



Southern Peanut Butter Cake

Makes: 1 9-inch layer cake

Prep Time: 20 minutes Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour 20 minutes plus refrigerator time

- 1 cup plus 2 tbsp unsalted butter, softened
- 2 & 1/4 cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup creamy peanut butter (use Jif or Skippy)
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- 3 large eggs, room temperature
- 3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 3/4 tsp baking soda
- 3/4 tsp Kosher salt
- 2 & 1/4 cups whole milk, room temperature
- Peanut Butter Frosting
- Peanut Praline Filling
- Brown Sugar Candied Peanuts, for garnish

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray 3 9-inch round cake pans with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pans with parchment paper.

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, about 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on medium-low speed, add peanut butter and vanilla, beating until smooth and well combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until smooth and well combined after each addition.

In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition and stopping frequently to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. Divide batter among prepared pans (about 663 grams each) and smooth tops using a small offset spatula. Tap pans on a kitchen-towel-lined counter several times to settle batter and release any air bubbles.

Bake until cakes spring back lightly when gently pressed in center and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 25 to 30 minutes, rotating pans during last 2-4 minutes of baking. Let cool in pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely, parchment side down, on wire racks. Once cool, remove parchment paper.

Trim or level cooled cake layers, if desired. Place 1 cake layer on a serving plate. Spoon 1/2 cup (120 grams) Peanut Butter Frosting into a pastry bag; cut a 1/2-inch opening in tip. Pipe a 1/2-inch-tall border around edge of cake layer. Dollop half of Peanut Praline Filling (about 375 grams) all over top of cake layer, and spread until even and reaches piped border. Top with second cake layer. Pipe a 1/2-inch-tall border around edge of cake layer. Dollop remaining Peanut Praline Filling all over top of cake layer, and spread until even and reached piped border. Top with remaining cake layer. Spread a thin layer of frosting on top and side of cake to create a crumb coat. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

Spread remaining Peanut Butter Frosting on top and sides of cake. Garnish with Brown Sugar Candied Peanuts, if desired. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or up to overnight. Let stand at room temperature for 20 to 30 minutes before serving.