



VIENNESE LINZERTORTE CAKE

You'll find all the flavors of a traditional Linzertorte — a hazelnut, spice and raspberry jam tart — in this delicious cake. The top is covered with a piped frosting that imitates the lattice crust of the classic dessert. One ingredient that is a definite departure from the original is the Chinese five-spice powder; it adds a lovely nuance.

CAKE

1 cup hazelnuts, toasted
2 cups unbleached all purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 1/2 teaspoons Chinese five-spice powder*
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
1 1/2 cups sugar
3 large egg yolks
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 teaspoon almond extract
1 1/4 cups whole milk
5 large egg whites, room temperature

FROSTING

6 ounces good-quality white chocolate (such as Baker's or Lindt)
3 8-ounce packages cream cheese, room temperature
9 tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature
1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
2 1/4 teaspoons vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
1 cup raspberry preserves, stirred to loosen

1 1/2 cups finely chopped toasted hazelnuts

*A blend of ground anise, cinnamon, star anise, cloves and ginger available in the spice section of most supermarkets.

FOR CAKE:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter and flour 15 x 10 x 1-inch jelly roll pan. Finely grind nuts with flour in processor. Transfer to medium bowl. Mix in baking powder, spices and salt. Using electric mixer, beat butter and sugar in large bowl until well blended. Beat in yolks and extracts. On low speed, add dry ingredients alternately with milk, beating just until combined (batter will be thick). Using

clean dry beaters, beat whites in another large bowl until stiff peaks form. Fold 1/3 of whites into batter to lighten. Fold in remaining whites. Spread batter in prepared pan; smooth top. Bake until tester inserted into center comes out clean, about 25 minutes. Cool cake on rack 20 minutes. Run sharp knife around cake to loosen. Turn cake out onto foil-lined rack; cool.

FOR FROSTING:

Stir white chocolate in top of double boiler over barely simmering water until melted. Cool to barely lukewarm. Using electric mixer, beat cream cheese and butter in large bowl until smooth. Beat in white chocolate, then sugar and extracts (if frosting is too soft, chill until firm enough to spread).

Using serrated knife, cut cake crosswise into three 5x10-inch rectangles. Place 1 cake rectangle on platter. Spread 3/4 cup frosting over. Drizzle 1/4 cup preserves over; spread over frosting. Top with second cake. Spread 3/4 cup frosting over. Drizzle 1/4 cup preserves over; spread over frosting. Top with third cake. Spoon 1 1/4 cups frosting into pastry bag fitted with 1/4-inch star tip. Spread remaining frosting over top and sides of cake. Drizzle remaining preserves over top of cake; spread evenly to cover top. Refrigerate cake just until frosting begins to firm, about 20 minutes.

Pipe frosting in 7 diagonal lines atop cake, spacing apart. Repeat in opposite direction, piping 6 lines and forming lattice. Press chopped nuts onto sides of cake. Pipe line of frosting around top edge of cake where nuts and preserves meet. (Can be prepared 2 days ahead. Cover with dome of foil; chill. Let stand 2 hours at room temperature before serving.)

Serves 14 to 16.