

hummingbird bakery hummingbird cake recipe

hummingbird bakery hummingbird cake recipe is a delightful and flavorful dessert that has captured the hearts of cake lovers around the world. Originating from the southern United States, this cake is known for its moist texture and rich flavors of banana, pineapple, and pecans, beautifully complemented by a cream cheese frosting. In this comprehensive guide, we will explore the origins of hummingbird cake, its key ingredients, step-by-step instructions for preparing the cake, tips for perfecting your baking, and ideas for variations and serving suggestions. By the end of this article, you will have all the information you need to create your very own hummingbird cake, inspired by the renowned Hummingbird Bakery.

- Introduction
- History of Hummingbird Cake
- Key Ingredients
- Step-by-Step Hummingbird Cake Recipe
- Baking Tips for Perfect Hummingbird Cake
- Variations and Serving Suggestions
- Frequently Asked Questions

History of Hummingbird Cake

The history of hummingbird cake is as rich and vibrant as its flavors. This beloved dessert is thought to have originated in Jamaica and gained popularity in the southern United States during the 1970s. The cake is named after the hummingbird, which is a symbol of sweetness and is also known for its attraction to tropical flowers. The cake's recipe was first published in Southern Living magazine, where it quickly became a favorite among readers.

Traditionally, hummingbird cake features a combination of ripe bananas, crushed pineapple, and chopped pecans, creating a moist and flavorful dessert. The cream cheese frosting adds a tangy sweetness that balances the cake's richness. Over the years, many variations have emerged, but the core elements remain beloved by many. Today, hummingbird cake is a staple at celebrations, family gatherings, and special occasions, showcasing its enduring appeal.

Key Ingredients

To make a delicious hummingbird cake, it is essential to gather the right ingredients. Each component plays a crucial role in creating the cake's signature taste and texture. Below are the key ingredients you will need:

- All-purpose flour: The foundation of the cake, providing structure.
- Granulated sugar: Adds sweetness and moisture.
- Baking soda and baking powder: These leavening agents ensure a light and fluffy texture.
- Salt: Enhances the overall flavor of the cake.
- Cinnamon: Adds a warm spice note that complements the other flavors.
- Vegetable oil: Contributes to the cake's moistness.
- Eggs: Bind the ingredients together and provide richness.
- Mashed ripe bananas: The primary flavor, adding natural sweetness and moisture.
- Canned crushed pineapple: Provides a tropical flavor and additional moisture.
- Chopped pecans: Adds crunch and a nutty flavor.
- Cream cheese: The base for the frosting, offering tanginess and creaminess.
- Butter: Adds richness to the frosting.
- Powdered sugar: Sweetens the frosting and gives it a smooth texture.
- Vanilla extract: Enhances the overall flavor profile.

Step-by-Step Hummingbird Cake Recipe

Now that you are familiar with the key ingredients, let's dive into the step-by-step process of making the perfect hummingbird cake. Follow these detailed instructions to ensure your cake turns out beautifully.

Step 1: Prepare Your Oven and Pans

Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease and flour three 9-inch round cake pans to prevent the cake from sticking.

Step 2: Mix Dry Ingredients

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking soda, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon. This ensures that all the leavening agents are evenly distributed throughout the flour.

Step 3: Combine Wet Ingredients

In a separate bowl, combine the vegetable oil, eggs, mashed bananas, and crushed pineapple. Mix well until thoroughly combined.

Step 4: Combine Wet and Dry Ingredients

Gradually add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients, stirring gently until just combined. Be careful not to overmix, as this can lead to a dense cake.

Step 5: Fold in Pecans

Gently fold in the chopped pecans, ensuring they are evenly distributed throughout the batter.

Step 6: Bake the Cakes

Divide the batter evenly among the prepared cake pans. Bake in the preheated oven for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Once baked, allow the cakes to cool in the pans for 10 minutes before transferring them to wire racks to cool completely.

Step 7: Prepare the Cream Cheese Frosting

In a mixing bowl, beat together the cream cheese and butter until smooth. Gradually add the powdered sugar and vanilla extract, mixing until fluffy and well combined.

Step 8: Assemble the Cake

Once the cakes are completely cooled, place one layer on a serving plate. Spread a generous layer of cream cheese frosting on top, then add the second layer and repeat. Place the final layer on top and frost the entire cake. Decorate with additional chopped pecans if desired.

Baking Tips for Perfect Hummingbird Cake

To ensure your hummingbird cake turns out perfectly every time, consider the following baking tips:

- Use ripe bananas for maximum flavor and moisture.
- Drain excess liquid from the crushed pineapple to prevent the batter from becoming too wet.
- Measure your flour correctly by spooning it into the measuring cup and leveling it off.
- Allow the cakes to cool completely before frosting to prevent the cream cheese frosting from melting.
- For an even more flavorful cake, let the frosted cake sit in the refrigerator for a few hours before serving.

Variations and Serving Suggestions

The hummingbird cake can be adapted in numerous ways to suit your taste. Here are some popular variations and serving suggestions:

- Add shredded coconut to the batter for a tropical twist.
- Swap out pecans for walnuts or almonds for a different nutty flavor.
- Incorporate spices such as nutmeg or cardamom for added warmth.
- Serve with fresh fruit, such as sliced bananas or pineapple, for a refreshing accompaniment.
- For a more decadent dessert, drizzle caramel sauce over the frosted cake before serving.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the origin of hummingbird cake?

A: Hummingbird cake is believed to have originated in Jamaica and became popular in the southern United States during the 1970s. It is named after the hummingbird, symbolizing sweetness.

Q: Can I make hummingbird cake ahead of time?

A: Yes, you can make hummingbird cake ahead of time. Bake the cake layers and store them wrapped in plastic wrap at room temperature for up to 2 days or freeze for longer storage.

Q: What can I substitute for pecans in hummingbird cake?

A: You can substitute pecans with walnuts, almonds, or even macadamia nuts, depending on your preference.

Q: How should I store leftover hummingbird cake?

A: Store leftover hummingbird cake in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. Allow it to come to room temperature before serving for the best flavor.

Q: Can I use fresh pineapple instead of canned for the recipe?

A: Yes, you can use fresh pineapple, but make sure to finely chop it and drain excess juice to avoid making the batter too wet.

Q: Is hummingbird cake gluten-free?

A: Traditional hummingbird cake is not gluten-free, but you can use a gluten-free all-purpose flour blend as a substitute to make it suitable for gluten-free diets.

Q: What is the best way to frost a hummingbird cake?

A: To frost a hummingbird cake, start with a crumb coat to seal in any crumbs, then apply a thicker layer of cream cheese frosting, smoothing the sides and top for a polished finish.

Q: Can I add additional flavors to the frosting?

A: Yes, you can add flavors such as lemon zest, coconut extract, or even a splash of rum to the cream cheese frosting for a unique twist.

Q: How can I make hummingbird cupcakes instead of a cake?

A: To make hummingbird cupcakes, simply use the same batter and fill cupcake liners about two-thirds full. Bake for 18-20 minutes at 350°F (175°C) and frost with cream cheese frosting after cooling.

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