

French Four-spice Cake with Browned Butter Spice Frosting

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Servings: 12

**** Quatre Epices:** grind in a spice blender, coffee mill or mortar and pestle: 1 tablespoons white peppercorns, 1/8 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg, 1/4 teaspoon (about 6) whole cloves, 1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon and 1/8 teaspoon ground ginger. Store leftovers in airtight jar and use within a month. If you cut smaller pieces, this would easily serve 16.

CAKE

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- Zest of 1/2 orange
- 2 large eggs
- 3 2/3 cups flour
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa
- 2 teaspoons quatre épices, **
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup buttermilk

FROSTING

- 2/3 cup unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1 teaspoon quatre épices
- 2 tablespoons half and half
- 1 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice, [or orange juice]
- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 2/3 cup walnuts, chopped, toasted

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 570 Calories; 24g Fat (36.4% calories from fat); 8g Protein; 85g Carbohydrate; 2g Dietary Fiber; 85mg Cholesterol; 217mg Sodium. Exchanges: 2 Grain(Starch); 1/2 Lean Meat; 0 Fruit; 0 Non-Fat Milk; 4 1/2 Fat; 3 1/2 Other Carbohydrates.

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Butter and flour a 9-in. square pan.
2. Make cake: Beat butter, brown sugar, and zest in a large bowl with a mixer until fluffy. Add eggs and beat until well blended. In another bowl, combine flour and other dry ingredients. Add flour mixture to butter mixture one-third at a time, alternating with buttermilk half at a time, and beating on low speed after each addition until blended. Spread batter in pan.
3. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool on a rack, 10 minutes. Loosen cake from pan with a slender spatula, then invert onto a rack. Re-invert onto another rack; cool completely.
4. Make frosting: Cook butter in a medium saucepan over medium-low heat, swirling pan occasionally, until deep golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Pour into a mixer bowl, let cool, then chill until firm enough to beat, about 30 minutes. Add remaining ingredients except for nuts and beat until fluffy, 1 to 2 minutes, occasionally scraping inside of bowl.
5. Split cake horizontally with a long serrated knife. Lift off top layer with 2 wide spatulas. Set bottom layer on a platter, then spread with half of frosting. Replace top layer. Spread top of cake with remaining frosting, then sprinkle with nuts.

Carolyn T's Blog - Tasting Spoons:
<http://tastingspoons.com>