

Orange Halva Cake

For the cake

250gms Butter (or one cup olive oil)

1 cup castor sugar

4 teaspoons orange rind

4 eggs

2 cups ground almond meal

2 teaspoons baking powder (use gluten free variety)

2 cups (course) semolina (or replace with fine polenta for gluten free version)

2 tablespoons freshly squeezed orange juice

For the syrup

1 cup castor sugar

2 cups freshly squeezed orange juice

2 tablespoons brandy or Grand Marnier (optional)

Cake

Preheat oven and prepare round baking tin with butter/baking paper.

Cream butter, sugar and orange rind together until light and fluffy with electric beater. Add eggs one at a time whilst still beating.

Add half the dry ingredients (almond meal, semolina and baking powder) and half the orange juice, mix, and then continue with remaining ingredients. The mixture is quite sticky and firm, a little like a biscuit mixture.

Transfer to prepared baking pan and bake in moderate oven approximately 40-45 mins. Insert skewer, and if it comes out clean, it is ready. The cake should be a lovely golden colour.

When baked and cooled slightly, turn onto a larger oven proof dish. Pour over half the prepared syrup and return to oven for 5 minutes. Pour over remaining syrup and let steep as long as you desire. Great with ice cream or thick cream.

Syrup

Put two cups freshly squeezed juice in a saucepan with one cup castor sugar (less can be used if you don't want it too sweet). If you like, you can add orange peel cut into very thin strips. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Once dissolved, bring to the boil and reduce heat. Allow to simmer for five minutes or so, without stirring. Add alcohol if used, and pour over cake as above. Viola!

Serves 12.