

Old-Fashioned Pound Cake Recipe

There is something undeniably nostalgic about a slice of old-fashioned pound cake. It evokes memories of Sunday afternoons at a grandmother's house, where the simplest ingredients were transformed into something magical. This classic dessert is dense, buttery, and possesses a velvety crumb that practically melts in your mouth. Unlike modern airy sponges, a true pound cake has a substantial weight and a rich, golden crust that provides the perfect textural contrast to the soft interior. It is the kind of reliable, crowd-pleasing dessert that needs no fancy frosting or decoration to shine—just high-quality butter, sugar, and patience.

Why You'll Love This Recipe

Perfect for Every Occasion

The beauty of this old-fashioned pound cake lies in its versatility. It is elegant enough to serve at a dinner party with a dollop of whipped cream and fresh berries, yet sturdy enough to pack in a lunchbox or take to a potluck. It freezes beautifully, meaning you can bake it ahead of time for holidays or unexpected guests. Whether enjoyed alongside a hot cup of coffee for breakfast or as a comforting late-night treat, this cake fits every moment. It is a blank canvas that celebrates pure, unadulterated baking tradition.

Butter Flavor Highlights

In this recipe, butter is not just an ingredient; it is the star of the show. The high fat content is what gives the cake its signature moistness and rich flavor profile. As the cake bakes, the butter browns slightly, infusing the crumb with nutty, caramelized undertones that are impossible to replicate with oil or shortening. Using premium European-style butter can elevate this dish even further, adding a luxurious creaminess. The result is a cake that is deeply satisfying, with a buttery aroma that will fill your entire home with warmth.

03 a thick slice of 

Classic Old-Fashioned Pound Cake



Aaron recipes

A dense, moist, and buttery old-fashioned pound cake recipe with a golden crust. A timeless classic perfect for dessert or coffee time.

[Print Recipe](#) [Pin Recipe](#)

Prep Time 20 minutes mins

Cook Time 1 minute min

Total Time 1 minute min

Course Dessert
Cuisine American

Servings 12 slices
Calories 450 kcal

Equipment

- Bundt Pan
- Stand mixer

Ingredients

- 1 lb Unsalted butter, room temperature
- 3 cups Granulated sugar
- 6 large Eggs, room temperature
- 3 cups Cake flour, sifted
- 1 cup Whole milk, room temperature
- 1 tbsp Vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp Salt
- 1 tsp Baking powder

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (165°C). Grease and flour a 10-inch Bundt pan thoroughly.
2. In a large mixer bowl, cream the butter and sugar on high speed for 5-7 minutes until pale and very fluffy.
3. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Mix in the vanilla extract.
4. Sift together flour, baking powder, and salt. Reduce mixer speed to low.
5. Add flour mixture alternately with milk, starting and ending with flour. Mix just until combined.
6. Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake for 60-75 minutes until a toothpick comes out clean.
7. Cool in pan for 15 minutes, then invert onto a wire rack to cool completely.

Notes

Ensure all ingredients are at room temperature for the best rise and texture.

Keyword buttery cake, old fashioned pound cake, pound cake recipe

Ingredient Highlights & Substitutions

Essential Ingredients

The traditional “pound” cake was named for its ratio—a pound each of flour, butter, eggs, and sugar. While we have tweaked the ratios slightly for better texture, these four pillars remain essential. You need room-temperature unsalted butter to ensure it creams properly with the sugar, trapping air for lift. Cake flour is often preferred over all-purpose flour as it produces a finer, tenderer crumb. Fresh eggs provide structure and richness, while pure vanilla extract adds that classic bakery scent. Do not skimp on the sugar; it is responsible for the tenderizing and the beautiful golden crust.

Smart Substitutions

If you do not have cake flour, you can make a substitute by measuring one cup of all-purpose flour, removing two tablespoons, and replacing them with cornstarch. If you prefer a tangier flavor, you can swap a portion of the milk or butter for sour cream or cream cheese, which also adds moisture. For a citrus twist, rub lemon or orange zest into the sugar before creaming. While vanilla is standard, almond extract creates a lovely, sophisticated variation that pairs wonderfully with fruit toppings.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Prep Phase

Start by preheating your oven to 325°F (165°C). This lower temperature is crucial for pound cake, as it allows the dense batter to cook evenly without burning the exterior. Grease a Bundt pan or loaf pan generously with butter and dust it with flour, tapping out the excess. This ensures your cake releases perfectly later. Make sure all your cold ingredients—butter, eggs, and milk—are at room temperature. This is non-negotiable; cold ingredients will curdle the batter and result in a heavy, greasy cake. Sift your flour, salt, and baking powder together to aerate the dry ingredients.

Cooking Phase

In a large mixing bowl or stand mixer, cream the butter and sugar together on high speed for at least five to seven minutes until the mixture is pale and fluffy. This aeration provides the leavening. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition to fully incorporate. Reduce the mixer speed to low and gradually add the flour mixture, alternating with the milk or liquid, starting and ending with the flour. Do not overmix. Pour the thick batter into your prepared pan and smooth the top. Bake for 60 to 75 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean or with just a few moist crumbs.

Pro Tips for Perfect Results

Technique Secrets

The “creaming method” is the secret to a light pound cake. You aren’t just mixing ingredients; you are mechanically forcing air into the fat. If you rush this step, your cake will be dense and leaden.

Another secret is the “cold oven start” method used by some bakers, but for this recipe, a steady, moderate heat works best. If the top of the cake is browning too quickly before the center is done, simply tent a piece of aluminum foil loosely over the pan for the last 20 minutes of baking.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

The most common mistake is opening the oven door too early. This releases heat and can cause the cake to collapse, resulting in a dense, gummy layer at the bottom known as a “sad streak.” Wait until at least 50 minutes have passed before checking. Another error is overmixing the flour. Once the flour hits the wet ingredients, gluten begins to form. Mix only until the flour streaks disappear to keep the crumb tender. Finally, let the cake cool in the pan for 10-15 minutes before inverting it; trying to remove it while piping hot will cause it to fall apart.

Serving Ideas & Pairings

Presentation & Plating

A classic pound cake is beautiful in its simplicity. A light dusting of powdered sugar is often all the decoration it needs. For a more festive look, you can drizzle a simple glaze made of powdered sugar and lemon juice or milk over the cooled cake. Slice it into thick, generous wedges. If serving for a dinner party, warm the slices slightly in the oven or toaster oven before serving to revive that “fresh out of the oven” texture.

Pairing Suggestions

This rich, buttery cake pairs exceptionally well with acidic fruits that cut through the heaviness. Fresh strawberries, raspberries, or a warm berry compote are traditional favorites. A scoop of vanilla bean ice cream adds a temperature contrast that is delightful. Beverage-wise, nothing beats a dark roast coffee or a pot of Earl Grey tea. The tannins in the tea cleanse the palate between buttery bites.

For a more delicate dessert option that still impresses, try our French Mousse Cake which offers a lighter, airier texture.

Nutrition Facts

Nutrient	Amount % Daily Value	
Calories	450 kcal	22%
Protein	6 g	12%
Carbohydrates	58 g	19%
Fat	24 g	37%
Saturated Fat	14 g	70%
Cholesterol	110 mg	36%
Sodium	180 mg	8%

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is my pound cake dry?

Dryness usually results from overbaking or measuring the flour incorrectly. Always spoon and level your flour rather than scooping directly with the measuring cup, which packs it down. Also, ensure you do not bake it longer than necessary; check it a few minutes before the timer goes off.

Can I freeze this cake?

Yes, pound cake freezes exceptionally well. Wrap the completely cooled cake (or individual slices) tightly in plastic wrap, followed by a layer of aluminum foil. It can be stored in the freezer for up to three months. Thaw at room temperature before serving.

What kind of pan is best?

A light-colored aluminum Bundt pan or loaf pan is ideal. Dark pans absorb heat too quickly and can cause the crust to burn before the inside is cooked. If you must use a dark pan, reduce the oven temperature by 25°F.

Conclusion

Mastering the old-fashioned pound cake is a rite of passage for any home baker. It teaches the importance of temperature, patience, and quality ingredients. This recipe delivers a cake that is moist, rich, and deeply satisfying—a true testament to the power of traditional baking. Whether you serve it plain or dressed up with fruit and cream, it is sure to become a requested favorite in your household. So, grab your butter, preheat your oven, and prepare to bake a slice of history.