

The Sandcastle cake

Recipe by April Carter



METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to fan 180°C. Grease and double-line the base and sides of 2 x 23cm deep cake tins.
2. Using electric beaters or a freestanding mixer, beat together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. In a separate bowl, crack the eggs and whisk together with a fork. Slowly add the eggs to the butter and sugar mixture, with the vanilla extract.
3. Sift together the flour and baking powder, then add to the egg mixture, using a spatula to scrape down the sides of the bowl to make sure it is well combined. Add the milk, then mix to combine.
4. Bake for 45-50 minutes, until a skewer inserted into the cake comes out clean. Cool for 20 minutes then turn the cakes out onto wire racks to cool completely.
5. To make the buttercream, whisk the butter until light (using an electric hand whisk or a freestanding mixer). Slowly add the icing sugar, loosening with milk, until light and fluffy.
6. Level the tops of the cakes, then slice each one in half. Sandwich all four sponges together with strawberry jam, then use a serrated knife to slice a small portion from all four sides (to make a rough square with rounded edges). Save the cut-offs to crumble into 'sand' crumbs to decorate. Use some buttercream to fix the cakes onto a board, then smooth the buttercream over the top and sides of the cake. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
7. Roll out the yellow fondant to 5mm thickness then carefully drape it over the cake. Ease it down the edges, smoothing it as you go, then trim the base to make it flush to the sandcastle. Top the corners with four squares of yellow fondant.
8. Roll out some brown fondant and cut out a door shape, then fix it onto the yellow base, securing it with a damp paintbrush, if necessary. Create windows, shells, starfish and seaweed, and dot these around the outside of the sandcastle. Add extra details with piped white icing. Top the sandcastle with Mr and Mr Crab, and finish with sand, made from crumbled cake leftovers.

INGREDIENTS

For the cake:

- 520g unsalted butter (room temp)
- 520g caster sugar
- 10 eggs
- 2tsp vanilla extract
- 520g self-raising flour
- 2tsp baking powder
- 2tbsp milk
- 200g strawberry jam

For the buttercream:

- 100g unsalted butter, softened
- 200g icing sugar, sifted
- 20ml milk

For the decoration:

- 200g yellow fondant
- White fondant and food gel colouring, or different coloured fondants, for Mr and Mr Crab and decoration