



BLACKBERRY WINE CAKE

SERVING SIZE: 16

PREP TIME: 15 MINS

COOKING TIME: 30 TO 40 MINS

*T*his cake freezes very well. Add the second glaze once you thaw it out. This can be done as many as two days prior to serving. Everyone loves this cake and asks for it all the time. The original recipe came from a coworker named Jamie Saxon. I put my own twist on it with the extra butter, the double glazing, and the fruit. It's a hit over and over again. Makes a beautiful presentation. No one believes it comes from a simple box cake mix. This and my chocolate pie are my most requested desserts.

INGREDIENTS

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup pecans, finely chopped
- 1 15.25-ounce box white cake mix
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canola oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup blackberry wine (Manischewitz)
- 1 3-ounce box blackberry or berry blue Jell-O
- 4 eggs

GLAZE

- 2 sticks (8 tablespoons each) butter, melted and cooled
- 1 cup blackberry wine
- 4 cups confectioners' sugar, sifted

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Grease a tube pan and put pecans in the bottom of the pan. In a large bowl, mix all remaining cake ingredients. Pour cake batter into greased tube pan, covering pecans, and bake for 30 to 40 minutes. Check with a long fork after 30 minutes in case your oven cooks fast. If the fork is clean, the cake is ready.

GLAZE

1. While the cake is baking, whisk 1 stick melted butter, cooled, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup blackberry wine, and 2 cups confectioners sugar to make the first batch of glaze.
2. When cake is done, prick with a fork all over and pour glaze over hot cake while still in the pan.
3. Let cool in pan for 1 hour, then remove cake from pan, inverting it onto a cake plate.
4. At that point, make a second batch of glaze exactly as you made the first and pour over cake. Decorate with blueberries, raspberries, and blackberries.

NOTE: This cake needs to be refrigerated. Everything except the second glaze can be made in advance and frozen. To really gild the lily, I pour a splash of wine and/or half a stick of melted butter on the bottom of the cake when it's right out of the oven before the first glaze.

SWEET AND SOUR GREEN BEANS

SERVING SIZE: 6 TO 8

PREP TIME: 15 MINS

COOKING TIME: 15 MINS

*R*eally good and easy, and yet another thing that can be made in advance. I found this recipe in Moma's handwriting with her recipes. I have no idea where it came from, but it's a winner—different and delicious.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 14.5-ounce cans French-style green beans
- 1 to 2 medium onions, sliced into thin rings
- 8 strips of bacon, fried
- 6 tablespoons sugar
- 6 tablespoons white vinegar
- ½ cup slivered almonds

DIRECTIONS

1. Drain beans. Pour into a 1 ½-quart dish and cover with onions.
2. Fry bacon, saving drippings. Break bacon into quarters and lay over onions.
3. Add sugar and vinegar to bacon drippings and heat, stirring to combine and dissolve sugar. Pour over onions and beans.
4. Marinate overnight.
5. Heat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Add almonds and bake for 30 to 45 minutes.