



Maple-Pecan Sheet Cake

This buttery, maple-and-vanilla-flavored sheet cake is reminiscent of pecan pie, but perfect for cake lovers seeking an alternative holiday dessert. Total: 2 hr 20 min (plus cooling)

Ingredients:

For the Cake:

1 1/2 cups whole pecans
1 1/2 sticks unsalted butter, at room temperature, plus more for the pan
3 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for the pan
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 cup vegetable oil
3/4 cup granulated sugar
3/4 cup lightly packed dark brown sugar
3 large eggs
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
2 teaspoons maple extract
1 1/4 cups buttermilk

For the Icing:

1 stick unsalted butter, diced
3/4 cup lightly packed dark brown sugar
2/3 cup pure maple syrup
1/4 cup whole milk
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1 pound confectioners' sugar, sifted
1 teaspoon maple extract
1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Directions:

1. Make the cake: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Spread the pecans on a baking sheet and bake until they begin to turn golden, 10 to 12 minutes. Roughly chop.
2. Butter a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and dust with flour, tapping out the excess. Whisk the flour, baking powder, salt and baking soda in a medium bowl. Beat the butter and vegetable oil in a large bowl with a mixer on medium-low speed to combine. Increase the speed to medium-high; beat in both sugars until light and fluffy, about 4 minutes. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, then the extracts. Reduce the speed to low and beat in the flour mixture in 3 additions, alternating with the buttermilk, scraping the bowl as needed. Increase the speed to medium-high and beat until combined. Spread the batter in the prepared baking dish. Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, 35 to 40 minutes. Transfer to a rack to cool completely.
3. Make the icing: Cook the butter, brown sugar, maple syrup, milk and salt in a small saucepan over medium-low heat until the butter melts and the sugar dissolves, 5 to 6 minutes (do not boil; reduce the heat if needed). Transfer to a bowl and let cool. Add the confectioners' sugar and both extracts and beat with a mixer until smooth, 1 to 2 minutes. Pour half of the icing over the cake, smoothing it toward the edges. Sprinkle with half of the pecans, then pour the remaining icing on top. Sprinkle with the remaining pecans and let set at room temperature, about 1 hour.