**Victoria Sponge**

This is the first cake (and the same recipe) my mum taught me to make, I was probably about 11 years old at the time and it gave me a lifelong interest in baking. Once a sponge cake has been mastered then it becomes a master recipe for many variations and different occasions. It makes a lovely cake for tea, a birthday cake for all ages, a cake to sell at the school fete and dare I say a cake to show off to your friends.

You need two sponge tins 20 cms/8 ins wide (ideally reasonable quality metal which will not distort) the sides should be straight and reasonably deep. Grease the tins with white fat or butter and line the base with baking parchment or greaseproof paper and grease that too.

Turn your oven on at 370 degrees centigrade.

You can make it with a wooden spoon, a hand whisk, a food processor or a stand-alone food mixer. I use one of the later three as the wooden spoon is hard work and I actually prefer the electric hand whisk.

**You need:**

4 large eggs weighed and the same weight in each of the following

Soft margarine e.g., Stork

Caster Sugar

Self -Raising Flour

Couple of tablespoons of milk

Jam of choice

You can use either grams or lbs and ozs, which ever you prefer as everything should weigh the same.

It can be made with three eggs but it will not look as impressive!

**Instructions:**

1. Beat together the margarine and sugar. It needs to be soft and light in colour and should fall off a spoon to be the right consistency.
2. Break the first egg in a cup and add it to the mixture, beat until it is well integrated. Do the same with the following three eggs and if the mixture starts to separate (curdle) beat in a spoonful of the measured flour.
3. Once the eggs have been beaten into the mixture change from using the mixer and use a large metal spoon to fold in half the sifted SR flour. This needs to be done carefully so as to keep the air into the mixture and then end.

Spoon half the mixture into each of the greased tins, carefully smoothing the mixture so it is relatively flat.

If possible place the two tins on the same shelf in your pre-heated oven and bake for approximately 25 minutes. Check after 20 minutes (resist opening the oven door earlier) and the cakes are ready when the sponge shrinks slightly from the sides of the tin and the cake springs back when touched lightly with a finger.

Loosen the sponges by running a knife carefully around the edges and turn out the cakes, remove the paper and place on a wire rack to cool.

Allow the cake to cool completely before sandwiching with a fruity jam and dust the top with sifted icing sugar.

Enjoy your cooking but if you are looking for short cuts it is probably best to get Philip or Ellie to make one for you!

Written by Annette Egerton