

THE MICRO WAY LANI BLOOMER



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Anytime you need a fast, easy dessert, get out your microwave bundt pan, a cake mix, and read on! In 30 minutes you and your microwave can have an impressive and delicious dessert ready to eat. A bundt cake is the easiest cake to make in a microwave because it's a donut shape. In a bundt pan, you haven't got a gooey middle to worry about, like you might have with other shaped pans.

When baking cakes in your microwave, you can use cake mixes, or make scratch cakes, whichever you prefer, and you don't need special microwave recipes. Cakes rise higher in the microwave, and most have a

slightly spongy texture that is lighter, moister, and more tender than a range baked cake. Cakes don't brown in a microwave, and don't get hard crusty edges either (unless you overcook them!). The lack of browning is noticeable only on yellow or white cakes, and I use ground nuts to give these cakes a dark crust. For iced cakes, this isn't necessary.

Almost all cakes can be baked in a microwave. The exceptions are angelfood, sponge, and chiffon cakes which need hot air to rise properly. A pound cake cooks in a microwave, but has a different flavor because it lacks the brown crusty edges.

There are two things you should

do differently when you bake a cake in the microwave instead of the range.

The first is to use just a little bit less liquid. Measure out the liquid called for in the recipe or mix, and remove 1 or 2 tablespoons before mixing it into the batter. I take out 1 tablespoon for cakes with less than 1 cup of liquid, and 2 tablespoons for cakes with 1 cup or more liquid in the recipe. A slightly thicker batter is easier to cook in the microwave where there is less evaporation during baking.

The second difference is that you don't grease and flour the cake pans. If you do, the flour absorbs moisture from the cake batter during baking and turns into a gooey paste all over the outside of the cake! Instead, grease the pan with shortening, then sprinkle granulated sugar on the shortening instead of the flour. The sugar forms a crust on the edges of the cake, making it easy to turn out.

If you are making a light-colored cake that won't be iced, you can sprinkle finely ground nuts or graham cracker crumbs instead of the sugar when preparing the pan. Either of these give the cake a darker crust, which people are used to seeing on cakes. Finely ground nuts are available in

supermarkets and are called pecan meal, walnut meal, etc. Look for these in baking sections near the whole and chopped nuts.

Try this easy orange cake, it has its own topping and is delicious.

Orange Bundt Cake

1 package yellow pudding cake mix

3 eggs

1/3 cup oil

1 tablespoon grated orange rind

7/8 cup orange juice (1 cup minus 2 tablespoons)

1/4 cup butter or margarine

3/4 cup orange marmalade

1/2 cup flaked coconut

Shortening or margarine and sugar to prepare pan

1. Combine mix, eggs, oil, orange rind and juice in a mixing bowl and beat two minutes.

2. Grease a microwave bundt pan and sprinkle sugar on the grease (just like you put flour on a pan for the range).

3. Melt 1/4 cup butter in a 2 cup measure on high for 30-45 seconds. Add marmalade and coconut and mix well. Spread mixture on the bottom of the bundt pan.

4. Pour cake batter on top of marmalade mixture. Bake, uncovered, on medium (50,5) for 15 minutes, turning the pan every 5 minutes if your oven cooks

unevenly (if one spot rises faster than another).

5. Microwave 2-3 minutes on high. When done, a cake should just start to pull away from the edges of the pan, and a toothpick should come out clean. There may be a few small damp looking spots on the top; these will dry during standing time.

6. Let cake stand on a counter or board for 10 minutes, then turn out onto a serving plate. If any of the topping sticks in the pan, put it back on the cake with a knife.

Tips:

-A 10-12 cup bundt pan will hold any two layer cake, whether it's a mix or a scratch recipe.

-To bake other cakes, use this timing (15 minutes on medium, 2-3 minutes on high) for most mixes cooked in a bundt pan. Scratch cakes, heavy cakes, or ones with a lot of nuts, etc. in the batter may take 4-5 minutes on high, after 15 minutes on medium.

-If your cakes are lopsided, or you have to turn them frequently, a turntable, such as a Micro-GO-Round, will give you perfect cakes.

Note: The times above are for ovens with 600-700 Watts of power; for 500-600 W, add 10 seconds to each minute; for 400-500 W, add 20 seconds to each minute.

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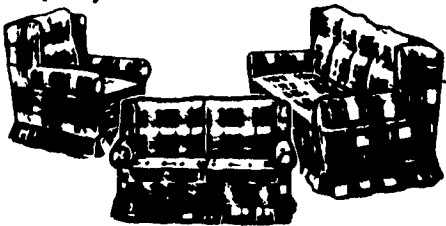
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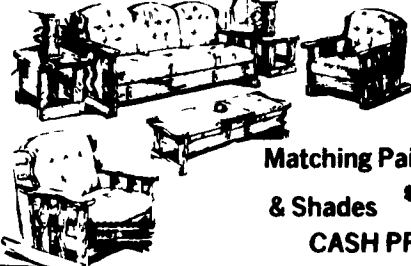
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