



SHABNAM'S ROSE FALOODA CAKE

Prep time: 1½ hours | Cook time: 25 minutes | Serves: 12

This pretty pink-and-white cake looks beautiful as it's topped with edible flowers and gold leaf, and it also tastes amazing with light vanilla and rose flavours. For this recipe you will need two 20cm/ 8in cake tins, a piping bag fitted with a wide plain nozzle and a pastry brush.

For a simpler way to decorate this cake, you can use ready-made edible cake decorations such as flower shapes and gold stars.

INGREDIENTS

For the Sponges:

225g/8oz unsalted butter, softened,
plus extra for greasing

2 tbsp full-fat milk

A few strands saffron

225g/8oz caster sugar

200g/7oz plain flour

25g/1oz cornflour

2½ tsp baking powder

Pinch salt

4 large free-range eggs,
at room temperature

1 tsp vanilla extract

For the Icing:

1 tsp basil seeds

240ml/8¾fl oz double cream

120g/4¼oz icing sugar, sieved

500g/1lb 2oz mascarpone,
at room temperature

4 tbsp rose syrup

For the Falooda:

25g/1oz vermicelli noodles (½ nest)

1 tsp rose syrup

To assemble:

2 tbsp rose syrup

100g/3½oz rose petal jelly

100g/3½oz glacé fruits,
finely chopped

25g/1oz flaked almonds

Edible flowers or rose petals

Flaked pistachios

Gold leaf (optional)

- 1 To make the sponges, preheat the oven to 180C/ 160C Fan/ Gas 4. Grease the sides of two 20cm/ 8in cake tins lightly with butter and line the bases with baking paper. Heat the milk, then add the saffron strands and leave to infuse and cool to room temperature.
- 2 Cream together the butter and sugar in a large bowl, whisking together until very light and fluffy. In another bowl, mix together the flour, cornflour, baking powder and salt. One at a time, add an egg with a tablespoon of the flour mixture to the butter and sugar, mixing well between each addition. Scrape down the sides and gently but gradually whisk in the rest of the flour mixture, followed by the saffron milk and vanilla.
- 3 Divide the cake batter evenly between the two lined tins and smooth the tops. Bake for 20-25 minutes — or until the tops are golden and a toothpick inserted into the centre of the cakes comes out clean. Remove from the oven and leave on a rack to cool for 10 minutes before turning out, removing the baking paper and leaving to cool completely.
- 4 To make the icing, soak the basil seeds in a small bowl of cold water for 15 minutes then drain through a sieve.
- 5 In a medium bowl, beat the cream and icing sugar together until thick then whisk in the mascarpone until smooth. Set 4 tablespoons aside in a small bowl and divide the rest into two bowls, one with slightly more than the other. To the bowl with slightly less fold in the basil seeds and 3 tablespoons rose syrup. Leave the larger bowl plain and to the small bowl containing 4 tablespoons of the mixture, add 1 tablespoon rose syrup. Put them all in the fridge to firm up for 20 minutes.
- 6 To make the falooda, cook the noodles in boiling water for 1 minute then drain and cool under cold running water. Leave to dry before mixing with the rose syrup.
- 7 To assemble, use a pastry brush to add 1 tablespoon of rose syrup onto the flat side of each sponge, then place one sponge syrup-side up onto a serving plate. Spread over most of the basil seed and rose cream, then use a piping bag with a wide plain nozzle to pipe the remaining cream all the way around the edge, to create a wall which will keep all the filling in place. Add the vermicelli mixture, rose petal jelly, chopped glacé fruit and almonds to the centre, then place the second sponge on top, syrup-side down.
- 8 Generously ice the top and sides with the plain bowl of cream, then use the small bowl of pink icing to create decorative pink streaks up the sides. Chill in the fridge for 1 hour or so to firm up. Cover with edible flowers or rose petals, flaked pistachios, and the optional gold leaf.