



COFFEE WALNUT CAKE WITH COCOA COFFEE BUTTERCREAM



“With every bite, warm memories of: Rich butter, brown sugar and farm fresh eggs vigorously beaten with my Scottish-born mother’s wooden spoon; Her favourite instant coffee powder for that recognisable evocative aroma and flavour; Crunchy walnut halves atop a doona-like topping of cocoa coffee buttercream (still always eaten first!). Nostalgic bliss...and still my favourite!”

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Ingredients

For the cakes (makes 2 x 20cm cakes)

50g walnut pieces, processed finely
 225g brown sugar
 225g unsalted butter, softened
 240g self-raising flour, triple sifted, with good pinch salt
 1 tsp vanilla extract
 1 tbsp instant coffee powder, dissolved in 1 tbsp boiling water, cooled (my mother always used Nescafé 43 Blend)
 1-2 tbsp milk
 4 x 60g eggs, separated

For decoration

Walnut halves
 Chocolate-coated coffee beans

For the Cocoa Coffee buttercream

350g icing sugar mixture
 175g unsalted butter, softened
 1/2 tbsp instant coffee powder
 1 tbsp cocoa powder
 1 tbsp boiling water

For Coffee-flavoured Sugar Syrup

1 cup sugar
 1 cup water
 2 tbsp coffee-flavoured liqueur (Kahlua was my parent's favourite!)

Method

For the Cake:

1. Preheat oven to 160°C. Grease two 20cm loose-bottomed cake tins. Line bases with
2. baking paper. Wrap collars around outside of tins (wet paper towels wrapped in foil).
3. Mix dissolved cooled coffee with 1 tbsp milk. Set aside to cool.
4. Make Coffee-flavoured Sugar Syrup by bring sugar and water to the boil in a small saucepan, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Take off heat, stir in coffee liqueur. Set aside to cool a little.
5. Cream butter, brown sugar and vanilla extract with electric mixer until light and fluffy.
6. Beat in egg yolks one by one. Fold in sifted flour, salt, in batches, alternately with coffee milk mix. Add more milk 1 tsp at a time if needed to make a thick dropping consistency. Stir in finely chopped walnuts.
7. Beat egg whites until soft peaks form. Fold evenly through batter. Divide mixture equally between the two prepared tins.
8. Bake in bottom 1/3 of preheated oven for 25-30 minutes, rotating cakes after halftime and cooking until sponges have risen, are springy to the touch, and have pulled away slightly from the edge of the tins.
9. While cakes are still warm, prick tops of cakes with toothpick and brush generously with the cooled Coffee Sugar Syrup.
10. Leave the cakes to cool in their tins on a wire rack for 10 minutes, then turn out onto the rack and remove the baking paper. Allow to cool completely before icing with Cocoa Coffee Buttercream.