

Vicky Mess

Serves 12-16

Hands-on Time 40 minutes

Baking Time 18 minutes

Ingredients

- 45g unsalted butter (plus extra for greasing, softened)
- 190g plus 1 tbsp caster sugar
- 6 medium eggs
- 190g plain flour
- Pinch fine salt
- 60ml full-fat milk
- 400g strawberries
- 50g raspberry or strawberry seedless jam
- 600ml double cream
- 50g icing sugar
- 1 portion Swiss meringue (made with 100g egg whites and 190g caster sugar)

Equipment

- Baking parchment
- Scissors
- 2 x 20cm cake tins (springform or fixed bottom)
- Small microwavable bowl
- Microwave
- Large bowl
- Electric whisk
- Sieve
- Spatula
- Wire rack
- Chopping board
- Knife
- Bowl
- Spoon
- Bread knife or long serrated knife
- Plate
- Palette knife
- Blowtorch

Method

1. Make the Sponge

- Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C (fan)/350°F/Gas Mark 4. Line the cake tins with parchment and grease with butter.
- Melt 45g butter in a microwavable bowl in 20-second bursts. Set aside.
- In a large bowl, whisk 190g caster sugar and eggs until thick and voluminous (about 5 minutes).
- Sieve flour and salt over the egg mixture. Gently fold in with a spatula.
- Fold in the melted butter until incorporated. Divide the batter between the tins and bake for 18 minutes.
- Cool in the tins for 15 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack.

2. Prepare the Filling

- Microwave milk for 30 seconds. Stir in 1 tbsp caster sugar until dissolved.
- Set aside 3-4 strawberries for decoration. Chop the rest and mix with jam.

- Whip cream and icing sugar until thick.

3. Assemble the Cake

- Slice each sponge in half horizontally.
- Place one sponge base on a serving plate, cut side up. Sprinkle with 1 tbsp sugared milk.
- Spread 1/3 of the cream over the sponge, creating a raised edge. Add 1/3 of the jammy strawberries.
- Repeat with the remaining layers, finishing with the last sponge (cut side down). Press gently to secure.
- Refrigerate for at least 1 hour (or overnight).

4. Decorate with Swiss Meringue

- Prepare the Swiss meringue as per the recipe instructions.
- Spread 1/3 of the meringue over the top of the cake. Use the rest to cover the sides.
- Dip the reserved strawberries in meringue and place on top.
- Use a blowtorch to lightly brown the meringue.

Enjoy!