

Pistachio Petit Four Cake

Blog post: <https://korenainthekitchen.com/2018/08/06/pistachio-petit-four-cake/>

Makes one 6" layer cake, 8-10 servings (this is a rich, sweet cake so small servings are good!). Adapted from [Sky High: Irresistible Layer Cakes](#) via [Leite's Culinaria](#). Chocolate frosting from [Martha Stewart](#).

Cake

Preheat the oven to 350°F (325°F convection). Butter two 6" cake pans and line the bottoms with parchment paper, then butter the paper.

Place **6 tbsp shelled pistachios** on a baking sheet and toast them in the preheating oven for about 7-10 minutes, until lightly coloured and fragrant. Remove to a plate to cool. Set aside about 2 tbsp pistachios for decoration.

Put the remaining pistachios in the bowl of a food processor and pulse a few times to chop coarsely. Add **1/2 cup + 1/3 cup granulated sugar** and pulse until the nuts are finely ground.

Transfer to the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment and add:

1 cup cake flour

1 1/2 tsp baking powder

1/4 tsp salt

Mix briefly to blend, then add:

1/2 cup unsalted butter

1/4 cup milk

1 tsp vanilla extract

Stir on low speed to combine, then increase the speed to medium and beat for several minutes until the mixture is very light and fluffy.

In a small bowl beat **2 eggs + 1 egg yolk**, then add to the cake mixture in 2-3 additions, scraping down the sides of the bowl and only mixing until just combined after each addition.

Divide the batter evenly between the two prepared pans and spread the top of the batter smooth. Wrap each cake pan in a strip of damp towel, which will help insulate the edge of the cakes and make them bake flatter and more evenly. Bake in the preheated 350°F (325°F convection) oven for 20-25 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean.

Cool the cakes in the pan on a rack for 10 minutes, then run a knife around the edges and invert the cakes out of the pans. Peel off the parchment paper and allow the cakes to cool completely.

Chocolate Frosting

Melt **250 grams bittersweet dark chocolate** (in the microwave or over a double boiler) and set aside to cool.

In a small bowl, combine:

3 tbsp Dutch processed cocoa powder

3 tbsp hot water

Mix thoroughly and set aside to cool.

In the bowl of a stand mixer with the paddle attachment, beat on medium speed until very light and fluffy:

1/2 cup unsalted butter, soft
1/4 cup icing sugar
a good pinch of fine salt

Beat in the cooled melted chocolate, then the cocoa powder mixture. Beat until thoroughly combined, then set aside for 30 minutes at room temperature before frosting the cake - it should be soft but spreadable and thick enough to mound on a spoon.

Fillings

While the chocolate frosting is sitting for 30 minutes, prepare the cake fillings.

Take **8 oz marzipan** and divide into 5 equal portions. Set aside one portion for decoration (wrap in plastic to keep it from drying out). Dust your work surface with **icing sugar** and one at a time, roll the remaining 4 portions of marzipan out thinly into slightly larger than 6" circles, then use your cake tin as a guide to trim them to exactly the same size as your cake layers (or slightly smaller). Set aside and cover with plastic to keep the rounds from drying out. Gather up any trimmings and add them to the marzipan you reserved for decoration.

Press **6 tbsp apricot jam** through a strainer to remove any lumps and make it completely smooth.

Assembly

With a serrated knife, slice each of the cooled cake layers in half horizontally, to give you 4 layers. Place the first cake layer cut side up on a serving plate and protect the edges of the plate with strips of waxed paper. Spread 1/4 of the **apricot jam** over the cut surface of the cake, right to the edges. Top it with a round of **marzipan**. Spread a heaped spoonful of **chocolate frosting** over the marzipan, right to the edges. Repeat twice more with the second and third layers of cake, along with the jam, marzipan, and chocolate frosting. Top with the fourth layer of cake, spread with jam, and top with marzipan, making sure the top of the cake is as smooth as possible.

Spread the remaining chocolate frosting evenly over the top and sides of the cake with an offset spatula. Set aside while you make the marzipan rose decorations.

Take the **reserved marzipan** and divide it in half. Add a tiny bit of **pink paste food colouring** to one half, and tiny bit of **orange paste food colouring** to the other (you really only need a TINY bit of colour), and knead each half to combine. To make a rose, take a small pea-sized piece of marzipan and roll it into a little log - this will be the middle of the rose. Take another pea-sized piece and flatten it out into a circle with your fingertips, making the edges on one side thinner - this will be the first petal, and the thinner edge is the ruffly edge of the petal. Wrap the petal around one end of the little log you made. Repeat with more petals, making each one slightly larger, until the rose is the desired size. Pinch off any excess marzipan from the base of the flower, and set aside at room temperature to dry/set. Repeat to make as many roses as you wish.

To decorate the cake, sprinkle the top centre of the frosted cake with the **reserved chopped pistachios** - these will be the rose leaves. Top with the **marzipan roses**. Sprinkle any remaining pistachios around the base of the cake. Chill the cake to set everything (~1 hour), then bring it to room temperature before serving.