

Mrs. Couch's Lemon Buttermilk Poundcake

*By: Mrs. M.C. Couch
Adapted by: Julia Pizzolato*



Mrs. Couch contributed this recipe to the November 1971 version of the Ozona Cookbook published by the Women's Society of the Ozona United Methodist Church. And thank goodness she had a giving heart and was willing to share this recipe because it is a winner. It's 5-star, NPS 10, two-thumbs-up, all-the-things, worthy. It's got the holy trinity of poundcake attributes: tender crumb, moist to the taste, and solid enough to stand on its own without glaze (but I still glazed it). I have some thoughts, aka notes, and I wrote them down for you. Please read the recipe all the way to the last of the notes before you get started so we both honor Mrs. Couch's memory and her recipe in the best way possible.

Ingredients:

Cake

3 sticks of butter (room temp., 65 degrees)
2 ½ cups (500 grams) granulated sugar
3 ½ cups (420 grams) all-purpose flour
½ tsp. baking soda
½ tsp. salt (see notes)
4 eggs
1 cup buttermilk
1 ½ tsps. lemon oil (see notes)

Glaze

2 cups (220 grams) powdered sugar
2-3 tbsps. lemon juice

Directions:

Cake

1. Preheat oven to 325. Grease and flour a 12-15 cup bundt pan.
2. Whisk together the flour, baking soda, and salt. Set aside.
3. Cream the butter and sugar together until fluffy.

4. Add the eggs one at a time to the butter and sugar, beating after each egg.
5. Add the flour mixture and buttermilk alternately, mixing after each addition.
6. Add the lemon oil and gently stir.
7. Pour the batter into the prepared bundt pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 75 minutes, until top is lightly golden and a toothpick test reveals just a few moist crumbs.
8. Leave in the pan for 10 minutes, then gently turn the cake out onto a cooling rack.
9. When the cake is fully cool, ice with the lemon glaze.

Glaze

1. Whisk powdered sugar and lemon juice together until well-mixed. Add more juice if needed for desired consistency or more powdered sugar as needed.

Notes:

- These directions are greatly expanded from Mrs. Couch's. Times were simpler back then.
- One thing that intrigued me about this recipe was that Mrs. Couch used lemon extract instead of lemon juice or lemon zest. I wanted to see if it was possible to make a tasty lemon cake with only oil because, for a lot of people, that's convenient. I changed the extract to lemon oil (I use Boyajian Lemon Oil) because I think it's better. Her recipe called for 1 tsp. but I bumped that up because we love a solid lemon flavor in this house. If you prefer something with a hint of lemon vs. a declaration of lemon, take it down.
- Now let's talk lemon juice. If you follow Samin Nosrat or you have read *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat*, you know how important fresh acid is when there's no way around it (like lemon oil). It's worth the effort to crack a lemon open and juice it. AKA, when lemon juice is called for, don't grab the bottled version off the grocery shelf. It's got preservatives and other icky stuff that gives it a bitter taste. And when the only two ingredients are lemon juice and sugar, you do not want bitter. But really, you don't want bitter ever.
- Now, let's talk salt. Again referencing Samin's fabulous book, there is a wide variety of "salt." The two most common in the average kitchen are kosher (I use Diamond, as does Samin) and table salt (Morton's). For this recipe, the first time I made it, I used ½ tsp. Diamond kosher. The last time I made it, I used ¼ tsp. table salt. Samin has a fabulous salt conversion chart in the book, and I've seen it shared online. Use what you have just be sure to adjust the amounts for the kind you have.
- Adjust the glaze to your liking. More sugar? More lemon? Do it. You will not "ruin" it. My only suggestion is not to make it too thin, or it won't cling to the cake in a tasty manner. I used 3 tbsps. of lemon juice because I like lemony. That created a consistency that very slowly drizzled from a spoon onto the cake. And most of it stayed on the cake!