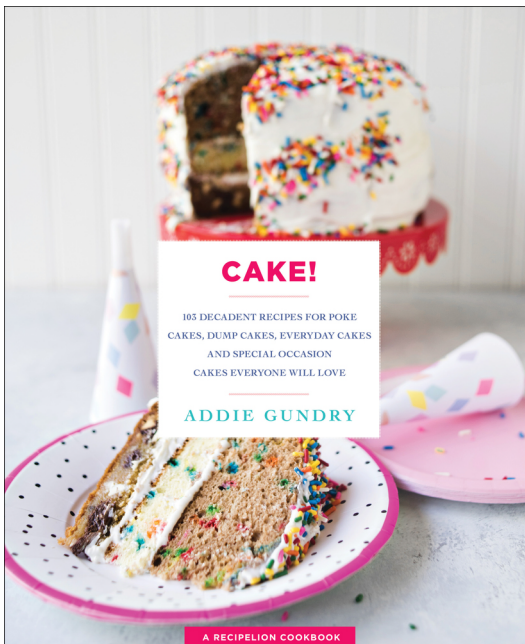


Cookistry

Kentucky Butter Cake

by Donna Currie



When I got the book *Cake!*, my first instinct was to make one of the coffee cakes. I absolutely adore all kinds of coffee cakes, and they're usually not too sweet, so they're great to have with coffee in the morning. They're also nice for dessert. They're like, all-purpose cakes.

Pecan Pie Coffee Cake sounded particularly appealing. I love nutty coffee cakes a lot. But then I saw the Kentucky Butter Cake in the Bundt Cake and Pound Cakes section.

That sounded good because I have a bazillion Bundt cake pans, and I love pound cake.

But, alas, pound cake has been my white whale ever since I moved to high altitude. The first one I tried to make here boiled out of the pan. After I got over that trauma - like, several years later - I tried other recipes. While they mostly were fine cakes, they weren't as dense as I wanted them to be. They were more like sponge cakes than pound cake.

Bah, humbug.



As I eyed the Kentucky Butter Cake recipe, I saw that it was pretty similar to pound cakes I'd made in the past, with one very interesting difference. Instead of beating the butter and sugar together, and instead of beating egg whites or yolks to add air, this recipe called for chucking everything into a bowl together.

Wow. I love a recipe that's not fussy. So I decided to give it a try.

Oh, and the other great thing about this recipe is that all the ingredients were in even numbers. It's not that I have some kind of mystical affinity for even numbers. However, it made the recipe easy to cut in half. As much as I like cake, I didn't want a whole pound cake for myself. So, I cut the recipe neatly in half and I baked it in a loaf pan. And it worked perfectly.

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And it was almost a perfect pound cake, the way it lives in my memory. It was a little paler in color and not as yellow as some I've made, but that's not a big deal. And the texture wasn't perfect. There were a couple of larger air bubble holes here and there. Not enough to ruin the texture, and certainly no a flaw in the recipe. But if this is the only issue that high altitude caused, I'm giving this one a high five.

I didn't make the glaze since I was happy with the sweetness of the cake without it, but for a party or special occasion where this is being served as dessert, the glaze would certainly add something extra to the cake.

While I cut the recipe in half, here's the original. Get yer decorative Bundt pan ready.

Kentucky Butter Cake

For the Cake

3 cups all purpose flour, plus more for the pan
2 cups granulated sugar
2 sticks (16 tablespoons) unsalted butter, softened
1 cup buttermilk
4 large eggs
1 tablespoon vanilla bean paste or extract
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda

For the Glaze

¾ cup granulated sugar
5 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon unsalted butter
2 teaspoons vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract
Confectioner's sugar for dusting
Caramel sauce, warm, for drizzling

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Grease and flour a 12-cup Bundt pan (I always use the baking spray that has flour in it).

Beat the flour, sugar, butter, buttermilk, eggs, vanilla, salt, baking powder and baking soda with your stand mixer fitted with the paddle, or with a hand mixer. Start on low for about a minute, then increase to medium, until it's smooth.

Pour the batter into your pan and bake for 65-75 minutes, or until the cake is golden and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.



When the cake is done, start the glaze. Place the granulated sugar, butter, vanilla, and 2 tablespoons of water in a small saucepan. Heat on medium-low heat until the butter is melted and the sugar is dissolved.

While the cake is still warm in the pan, poke it multiple times with a wooden skewer, then pour the glaze over the cake.

Let the cake cool completely in the pan, then invert it onto a serving plate. Dust with powdered sugar and drizzle with caramel sauce before serving.

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