

01/17/16 - Pear, Apple, Cranberry Cake

When I was a newlywed here in Los Angeles, despite being 27 years old, I was still quite naive about the nature of people. Unfortunately my husband's dear mother of blessed memory was stricken with cancer soon after our marriage. She did not last long and I was compelled to take over most family holidays and Shabbat dinner. I loved to go to the kosher bakery on Friday morning as part of my Shabbat dinner preparation. For a couple on a budget it was a good excuse just to buy with abandon. I soon discovered several things about going to a bakery....Most stuff they sold didn't taste as good as homemade. It tended to be a mixed bag of either dry or overly doughy, dyed yellow Challahs, cardboard tasting pareve cookies trying to slide past your taste buds by just looking pretty or cakes with so many dings as to make them not good looking enough to put on a cake plate. The chocolate had a weird taste (certainly not chocolaty) with a grainy sugary texture or a waxy feel on the tongue that did not melt like chocolate.

The customers were in a word from another planet, all crowding and pushing even though you were directed to take a number. I once saw a young person pick a discarded number ticket off of the floor and then proceed to go ahead of an elderly man with a cane who looked like he might fall down at any moment. Is this our fellow Jewish people I thought? Oh well enough of that, I started to bake my own Challah and then from there my own pareve cookies and cakes for Shabbat and holidays. The results were so much better and healthier, no additives, no dough conditioner, no fake chocolate brown stuff, no mass quantities of pareve margarine.

This last Shabbat I had an inspiration and baked a simple little cake. I like to play a game with myself and try to think up ways to use leftovers and avoid as little tossing of food as possible. I have a lot of leftover cranberry orange/tangerine sauce. I found one pink lady apple in the back of the refrigerator and two pears, one of which turned out to be spoiled inside, so I did toss that one. Try this cake and serve after your next Shabbat Dinner. It met with rave reviews by my husband and grandpa.



Yield: 12 to 16 slices

3 cups unbleached flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

1/2 teaspoon salt

2 and 1/2 cups sugar

5 extra large eggs

1 cup sunflower oil

1/4 cup fresh squeezed orange or tangerine juice

1 teaspoon vanilla

2 tablespoons orange or tangerine zest

1 medium Pink Lady apple

1 large Bartlett pear

1 cup leftover cranberry tangerine sauce

cooking spray for greasing pan

12 cup Bundt pan

OR

10 or 11 inch diameter cake pan

Heat oven to 350° F. Measure flour, baking powder and salt into a medium bowl, stir, and set aside. Peel pear and apple, slice and dice them too about 1/2 size pieces. Set pear and apple dice into a small bowl and set aside. Measure out 1 cup of cranberry tangerine sauce and set aside.

In a large bowl place cracked and checked eggs and sugar. Beat with a whisk until thick and lemony. Next, add oil to eggs and sugar, combine carefully until oil is completely incorporated. Now add orange juice, vanilla and zest. Mix well. Set whisk aside and add in flour using a wooden spoon to stir and combine.

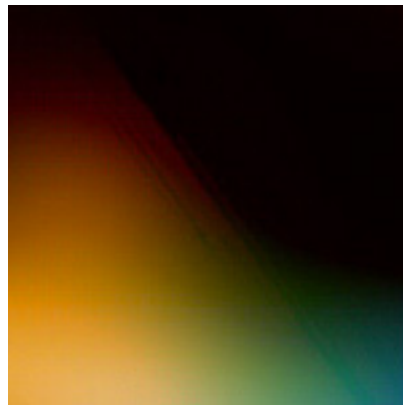
Spray the pan with non-stick oil spray, I prefer a natural oil like safflower or grape seed. Pour half of the cake batter into prepared pan. Randomly drop in the apple and pear dice, trying not to get directly on the wall of the pan. Spoon in tablespoon size blobs of cranberry sauce randomly through the cake. Now, pour or spoon the remaining batter over the cake until all the batter is in pan. Place cake in oven and bake for 50 minutes to 1 hour and 5 minutes depending on what cake pan you use. Please check for doneness with a toothpick inserted in the middle.

When cake tests done, remove from oven and place on a cooling rack. Allow to cool 10 minutes then, invert onto another rack and remove pan. Let cake continue to cool 100%. Place cake on serving plate. Before serving dust with a bit of powdered sugar. Cake may be stored room temperature for two days covered or you may freeze it and serve later.





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