

# Our State eats

Published in the April 2020 issue of Our State

## Honey Spice Layer Cake

Yield: 1 cake.

### FOR THE HONEY CAKE:

- 6 cups all-purpose flour
- 2¼ teaspoon baking powder
- 1½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1½ tablespoons cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons nutmeg
- 5 eggs
- 1⅔ cups granulated sugar, sifted
- 1⅓ cups canola oil
- Scant ½ cup unsweetened apple sauce
- ¾ cup fresh squeezed orange juice
- 1½ cups honey
- 1 cup chai tea, strong and warm

### FOR THE SWISS MERINGUE BUTTERCREAM:

- 8 egg whites
- 2½ cups sugar
- 7 sticks unsalted butter, room temperature, cut into small cubes
- 4 tablespoons honey
- ½ teaspoon vanilla bean paste

### FOR THE WHITE CHOCOLATE GANACHE DRIP:

- 1⅓ cups chopped white chocolate (good quality, not chocolate chips)
- 5½ tablespoons heavy cream
- ½ tablespoon honey

**For the honey cake:** Preheat oven to 325°. Trace 8-inch pans on parchment paper and cut out 3 rounds. Spray three pans liberally with canola oil then line the pans with the parchment rounds. For chai tea, bring 1½ cups of water to a boil and steep 2 tea bags for 5-6 minutes. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, and spices, then sift.

In the bowl of a stand mixer with whisk attachment, whisk eggs for 2 minutes on 6 (medium high) speed. Add sugar in thirds to eggs while beating for 30 seconds. Continue to beat egg and sugar mixture for 3 minutes until pale in color. In large mixing bowl, whisk together wet ingredients remaining — oil, apple sauce, orange juice, honey, and tea. On 4 (medi-



um low) speed, slowly incorporate wet ingredients in consistent stream. Beat on 6 speed for 1 minute. Add flour mixture to wet mixture in thirds, starting and ending with dry. There should be some flour not yet incorporated — scrape bowl down and mix on 2 (stir) for 30 seconds.

Scrape bowl down again with rubber spatula and fold to incorporate all dry and wet mixtures together. This batter will be loose. Distribute evenly among the three pans. Bake for 25 minutes then rotate the pans and continue to bake for at least another 10 minutes. Check doneness with a toothpick — depending on the oven, you may need 5-7 more minutes. Remove cakes from oven and place on cooling rack. Cover hot cakes with clean tea towel and press down the cake dome for a flat cake layer.

While the cakes are still warm, use an offset spatula to go around the cake in the pan to loosen, then flip onto plastic. Wrap twice and refrigerate them over night.

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**For the swiss meringue buttercream:** Place the sugar and egg whites in a heatproof stainless steel bowl set over a pot of simmering water. Whisk until the sugar has dissolved and egg whites are hot to the touch, being careful to not cook the egg whites. Keep them moving. Transfer mixture to stand mixer bowl. TIP: when making meringues, wipe everything down with white vinegar to remove greasy residues. Using the whisk attachment, beat on 8-10 (high) speed until mixture has formed glossy, stiff peaks and stand mixer bowl is only a little warm to the touch. With stand mixer on high, add the butter, in thirds, and beat until incorporated after each addition. The buttercream may appear curdled, which is normal. Continue beating for at least 5-7 minutes. Add vanilla bean paste and honey. Add two drops of Americolor "gold" food coloring, if desired. Beat until just combined. Set buttercream aside to set up at room temp.

Assemble cake and refrigerate for at least two hours so the buttercream gets cold. Ganache should not be dripped on the cake unless the cake is chilled properly. After the cake has been chilling for an hour and a half, prepare ganache for the drip.

**For the white chocolate ganache drip:** In a stainless steel bowl over a pot of simmering water, fold together white chocolate and cream until melted. Continue folding with rubber spatula and add honey. Add 2-3 drops of Americolor "Gold" food coloring, until more to achieve desired color. Let the ganache set up for about 15 minutes for optimum drip consistency, then apply drip to the cake. Let chill for 20 or so minutes in refrigerator before adding buttercream roses on top.

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