

Novice Bakers- Shelia & Don Falcone

Lemon Olive Oil Cake

While the Falcone family is from north of Rome, the maternal side of the family is from southwest Italy, near the toe of the boot in the Calabria area, not too far a drive from Sorrento. The family owned an olive grove in Calabria consisting of approximately 20 hectares. Consequently, when an Adriatic cruise came up and Sorrento was one of the stops, we could hardly turn it down. While we did not get to Calabria, we did eat local foods that included several lemon and olive oil delights. Sorrento is the capital of lemon growing in Italy. We are not great bakers, but we wanted to have it recently for a holiday dinner. We ordered from a boutique bakery in Manhattan. We ordered it in time, days before we needed it. At the last minute, they cancelled the order and we decided to be brave and make it ourselves. We bought all of the ingredients and a new 9-inch springform pan. After all, why would we keep our old pans when we moved to Meadowood. While we were preparing it, Amazon left a package at our door. It was the olive oil cake. We now had two olive oil cakes for two people, and due to the pandemic, no way to share them. We tasted both and we were thrilled that our cake was delicious and more moist than the boutique cake. It must have been the Limoncello. It was so much closer to the tastes we remembered from that beautiful day on the Plaza in Sorrento.

Most of the ingredients you probably already have on the shelf, but they are readily available which makes it easy to prepare. It freezes well and will stay fresh for quite awhile after defrosting. Mangia!!

Ingredients:

1 1/3 cups extra-virgin olive oil
3 large eggs
1 1/4 cups whole milk
1 1/2 tablespoons grated lemon zest
1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
1/4 cup Limoncello (Gran Marnier may be substituted)
1 to 2 teaspoons lemon extract
1 3/4 cups granulated sugar
2 cups + 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt, or to taste
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
confectioners' sugar, for dusting



Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 325F, add a circle of parchment paper to the base of a [9-inch springform pan](#), and spray the parchment paper and the sides of the pan very well with cooking spray; set aside. Do not make this cake in a regular 9-inch cake pan. Most are only about 1 1/2 to 2 inches deep and this cake rises to about 2 1/2 to 3 inches on the sides and nearly 4 inches in the center. It will overflow in a regular 9-inch pan.
2. To a large bowl, add the olive oil, eggs, and whisk well.
3. Add the milk, lemon zest, lemon juice (should get sufficient zest and juice from one very large ripe lemon), Limoncello, lemon extract, and whisk.
4. Add the sugar and whisk.
5. Add the flour, salt, baking powder, baking soda, and whisk until just incorporated; do not overmix. The batter is on the thin side; this is normal.
6. Turn batter out into prepared pan, place pan on a baking sheet as insurance against a leaky springform pan and bake for about 60 to 75 minutes. Start checking after 60 minutes since all ovens vary. Cake will be golden browned and domed in the center when done, and a toothpick inserted in the center will come out clean or with a few moist crumbs.
7. Allow cake to cool in the springform pan for about 1 hour before releasing it and allowing the cake to finish cooling on a wire rack.
8. Dust with confectioners' sugar prior to serving. Cake will keep airtight at room temp for 1 week and although we have not tried it, we think this cake would freeze very well for up to 3 months.