

## STRAWBERRY MOUSSE CAKE

### INGREDIENTS

for the cake

1 1/4 cups butter, softened  
2 1/4 cups granulated sugar  
7 egg whites, at room temperature  
3 1/2 cups cake flour  
4 teaspoons baking powder  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
1/2 teaspoon almond extract

for the strawberry mousse filling

1 envelope unflavored gelatin  
2 cups sliced fresh strawberries  
1/4 cup granulated sugar  
1 cup whipping cream

for the frosting and garnish

2 cups whipping cream  
1 teaspoon shipped cream stabilizer  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla  
2 tablespoons confectioners sugar  
halved or small fresh strawberries to garnish  
2 cups sliced almonds, lightly toasted

### DIRECTIONS

Prepare Cake Layers: Preheat oven to 350F. Beat 1 1/4 cups softened butter and 2 1/4 cups granulated sugar at medium speed with a heavy-duty electric stand mixer until fluffy. Gradually add egg whites, one-third at a time, beating well after each addition. Sift together cake flour and baking powder; gradually add to butter mixture alternately with 1 cup water, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Stir in vanilla and almond extracts. Pour batter into 4 greased and floured 8-inch round cake pans or, in this case, a 14-inch oblong spring form pan.

Bake at 350F for 22 to 25 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pans on wire racks 10 minutes; remove from pans to wire racks, and cool completely (about 30 minutes).

While the oven is still warm, toast the sliced almonds for 8-10 minutes, until lightly golden. Let cool completely.

Prepare Strawberry Mousse: Sprinkle gelatin over 1/4 cup water in a small bowl; let stand 5 minutes. Process 2 cups sliced strawberries and 1/4 cup granulated sugar in a blender or food processor until smooth, stopping to scrape down sides as needed. Transfer strawberry mixture to a small saucepan; bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Remove from heat. Add gelatin to strawberry mixture, stirring constantly until gelatin dissolves. Cover and chill until consistency

of unbeaten egg whites, stirring occasionally (about 30 minutes). Beat cream at low speed until foamy; increase speed to medium-high, and beat until soft peaks form. Fold whipped cream into strawberry mixture until well blended. Cover and chill 30 minutes or just until mixture is thick enough to hold its shape.

Cut cake into layers (in this case, three layers. Spread about 1 cup Strawberry Mousse between each cake layer, leaving a 1/4-inch border around edges; cover and chill 3 hours or until mousse is set.

Make the whipped cream frosting. Beat cream, stabilizer, vanilla and confections sugar at low speed until foamy; increase speed to medium-high, and beat until soft peaks form. Frost cake and garnish with fresh strawberries. Line the outside of the cake with toasted almonds and chill for 2-3 more hours before slicing.