



Torta di Nocciole delle Langhe - Piemontese Hazelnut Cake

Prep time 12 mins Cook time 25 mins Serves 8 - 10

A simple to prepare sponge cake using ground hazelnuts as the essential ingredient.

Ingredients:

- Butter or tasteless vegetable oil for greasing the pan
- 1¼ cup of granulated sugar
- 1½ cup of hazelnuts, lightly toasted and skins removed
- 4 large egg yolks, room temperature
- 4 large egg whites, room temperature
- Pinch of salt
- Confectioner's sugar for dusting
- Fresh berries for garnishing

Instructions

1. Adjust the oven rack to the center position. Preheat the oven to 350° F.
2. Grease a 9" springform pan well.
3. Combine the toasted and skinned hazelnuts and ¼ cup of the granulated sugar in the work bowl of a food processor fitted with the chopping blade. Process off and on until the hazelnuts are finely ground.
4. Place the egg whites in the work bowl of a standing mixer along with ¼ cup of the granulated sugar and the pinch of

salt. Beat on high speed until the egg whites are glossy and able to form soft peaks, set aside.

5. Using a clean work bowl, combine the egg yolks and the remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of granulated sugar beat on high speed stopping several times to scrape down the sides of the work bowl. Continue to beat until the yolk mixture becomes pale yellow in color and quite thick.
6. Using a spatula, add the ground hazelnuts to the beaten egg yolks, combining until a uniform batter is formed. Spoon about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the beaten egg whites into the hazelnut - yolk batter and stir to lighten. Carefully fold the remaining egg whites into the mixture, working from the bottom of the bowl and turning the mixture upwards. Work gently to combine, being certain that there are no streaks of white.
7. Turn the batter into the prepared springform pan, smoothing out the top with an offset spatula or the back of a tablespoon. Place into the preheated oven.
8. As the torta bakes, it will rise in the oven. Refrain from opening the oven door, as consistent heat is important with this type of cake. If you have an oven light put it on. After 20 minutes, quickly open the oven door and gently press on the center of the cake. If the top of the cake is golden and the center is fairly firm, remove the cake to a wire rack to cool; if not, bake for an additional 5 minutes.
9. Allow the cake to cool until just warm, at this point run a sharp knife around the edges of the springform pan. Once the torta is completely cool, remove to a serving platter, dust with confectioner's sugar, and garnish with fresh berries.