

# Raspberry Charlotte

Makes 1 Cake

There are two options for the charlotte filling:

1. A simplified version consisting of fruit purée and whipped cream only
2. A lighter, slightly more complex version with Italian meringue (recipe noted at end)

## Cake Base and Ladyfingers

- 8 large egg whites (240g)
- 1 cup sugar (200g)
- 8 large egg yolks (160g)
- 2 cups all-purpose flour (325 grams)
- pinch of cream of tartar
- powdered (icing) sugar, about 1/2 cup

## Special Equipment

- A pastry bag fitted with a round nozzle tip approximately ½ inch diameter (the larger the nozzle, the wider the ladyfingers)
- Off-set spatula
- A springform pan 8 or 9-inch diameter x 2 ¾-inch height. If you can't find the exact size, the recipe can be adapted to any size pan but you'll need to adjust the amount of mousse accordingly. (The pan is used as a mold only and will not be placed in the oven.)
- If opting for the lighter Italian meringue version, a clip-on candy thermometer
- Cake board (the size of your springform base) to support your Charlotte. These are available at most kitchenware and craft stores, but a piece of sturdy cardboard cut to size and covered in parchment does the trick.
- A ribbon and cake platter

## Garnish

- fresh raspberries, about 100 grams (6 ounces)
- fresh mint

## **Cooking Instructions: Cake Base & Ladyfingers**

Line the base of the springform pan with the cake board or cardboard cut to size. (This helps support your cake when transferring to a cake platter.)

Line two baking trays with parchment paper.

Using the base of your springform pan as a template, trace a circle (with a Sharpie) onto one of the parchment-lined baking trays. (This will be used as a guide when piping the batter, for the cake base, directly onto the baking tray.)

Combine the egg whites and cream of tartar in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment or a large bowl. Whip the egg whites at medium-low speed until a dense network of bubbles form, about one minute. Gradually add about half the sugar, increasing the speed to high just until the egg whites are glossy and billowy (now a meringue).

In another bowl, whisk the remaining sugar with the eggs yolks until light and pale.

Gently fold the yolk mixture into the meringue, until well incorporated. Add the flour, in batches, until well incorporated. You should have a light, smooth batter.

Scoop the mixture into a pastry bag fitted with the round nozzle tip.

### **Cake Base**

Pipe a spiral of batter, about 1/2-inch thick, onto the marked parchment-lined baking tray, starting in the center, leaving a half inch border.

Dust with powdered sugar and bake in a preheated oven 10 to 12 minutes until golden. Loosen the base with an off-set spatula and place on a baking rack to cool. Lightly dust with powdered sugar (again).

### **Ladyfingers**

Using the remaining batter, pipe 3 1/2 -inch lengths approximately 3/4" thick, onto a parchment-lined baking tray, leaving at least an inch between each. (You need approx. 20 - 24 ladyfingers.) Dust with powdered sugar.

Bake approximately 10 – 12 minutes until golden. Carefully transfer the ladyfingers to a rack to cool. Lightly dust with powdered sugar (again).

## Cake Assembly

Place the cooled cake base, sugar side down, in the cardboard-lined springform pan. There should be a gap (about 1/3 -inch) between the cake and the side of the springform pan. (The gap will be lined with ladyfingers.)

Trim the ladyfingers at the base so that they sit upright, about ¼ inch above the springform pan. Place the trimmed ladyfingers, sugared-side facing out, in the gap between the cake and the side of the springform pan. You want a snug fit. Set aside until the mousse is ready.

## Raspberry Mousse Filling

*(Alternate simplified Italian meringue filling recipe below)*

### Mousse Ingredients

- 2 1/4 cups raspberry purée\*
- 1 cup granulated sugar (200 g)
- 2 Tbsp unflavoured gelatin
- 2 cups whipping cream (35%), whipped, covered and refrigerated until ready to use

*\*Thaw 800 grams (28 oz) frozen berries, about 6 cups frozen or 4 cups thawed. Using a food processor, emulsion blender or food mill, briefly purée the berries. Press the purée through a fine-mesh strainer, using the back of a ladle or spoon to extract the liquid. Measure 2 1/4 cups purée and discard the seeds.*

### Cooking Instructions

In a small bowl or cup, sprinkle the gelatin over ½ cup of raspberry purée and allow to stand until the gelatin is moistened.

In a small saucepan, combine the remaining purée and sugar and warm over low heat until the sugar has dissolved. Add the gelatin mixture and stir until completely dissolved. Set aside and cool to room temperature.

Once the mixture has cooled, fold in the whipping cream until well combined.

## Putting It All Together

Regardless of which version of filling you use, the mixture should not be too runny, otherwise it will seep through the ladyfingers. If the filling needs additional firming, place it in the refrigerator for the gelatin to firm slightly. (If left too long, it will become too firm to pour.) The texture should be soft enough to pour but firm enough so that it doesn't seep through the charlotte.

Once the mousse has firmed slightly, pour into the cake-lined springform pan, leaving about ½ inch between the mousse and the top of the ladyfingers. Refrigerate until firm, in the springform pan, at least two hours or until the mousse has set.

With a cake platter in front of you, remove the springform pan and carefully transfer the Charlotte (and the cardboard base) to the platter.

Decorate the perimeter of the cake with fresh raspberries and garnish with a sprig of mint.

Tie a ribbon around your Charlotte, stand back and admire.

## Alternate Filling: Italian Meringue

### Meringue Ingredients

- 2 ¼ cups raspberry purée\* (*see instructions noted above*)
- 2 Tbsp unflavoured gelatin
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ¼ cup water
- 2 large egg whites
- pinch cream of tartar
- 1 cup whipping cream (35%), whipped, covered and refrigerated until ready to use

### Cooking Instructions

In a small bowl or cup, sprinkle the gelatin over ½ cup of raspberry purée and allow to stand until the gelatin is moistened.

In a small saucepan, warm the strained purée and over low heat and add the until the gelatin mixture, stirring until it is completely dissolved. Set aside and cool to room temperature.

Place the egg whites in a bowl of a standup mixer fitted with a whisk (or use a medium bowl and a hand mixer). Add a pinch of cream of tartar and whip the egg whites just until they start to appear frothy. Do not whip them to soft billows just yet.

Place the sugar and water in a small saucepan and stir. Clip the candy thermometer to the side of the pan and heat the mixture, over medium heat, until it reaches 240°F (“soft ball” stage).

Working quickly, carefully pour the hot sugar into the partially beaten egg whites in a thin, steady stream, while whipping the egg whites at high speed. Continue to whip until the mixture (now a meringue) is glossy and billowy. (This will take a few minutes.)

Fold the fruit purée into the meringue in batches and mix until well combined. Fold in the whipping cream until well combined.

Proceed to recipe “**Putting it all Together**”.