 ½ oz cocoa

300g / 10 ½ oz caster sugar

2 tsp bicarbonate of soda

120g / 4oz butter

284ml tub buttermilk or half milk, half plain yogurt

150ml / ¼ pint milk

2 eggs, lightly beaten

A very little grated chocolate to decorate, optional



To make the icing:

Blend the cornflour or custard powder with 2-3 tablespoons of the milk. In a medium saucepan, using a wooden spoon mix the cocoa with the sugar, blending out any lumps then pour in the milk. Heat until it comes to a simmer, stirring occasionally.

Whisk a little of the hot milk into the cornflour mixture then return to the pan and bring to the boil, whisking constantly. Continue to whisk over the heat for 2-3 minutes until the mixture is very thick, smooth and glossy. Stir in the butter.

To prevent a skin forming while it cools pour the icing into a large shallow dish and cover the surface with clingfilm or, for a plastic free 1950's option, use damp greaseproof paper.

Leave to cool then chill thoroughly.

Next make the cake.

Preheat the oven to 160°C / 320°F / gas mark 3.

Sieve the flour, cocoa, sugar and bicarbonate of soda into a large bowl and make a well in the centre.

Melt the butter over a low heat, remove from the heat then whisk in the buttermilk, milk and beaten eggs.

Pour into the well in the flour mixture and beat until smooth. Divide between the prepared tins, level the surface then bake in a preheated oven for 35-40 minutes or until well risen and the cakes spring back when pressed.



Cool in the tins for a couple of minutes then turn on to a wire rack to cool completely. Place one cake bottom up on a cake plate and spread with almost half the icing. Top with the second cake and swirl over the remaining icing. Sprinkle with grated chocolate if the rations will stand the expense.

Serve with tea and scandal!

