

# Christening cake

For an occasion as special as a christening, you need a cake that old and young appreciate. This one is deliciously rich with butter featuring in the sponge as well as the *crème au beurre* filling

**CHRISTENING CAKE** Serves 30

**Overall timing** 3 hours plus overnight chilling

**Equipment** 4 sandwich tins sizes 10in (25cm), 9in (22cm), 7in (18cm), 6in (15cm), greaseproof, mixing bowl, bowl, saucepan

**Freezing** Cook sponges but don't halve them. Wrap, label and freeze. Freeze filling in a separate container. Freezer life: cake, 4 months; filling, 3 months. To use: cake, allow to thaw for 1 hour before icing; filling, allow to thaw for 2 hours (remove 1 hour before cake)

## INGREDIENTS

12	Eggs	12
12oz	Caster sugar	350g
14oz	Plain flour	400g
4oz	Ground almonds	125g
2oz	Butter	50g
	Curaçao, maraschino or apricot brandy (optional)	
	<b>Filling</b>	
5	Egg yolks	5
9oz	Granulated sugar	250g
5 tbsp	Water	5×15ml
12oz	Softened unsalted butter	350g
	<b>Icing</b>	
1lb	Icing sugar	450g
2	Egg whites	2
	Hot water	
	<b>Decoration</b>	
1lb	Sugared almonds	450g
	Silver balls	

## METHOD

- 1 Preheat the oven to 375F (190C) Gas 5. Grease and flour cake tins. Line bases with greaseproof or non-stick paper.
- 2 Make the cake mixture in two separate amounts. First, put 6 eggs and half the sugar into a bowl and beat with an electric mixer or whisk until the mixture is thick and pale yellow.
- 3 Melt the butter in a saucepan. Sieve half the flour into the egg and sugar mixture and sprinkle with half the almonds. Add half the melted butter and fold in gently, using a metal spoon. Put mixture into largest and smallest of the tins.
- 4 Cook just above the centre of the oven for about 15–20 minutes for the small cake and about 30 minutes for the large cake.
- 5 Using the remaining ingredients, make up the sponge mixture as above and put in the two middle-sized tins. Bake for about 30–35 minutes.
- 6 Allow to cool slightly in tins, then turn out on to a cake wire.
- 7 When completely cold, cut cakes horizontally and sprinkle the cut sides with a little liqueur.

### To make the Crème au beurre filling

- 1 Put egg yolks into a bowl and whisk them well.
- 2 Put sugar and water into a saucepan. Heat slowly till sugar melts. Bring to the boil and boil for 2–3 minutes, without allowing it to colour.
- 3 Pour hot syrup on to the egg yolks, beating continuously. Allow to cool.
- 4 Gradually work the softened butter into the egg yolk mixture, till a smooth cream is obtained. If liked, stir in liqueur to taste.
- 5 Spread filling over cut sponge cakes and sandwich them together again. Place cakes one on top of the other, starting with the largest at the bottom and ending with the smallest. Use any remaining filling to secure the cakes in position.
- 6 Wrap the cake in foil or polythene and leave in fridge overnight.

### To make the icing

- 1 Sieve the icing sugar into a large bowl, add the egg whites and beat well together. Add 1–2 tbsp (1–2×15ml) hot water to give a coating consistency.
- 2 Coat the entire cake with icing. Place on a serving dish. Decorate with sugared almonds and silver balls.



Left: Christening cake – a rich concoction for children of all ages to appreciate