



Strawberry Dusted Cannoli Cake

The flavors of an Italian Cannoli cake style

- 1-1/2 cups brown sugar
- 10 Tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon orange zest
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon fine salt
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1-1/4 cups buttermilk
- 1/2 cup mini semi-sweet chocolate chips

Creamy Frosting:

- 1/2 cup ricotta cheese
- 1 Tablespoon orange juice
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- Pinch of fine salt

1-1/4 cup confectioners' sugar
1 cup heavy cream

Garnish Topping:

1/4 cup dehydrated strawberries, ground
1/2 cup coarse chopped unsalted pistachios, toasted
1 Tablespoon semi-sweet mini chocolate chips
3 fresh strawberries, partially sliced

Prepare the Cake:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.; set rack in the center. Coat a 10-inch round cake pan with nonstick spray, line with a parchment round; spray lightly with baking spray.
- In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle, beat brown sugar and butter on low speed until combined. Add eggs, one at a time, stopping to scrape the sides as needed. Add the vanilla and orange zest; Mix until well combined.
- In a medium bowl, sift flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon. Add the flour to the mixer bowl in two parts, alternating with the buttermilk, beginning and ending with the flour mixture. Mix on low until no streaks of flour remain.
- Use a rubber spatula to fold in the chocolate chips.

Prepare the Frosting:

- Using a mixer, fitted with a whisk, combine the ricotta, orange juice, vanilla, and salt. Whip on low speed until just combined, sift in the confectioners' sugar, and whisk to combine. Stream in the cream and whip on medium high speed until the frosting is thickened and spreadable, about 5 minutes.
- Scoop all the frosting on top of the cooled cake and use an offset spatula to spread to the edges in an even layer.
- Sprinkle the top of the cake with ground dried strawberries.
- Combine the pistachios with the mini chips and place them around the edge of the cake.
- Place fresh decorative sliced strawberries in the center of the cake.
- Serve or store in the refrigerator until serving.
- Yield: one 10-inch round cake

Cook's Note: Diced candied oranges could be added to the cake in place of the orange zest as was recommended in Renato's original recipe.

Recipe Inspired by: Renato Poliafito, from *Dolci! American Baking with an Italian Accent*,

About the Recipe: The Cannoli, a popular Italian dessert, is usually served in a crisp shell and stuffed with a filling of creamy ricotta studded with candied dried fruit and chocolate chips. This cake dessert captures all of those delicious flavors, combining them with summertime strawberries and lots of pistachios.

