

## Hummingbird Cake

Tree House for Grown-Ups | April 2008



*The flavor of this traditionally Southern fruit-and-nut cake is even better when baked and frosted the day before serving.*

PREP: 55 MINUTES   BAKE: 25 MINUTES   COOL: 5 MINUTES IN PAN   OVEN: 350°

- 3 CUPS ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
- 2 TSP. GROUND CEYLON CINNAMON\*
- 1 TSP. BAKING SODA
- 1 TSP. SALT
- 1 CUP GRANULATED SUGAR
- 1 CUP PACKED LIGHT-BROWN SUGAR
- 3 LARGE EGGS
- 1 CUP VEGETABLE OIL
- 2 TSP. VANILLA EXTRACT
- 1 CUP FRESH PINEAPPLE, CRUSHED\*\*
- 2 CUPS MASHED BANANAS (4 LARGE, RIPE BANANAS)
- 1 CUP CHOPPED PECANS
- 1 RECIPE CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

Butter and flour three 9-inch round cake pans. Cover the bottom of each pan with a round of parchment paper or waxed paper, cut to fit, pressing the paper snugly over the bottom of the pan.

Combine the flour, cinnamon, baking soda, and salt. Sift them together into a bowl or onto a large sheet of waxed paper; set aside.

Combine granulated sugar and brown sugar in a large mixing bowl; add the eggs and stir vigorously until smoothly blended with the sugar. Whisk in the oil and vanilla. Add the flour mixture all at once and stir just until moistened and the ingredients are evenly combined. Do not beat. Add the pineapple, bananas, and pecans, and stir just until blended.

Divide the batter among the three prepared cake pans, spreading it evenly. After filling the pans, give each one a gentle bang on the countertop to dislodge any air bubbles in the batter. Bake in a 350° oven for 25 to 30 minutes or until the cakes spring back when pressed gently with your finger and a toothpick or cake tester inserted in the center of a layer comes out clean.

Cool in the pans for 5 minutes; turn out layers onto cooling racks to cool completely before frosting. If parchment has clung to the layers, peel it off.

To assemble the cake, place 1 of the layers, bottom side up, on a plate. Spread with about  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup *Cream Cheese Frosting*. Top with a second layer, bottom side down, and spread with another  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup frosting. Set the third layer, top side up, over the others. Frost the top and sides of the cake with the remaining frosting. Store the frosted cake in refrigerator. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving. Makes one 9-inch, 3-layer cake (12 to 16 servings).

\*NOTE: Ceylon cinnamon is smoother and sweeter than ordinary cinnamon. If using regular ground cinnamon, reduce the amount to 1 teaspoon.

\*\*NOTE: Mash 1 cup fresh pineapple chunks with a potato masher until finely crushed; you will have about  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup crushed pineapple.

Per serving: 964 cal., 67 g total fat (24 g sat. fat), 146 mg chol., 492 mg sodium, 84 g carbo., 4 g dietary fiber, 12 g protein.

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**CREAM CHEESE FROSTING:** Cut  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  sticks) chilled butter into 2-inch pieces and put in a large mixer bowl. Beat on low speed of an electric mixer (preferably a stand mixer), gradually increasing speed to medium, for 3 to 4 minutes or until butter is malleable but still cool. Cut three 8-ounce packages chilled cream cheese into 2-inch pieces; add to butter and continue to mix until smooth and thoroughly blended. Add 1 teaspoon vanilla, then slowly add  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups sifted powdered sugar; beat until blended. Increase speed slightly and continue beating for 2 to 3 minutes or until frosting becomes light and fluffy. Fold in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups chopped pecans by hand.