



## Fourth of July Vanilla Sheet Cake

Makes: 12 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 4 hours

- 3 cups (354g) cake flour (spoon & leveled)
- 1 and 1/2 cups (300g) granulated sugar
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks; 230g) unsalted butter, cubed and softened to room temperature
- 1 tbsp pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup (240ml) whole milk, at room temperature and divided
- 1/3 cup (80g) sour cream, at room temperature
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature

### Whipped Vanilla Buttercream:

- 1 cup (230g) unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
- 4 and 1/2 cups (540g) confectioners' sugar
- 1/3 cup (80ml) heavy cream
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract
- salt, to taste
- 3 drops soft pink gel food coloring
- 1 tsp true red or red red gel food coloring
- 3 drops magenta or violet gel food coloring
- 1 tsp navy food coloring
- optional: sprinkles for garnish

### Make the Cake:

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Generously grease a 9×13 inch cake pan.

Sift the cake flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in the bowl of a stand mixer. With the paddle attachment, beat the ingredients together on low speed for a few seconds to gently combine. Add the butter, vanilla, and 1/2 cup of milk. Mix on medium speed until the dry ingredients are

moistened, about 1 minute. Stop the mixer and scrape down the sides and up the bottom of the bowl. The mixture will resemble a thick dough.

Whisk the remaining milk, the sour cream, and eggs together in a medium bowl. With the mixer running on medium speed, add the egg mixture in 3 additions, mixing for about 15 seconds after each addition. Stop the mixer and scrape down the sides and up the bottom of the bowl, then mix for about 15 more seconds until batter is completely combined. Avoid over-mixing. Some small lumps are OK.

Pour and spread batter evenly into prepared pan. Bake for around 32-35 minutes or until the cake is baked through. Begin checking doneness at 28 minutes. To test for doneness, insert a toothpick into the center of the cake. If it comes out clean, it's done. Allow cake to cool completely in the pan set on a wire rack. The cake must be completely cool before frosting.

**Make the Buttercream:**

With a handheld or stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter on medium speed until creamy, about 2 minutes. Add confectioners' sugar, heavy cream, and vanilla extract. Beat on low speed for 30 seconds, then increase to medium-high speed and beat for 4 full minutes. Add up to 1/4 cup more confectioners' sugar if frosting is too thin or another Tablespoon of cream if frosting is too thick. Add a pinch of salt if frosting is too sweet. (I add 1/8 teaspoon salt.) Frosting should be extra fluffy. Divide buttercream into three separate bowls.

To make the red buttercream, place 3 drops of soft pink gel food coloring and stir to combine. Then add the red gel food coloring. Stir until there aren't any streaks. Follow the same steps for the blue buttercream, using magenta drops and 1 tsp of navy gel food coloring. The key to getting a deep color is to let it sit out for hours, overnight if possible. The colors will intensify with time. It won't hurt the buttercream to have it sit out overnight but if you are uncomfortable with that, feel free to place it in the fridge (it may take longer to reach the depth of color you are looking for).

Spread white frosting over cooled cake using an offset spatula. Pipe rosettes and stars using a 1M and #32 tip and garnish with sprinkles. Slice and serve. Cover leftover cake tightly and store in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

**Chef's Notes:**

**Make Ahead & Freezing Instructions:** The cake can be baked, cooled, and covered tightly at room temperature overnight. Likewise, the frosting can be prepared ahead, covered and refrigerated overnight. Let the refrigerated frosting sit at room temperature for 10 minutes, then beat with a mixer for 1 minute to bring it back to a spreadable consistency. Frosted cake or unfrosted cake can be frozen up to 2-3 months. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator and bring to room temperature before decorating/serving.

Cake Flour: For the best results, I strongly recommend cake flour. You can find it in the baking aisle and I have many more recipes using it. If you cannot get your hands on cake flour, follow my instructions here.

Why is everything at room temperature? See why here.

*Recipe from Sally's Baking Addiction*