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LEMON SPONGE CAKE

YIELD: Makes two 10-inch (25-cm) round cakes or four 8-inch (20-cm) round cakes

Ingredients

- 4 cups (480 g) all-purpose flour
- 8 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 8 eggs, separated
- 3½ cups (693 g) granulated sugar
- 2 cups (455 g) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 2 cups (480 ml) whole milk
- 4 lemons, zested and juiced
- 4 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C/gas 4); for convection baking, preheat to 325°F (165°C/gas 3).
2. Sift together the flour, baking powder, and salt and set aside.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whip attachment, whip the egg whites on high until frothy, about 1 minute.
4. With the mixer still on high, sprinkle ½ cup (99 g) of the sugar slowly into the whipped whites. Continue to whip until full peaks form, about 5 minutes. Transfer whites to a clean bowl and set aside.
5. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the butter and the remaining 3 cups (594 g) of sugar until light and fluffy.
6. With the mixer on medium speed, slowly add the yolks a bit at a time, allowing them to fully incorporate before the next addition. Scrape the bowl.
7. In a separate bowl, combine the milk, lemon juice, vanilla and zest.
8. Add about one-third of the flour mixture and one-third of the milk mixture to the bowl and mix on low speed until fully incorporated.
9. Scrape the bowl and repeat 2 more times until all the ingredients are fully incorporated.
10. Take the bowl off of the stand mixer and fold in the whipped egg whites a little at a time by hand.
11. Divide batter into the prepared pans and bake for 45 to 50 minutes. When fully baked, cakes should be firm to the touch and a cake tester inserted into the center should come out clean.