

Chocolate and Chestnut Cake

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This gluten free cake is soft, squishy, dense and flavoured with roasted chestnuts. It tastes like you've been slaving in the kitchen for hours but in reality, it's really simple to make. Serve with mascarpone cheese sweetened with vanilla and a little caster sugar.

Ingredients:

500g chestnuts
250ml milk
6 eggs
250g caster sugar
100g butter
100g ground almonds
100g melted dark chocolate
Juice and zest of 1 lemon
50ml brandy or liquor of choice

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 200C. Cut a cross into the bottom of each chestnut, making sure you pierce the shell. Place into a roasting tin and bake for 15-20 minutes, then take them out of the oven and turn the heat down to 180C. Leave them to cool enough for you to peel, then place into a pan of boiling water and simmer for 15 minutes. Drain and blend until smooth in a blender.
2. Separate the eggs. Place egg whites into one bowl. Place the egg yolks into another. Add the sugar to the egg yolks and whisk until pale and fluffy. Add the butter and beat until combined - the mixture should be pale and fluffy.
3. Fold the ground almonds and melted chocolate into the butter mixture. Fold in the lemon juice and zest and brandy. Fold in the chestnut puree.
4. Beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form. Carefully fold into the chestnut batter until fully combined, being careful not to knock any air out. Pour into a 25cm cake tin. Bake for 45 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Serve warm or cold.

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