

## 05/07/13 - Pineapple Coconut Cake

Mother's Day approaches and somehow brunch is in order. My sister-in-law so graciously does the duty every year. In fact this year she made Mother's Day brunch a week early and I brought this lovely, super rich, moist, incredibly flavorful cake to the celebration. I baked two layers of my favorite coconut cake, with the addition of pulverized desiccated pineapple and a few tablespoon of mashed fresh pineapple added to the batter to enhance the flavor. I split the layers in half creating four layers. I made pineapple curd using whole fresh pineapple and a Vitamix blender and the frosting is a classic cream cheese frosting with coconut flavoring.

The whole thing is covered in shredded sweetened coconut and does look like a big snowball. This cake is also great for a traditionally dairy Shavuot dinner. The



It is remarkable how Mother's day makes us remember our Mothers. I can only say that Noni (as we called my mom) a corruption of Nona coming from a child's mouth, was a uniquely modern woman for her time. She was into gardening, fresh food, making everything from scratch, and supporting local farmers, always shopping at the Pike Place Market in Seattle. She was never afraid to expend effort or get her hands dirty in the pursuit of good food. We could all take a lesson from her. I salute you mom and will try to carry on your legacy.



Capeloto Sisters with Nona at 90Serves 12 to 20

Cake Layers:

2 and 3/4 cups unbleached flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1/2 teaspoon sea salt

2 tablespoons pulverized dehydrated pineapple

1 and 3/4 cups sugar

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature

1 cup canned, sweetened, cream of cocoa (Coco Lopez), stir before measuring

4 extra large eggs, separated

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 cup buttermilk

2 tablespoons fresh pineapple pieces crushed

Pinch of salt

Pineapple Curd:

2 cups fresh pineapple puree, strained

2/3 cup sugar

6 egg yolks

5 tablespoons cornstarch

pinch of salt

Frosting:

2 eight ounce packages cream cheese, (not whipped, or light) room temperature

1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature

1/2 cup sweetened cream of coconut (coco Lopez)

1 teaspoon vanilla

2 cups sifted powdered sugar, plus extra to give right consistency

2 and 1/2 cups of sweetened shredded coconut

Heat oven to 350°F. Butter and line two 9 inch cake pans with parchment paper. Butter parchment paper. Whisk flour, baking powder, and baking soda, salt, and pulverized pineapple in a medium bowl to blend. Set aside.

In large bowl of electric mixer cream butter, sugar, and sweetened cream of coconut until fluffy. Beat in egg yolks, and vanilla. Add in buttermilk and blend. Add crushed bit of fresh pineapple and blend. Combine dry ingredients with wet on low

speed, just until blended.

In a separate bowl using a whisk or balloon whip, beat egg whites with a pinch of salt until stiff but not dry. Carefully fold egg whites into cake batter until barely blended. Divide cake batter evenly between 2 pans. If you are in doubt about batter being evenly divided, weigh it. Gently level cake batter and place pans in preheated oven. Bake about 45 minutes or until a tester comes out clean. Cool cakes layers on racks for ten minutes then run a sharp knife around sides. Invert cakes onto racks and remove cake pans. Let cake layers finish cooling.

For Pineapple curd, peel pineapple, cut into chunks. Place chunks into blender (Vitamix) or food processor. Puree. Pass puree through a course sieve to remove any stringy parts. Measure out two cups and place in a medium saucepan. Add sugar, egg yolks, cornstarch and pinch of salt to saucepan. Whisk to blend. Place saucepan on medium heat and whisk constantly until curd thickens, about to come to a boil. Remove from heat and pour into a bowl. Place a piece of plastic wrap directly on surface while curd cools so it won't form a skin. This can be made a few days ahead and refrigerated.

For frosting, place cream cheese in a mixer bowl and beat until fluffy then add butter and blend. Add sugar, Coco Lopez, and vanilla, and blend. Shake Coco Lopez before measuring as it settles in can.

To assemble; Place one cake layer on serving cake plate or I like to use a lazy-susan cake stand. Place your hand flat on top of cake layer. Using a long serrated knife slice cake layer in half and remove one half. Spread 1 cup of pineapple curd on cake. Repeat with next two layers leaving a layer with flat bottom up on top. Take frosting and spread some very generously on top. Place dollops around perimeter of top and with an icing spatula spread frosting down sides. Smooth and even out frosting all over cake with spatula. Using your hands, press coconut into frosting so it adheres. Keep refrigerated. Bring to room temperature before serving. It is a good idea to slice and plate one piece if you are serving on a buffet since guests are often shy to be the first one to remove a piece of cake.















