

# Mrs. Weston's Wedding Cake

*"Do you recollect whether the Manydown family sent about their wedding cake? Mrs. Dundas has set her heart upon having a piece from her friend Catherine, and Martha, who knows what importance she attaches to this sort of thing, is anxious for the sake of both that there should not be a disappointment."*

—Jane Austen to Cassandra, October 13, 1808

Though rich fruit and nut cakes had been used for centuries, in 1786, Elizabeth Raffald was the first to publish a recipe for a cake specifically for weddings in her *The Experienced English Housekeeper* cookbook. The cake was served not only at the wedding breakfast but also shared with the household servants and sent in pieces to friends and relatives who had not attended the ceremony. These wedding cakes were single-tiered, double-frosted confections, though by no means small. Queen Victoria's 1840 wedding cake measured 9 feet around and weighed 300 pounds, although it was only 14 inches high.

This recipe makes an enormous cake. I have quartered the ingredients, and it fit nicely into my 12½cm / 5in deep, 25cm / 10in springform pan.

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Photo by Paul Savidge,  
Food Styling by Dan Macey



## COOK'S NOTES

Make sure you have a bowl large enough to be able to combine and mix your ingredients, and note that your springform pan needs to be at least 10 inches around and at least 3 inches high. In a pinch, you can duct tape two smaller 10-inch springform pans together. Also, this is a perfect cake to make around the holidays since candied fruits are readily available in the supermarket. If you are baking in a convection oven, cut your cooking time back to 2 hours, 15 minutes.

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# Mrs. Weston's Wedding Cake—Continued

## To Make a Bride Cake

### Ingredients

454 g / 16 oz / 4 cups Flour  
454 g / 16 oz / 2 cups Butter  
454 g / 16 oz / 2 cups Sugar  
1/2 tsp Mace  
1/2 tsp Nutmeg  
8 Eggs, divided  
454 g / 1 lb / 3 cups Currants  
142 g / 5 oz / 1 cup Slivered Almonds  
113 g / 4 oz / 1/2 cup Citron  
113 g / 4 oz / 1/2 cup Candied Lemon peel  
113 g / 4 oz / 1/2 cup Candied Orange peel  
120 ml / 1/2 cup Brandy or 1 oz Brandy extract plus  
Apple Juice to equal a 1/2 cup.



### Directions

- Whip the whites of 8 eggs to stiff peaks and set aside. With an electric mixer, cream together the butter, sugar and egg yolks. Once they are combined, fold in the egg whites, brandy or juice and spices. Add the flour a little at a time until it is incorporated. Stir in the almonds and currants.
- Preheat the oven to 149°C/300°F. Generously grease a tall 25cm/10in springform pan. Spoon 1/4 of the batter into the pan and top with 1/3 of the citron, orange peel and lemon peel. Repeat twice more and top with remaining batter.
- Bake for 2½ hours, top with Almond and Sugar Icings.

Serves 25

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# Mrs. Weston's Wedding Cake—Continued

## Icings for the Bride-Cake

### *To Make Almond-Icing*

#### Ingredients

3 Egg whites\* or Meringue Powder equivalent  
283 g / 10 oz / 2 cups blanched almonds, ground to powder.  
1 tbsp Rose Water  
454 g / 16 oz / 2 cups powdered sugar

#### Directions

In a food processor, combine the almonds, rose water, and sugar and set this aside. Whip the egg whites until stiff peaks form. Slowly add the almond mixture to the egg whites until incorporated. Spread this on the top of your cake as soon as you take it from the oven, and then return the cake to the oven until the top is lightly browned. Cool the cake slightly on a rack. Once the cake is cool enough to touch, slide a knife around the inside edge of the pan to loosen the cake. Remove the edge of the pan and ice the cake with Sugar Icing.

### *To Make Sugar Icing*

#### Ingredients

907 g / 32 oz / 4 cups Powdered Sugar  
4 tbsp Corn Starch  
5 Egg whites\* or Meringue Powder equivalent

#### Directions

Sift together the starch and powdered sugar and set aside. Whip the egg whites until stiff peaks form. Slowly add in the sugar mixture, while the mixer continues to whip the egg whites. If you add the sugar too fast the whites will fall and you will end up with a glaze instead of icing. Continue to whip the icing for a few more minutes until it is the consistency of marshmallow cream. Ice the cake using a large, flat spatula, creating whorls and swirls in the pattern. Allow to stand at room temperature for several hours so that the icing hardens. Decorate with fresh flowers, if desired.

\*The consumption of raw egg whites can lead to food poisoning. Use meringue powder as a safe alternative.



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