

Savarin Cake

Makes one Savarin or 8 Rum Babas, depending on the size of the mould.

Dough

- 1 Tbsp instant yeast
- 1/4 cup 2% or whole milk, lukewarm
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- Pinch salt
- 3 eggs
- Zest from 1 lemon
- 1 2/3 cup of all-purpose flour, plus more as needed
- For the Babas: 1/3 cup of currants (or any dried fruit), finely chopped

Syrup

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup sugar
- For the Babas: add 1/2 cup dark rum
- For the Savarin: add 1/2 cup Kirsch
- Optional flavouring: vanilla , citrus zest, cinnamon sticks, cloves, star anise

Glaze

- Apple or apricot jelly, warmed

Cooking Instructions

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Brush mould(s) liberally with butter and dust with flour.

If mixing by hand: Dissolve the yeast with the lukewarm milk in a medium-sized bowl. Add the melted butter, sugar, salt, eggs and lemon zest and mix with a fork until well combined. If making Babas, add the currants. Add the flour all at once and, when the mixture becomes too difficult to mix

with a fork, transfer it to a floured work surface and knead by hand, adding additional flour as necessary to prevent the dough from sticking.

If mixing by machine: Dissolve the yeast with the lukewarm milk in the bowl of a standup mixer. Add the melted butter, sugar, salt, eggs and lemon zest and mix until well combined using the whisk attachment. If making Babas, add the currants. Change the attachment to a dough hook and add the flour all at once, mixing at medium speed until the dough no longer sticks to the side of the bowl. You may have to add additional flour, one tablespoon at a time, to prevent the dough from sticking.

You will know that you have mixed the dough enough when you can stretch it into a thick, long rope without breaking it. The dough will be slightly sticky to the touch.

Savarin mould: Stretch the dough into one long rope, place it in the circular mould and pinch the ends together. The dough should only fill the mould half way to the top. (As it rises the seam will disappear.)

Baba moulds: Place the moulds on a baking tray and break off the dough in uniform pieces, filling the moulds only half way to the top.

Allow the dough to rise in a warm draft-free area for about 30 – 45 minutes or until it reaches the top of the mould(s).

While the dough is rising, make the syrup: combine the sugar and water in a small saucepan and stir, heating gently until the sugar dissolves. Remove from heat and add the rum or Kirsch. If using vanilla, split the vanilla bean in half, lengthwise, and scrape the minute seeds from the pod. Add the vanilla seeds, and the pod, to the cooling syrup and infuse for 30 minutes. (If you don't want specks of vanilla seeds in your cakes, strain the syrup through cheesecloth or a fine-mesh strainer.) The syrup will be gently re-heated before pouring it onto the cake(s).

When the dough has risen, place the mould(s) in the pre-heated oven and bake until the tops are golden and the dough is cooked through. Babas take about 12 – 15 minutes, Savarins about 25 minutes. Carefully remove the mould(s) and cool on a rack. Using a fine skewer or a toothpick, prick the cake(s) in several places (this will help to draw in the flavoured syrup).

Babas: Warm the syrup and pour it in a shallow bowl, such as a deep dish pie plate, and place the cooled cakes in the syrup, turning them over to saturate them completely. Place the Babas onto individual serving plates or dessert bowls and brush with the warmed jelly. Serve with pastry cream mousseline and/or fruit.

Savarin: Position the Savarin on a rack placed over a baking pan and pour half of the warmed syrup over the cake. Gently turn the Savarin over and repeat on the other side. Place the Savarin onto a cake platter and brush with the warmed jelly. Fill the center with pastry cream mousseline and garnish with fruit. Dust with icing sugar, if desired.

Pastry Cream Mousseline

Yields 4 Cups

Ingredients

- 2 cups milk (2% or whole)
- 4 egg yolks
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour (or 2 Tbsp cornstarch)
- 1 1/2 cups 35% whipping cream

Cooking Instructions

In a small saucepan, combine the milk with half the sugar. Heat the sweetened milk until the mixture starts to boil. Remove it from the heat.

In a small bowl, combine the egg yolks with the balance of the sugar and whisk until smooth. Add the flour and whisk until well incorporated. (The mixture will be very thick.) Add about a cup of the warm milk to thin the mixture; mix well and return the mixture it to the saucepan of sweetened milk.

Return the saucepan to the heat and bring to a boil, stirring constantly for about a minute. The mixture (now a custard) should be thick and free of lumps.

Pour the hot custard into a bowl, cover with plastic wrap and, when it is not longer hot, refrigerate until well chilled.

When you are ready to serve, whip the whipping cream to a soft peak and fold it into the chilled pastry cream.

Serve with fruit, if desired.

Dried Fruit Steeped in Wine

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups dry white wine
- 3/4 cup pomegranate molasses
- 2 cups dried fruits (figs, apricots, cherries, etc.)
- 1 piece candied ginger
- 1 vanilla pod, split in half lengthwise
- 1 star anise
- pinch of peppercorns
- a handful of cranberries, if desired (thawed, if frozen)

Cooking Instructions

In a saucepan, warm the wine and molasses and remove from the heat. Add the fruit and remaining ingredients to the warm wine mixture and allow to steep for about 30 minutes.

When the mixture has cooled, place in a jar and store in the refrigerator for up to 10 days. Serve at room temperature with pastry cream mousseline, Savarin or Rum Babas.

Sugar Decorations

Ingredients

- 1 cup of sugar
- 4 Tbsp water
- 2 Tbsp light corn syrup

Cooking Instructions

Read the instructions to the end before you start this recipe.

Line a baking tray with a silicone baking mat or a sheet of parchment paper brushed with a thin coat of butter.

In a deep heavy-bottomed saucepan, combine the sugar, corn syrup and water. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, without stirring. When the sugar starts to colour (this takes about 5 minutes), swirl the pot to evenly distribute the colour. When the sugar turns golden (this takes about

3 minutes), quickly, and carefully, drizzle the hot sugar onto the prepared baking tray. When the sugar cools slightly and becomes malleable — this happens very quickly — carefully drape the sugar-coated mat (or parchment) over a canister or rolling pin, sugar side up. Once the sugar has cooled and hardened, peel it from the baking mat.

To clean the saucepan of hardened sugar, fill it with water and bring it to a boil.