Lemon-Basil Strawberry Sandwich Cakes

8 complete sandwich cakes made from 16 cake halves | Active 45 min | Cook 15 min | Total 180 min

Ingredients

- 150 g all-purpose flour
- 4 g baking powder
- 1 g fine salt
- 60 g unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 80 g fine sugar for the cakes
- 50 g beaten egg without shell
- 100 g buttermilk made with pasteurized milk
- 3 g finely grated zest from a washed lemon
- 5 g fresh basil leaves, washed, dried and very finely chopped
- 160 g full-fat plain cream cheese made with pasteurized milk
- 40 g plain thick yogurt
- 20 g powdered sugar for the filling
- 120 g fresh strawberries, washed whole, then hulled, dried and finely diced

Set out

Oven with two usable shelves, Two trays with 40×30 cm usable area, Baking paper, Digital scales, Fine grater, Two bowls and whisk, Scoop and spatula, Food thermometer, Rack, Rigid single-layer lidded carrier, Ice-packed cooler

Allergens

Milk, Egg, Wheat. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat the oven to 350°F (180°C) and line both trays. Mix flour, baking powder and salt. In a second bowl whisk butter, 80 g sugar, egg, buttermilk, zest and basil. Fold in the dry ingredients just until no flour remains; do not taste raw batter.

2. Divide all the batter into 16 equal mounds, about 28 g each, eight per tray. Shape roughly 5 cm rounds and leave at least 3 cm between them. Bake both trays for 12-15 minutes, exchanging shelves and turning the trays after 8 minutes. The centers must be fully baked, about 200°F (93°C), with no wet batter.

3. Cool on the trays 5 minutes, then on racks 25 minutes more. Meanwhile beat cream cheese, yogurt and powdered sugar until smooth. Fold in the dry diced strawberries and refrigerate the filling until needed.

4. Pair the 16 cold cakes into 8 matching pairs. Divide all the filling among eight bottom halves, about 42 g each. Add the eight top halves without pressing hard. Chill the complete sandwiches for at least 90 minutes, until 40°F (4°C) or colder, before packing.

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Bring it

Carry the eight finished sandwiches cold in separate paper collars inside one rigid shallow box. Avoid stacking them, and keep the lid clear of the soft filling. Keep at 40°F (4°C) or colder in an ice-packed cooler and at the gathering. Count all time out of cold control during packing, transport and display together: no more than 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C).

Finish at the gathering

Ready to serve cold. Bring eight small plates or sturdy napkins; the host needs no oven, mixing bowl or extra strawberries.

Make it yours

Use the same eight pieces for an all-year birthday lunch or housewarming. For a winter indoor picnic, the fresh basil in the cakes supplies the green note without adding a decorative leaf.

Ingredient labels

Check buttermilk, cream cheese and yogurt labels for additional ingredients. No substitution here establishes a certified allergen-free product.

A useful detail

Allow 30 minutes to prepare, 15 baking, 30 cooling, 15 to fill and 90 chilling:180 total. Filling preparation overlaps cake cooling. If the oven holds only one tray, add a second 15-minute bake and allow extra cooling before filling that tray. The fresh cheese-and-berry filling is always transported cold.

Another way

Use 120 g drained, blotted ready-to-eat canned peach dice instead of strawberries.

Replace 5 g basil with 5 g finely chopped fresh mint; retain the lemon and the cold filling.

Keep it well

Refrigerate covered at 40°F (4°C) or below and use within 24 hours for the best berry filling and cake texture. Keep the sandwiches in one layer. Do not freeze the assembled fresh-fruit filling.