

Torta de naranja

ORANGE AND ALMOND TORTA

Oranges, almonds and cinnamon are all Moorish ingredients that remind us so much of southern Spain and which are the main ingredients of this equally Moorish cake. We sometimes use Seville oranges instead of normal oranges when they are in season for a slightly tarter finish.

Serves 6

6 eggs, separated
240g caster sugar
230g almonds, almost finely ground
finely grated zest of 2½ oranges

SYRUP

juice of 8 oranges or 8 Seville oranges
juice of 1½ lemons (if not using Seville oranges)
1 whole cinnamon stick
caster sugar to taste

Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4. Line a 23cm spring-form tin on the bottom and sides with greaseproof paper.

Keeping 1 tablespoon of caster sugar aside for later, mix the egg yolks and sugar together until pale. Then add the almonds and zest. Beat the egg whites and remaining tablespoon of sugar until stiff and carefully fold into the sugar-egg mixture, trying not to knock the air out of the whites. The egg yolk/sugar mixture will seem very stiff at first, but keep folding in the egg whites and it will soon loosen up. Gently ease into the lined tin, place on the middle shelf of the oven, and bake for about 60-70 minutes until the torta is golden on top and firm to the touch.

While the torta is in the oven, make the syrup. Place the orange juice, lemon juice and cinnamon stick in a saucepan with a handful of sugar, bring to a gentle boil and simmer for about 5 minutes. Taste. The syrup should be quite tart. Allow to cool and place in the fridge.

When the torta is ready, remove from the oven and cool completely on a rack before opening the spring-form tin. Transfer to a plate and with a skewer, pierce four small holes in the top of the cake and pour half the syrup over the top. Serve with the rest of the syrup on the side.