

## Red-Currant, Bavarian-Cream Cake

### For the Bavarian Cream:

2 teaspoons gelatin  
1 teaspoon cornstarch  
1 cup milk  
4 large egg yolks  
1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar  
1 1/4 cup heavy cream  
2 teaspoons vanilla  
1 tablespoon dark rum or kirsch

### For the Spongecake:

5 large room-temperature eggs, separated  
1 cup sugar  
1 cup flour  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
2 teaspoons vanilla  
1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar

### For the Red-Currant Topping:

1 quart red currants (about 2 1/4 cups)  
2 teaspoons gelatin  
1 cup sugar  
1/4 currant jelly  
1/3 cup water

### For the Heavy Syrup:

1/2 cup sugar  
1/4 cup water  
1 tablespoon dark rum or kirsch

### To Make the Bavarian Cream Filling:

Chill a bowl and beater. Soften the gelatin in 1 tablespoon of cold water. Bring the milk to the simmer in a 1-quart saucepan.

Beat the egg yolks with the cornstarch until smooth. Very gradually add the sugar while beating. Continue to beat until a ribbon forms when the batter is dropped from the beater.

Gradually add the simmering milk to the egg yolks, beating constantly. Pour the mixture back into the saucepan. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly with a whisk until the mixture reaches 165° on a thermometer or until the mixture coats the back of a wooden spoon. Be very careful not to let the mixture boil or it will curdle. Off the heat, stir the softened gelatin into the hot mixture until thoroughly dissolved. Return the mixture to the bowl.

Place the bowl of custard in a larger bowl filled with ice, stirring constantly until the cream reaches room temperature. Remove from the ice. Stir in the vanilla and the alcohol. In the chilled bowl, beat the heavy cream until medium peaks are formed. Place the custard mixture in the bowl of ice again, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula until it begins to thicken. Do not let it set. Remove from the ice and stir in 1/3 of the whipped cream with the rubber spatula. Fold in the remaining whipped cream. Refrigerate for about 3 hours or until the cream is of a spreading consistency—neither runny nor completely set.

### To Make the Red-Currant Topping:

Wash and stem the currants. Soften the gelatin in a tablespoon of cold water. In a saucepan, boil the sugar and water until it is dissolved. Add the currant jelly and beat with a whisk until dissolved. Lower the heat. Add the currants and cook them only until slightly softened but still retaining their shape. At the lowest heat, add the gelatin and stir until dissolved. Cool and chill only until it is somewhat thickened and spreadable. Do not let it set fully.

**To Make the Spongecake:**

Preheat oven to 350°. Butter and flour an 8-inch or 9-inch springform. In a large bowl, beat the egg yolks and lemon juice until thickened. Gradually beat in 3/4 cup of the sugar, then the vanilla, and continue to beat until the mixture forms a ribbon. Beat the egg whites until foamy and sprinkle on the cream of tartar. Continue to beat until soft peaks are formed. Gradually beat in the remaining 1/4 cup of sugar until stiff peaks are formed

Stir in 1/3 of the beaten egg whites into the yolk mixture with a rubber spatula. Sprinkle 1/3 of the flour through a sieve into the batter and fold in carefully. Fold in the remaining 2/3 egg whites and flour, alternately by thirds. Pour the batter into the prepared springform and bake in the middle level of the oven for about 40-45 minutes (slightly less if using a 9-inch springform). When a cake tester comes out clean, remove the cake to a wire rack, and let cool for ten minutes. Gently loosen the sides of the pan, running a knife carefully around the edges. Invert onto the rack and carefully remove the bottom of the springform. Let cool completely. The cake maybe made a day ahead of time and frozen in a plastic bag.

**To Make the Heavy Syrup:**

Combine the sugar and water in a small saucepan and bring to the boil, stirring until dissolved and clear. Remove from the heat, allow to cool, then stir in the tablespoon of alcohol.

**Assembling the Cake:**

Carefully slice the spongecake into three layers. Place what was the top layer upside down into the cleaned springform and brush with the heavy syrup. Spread half of the Bavarian cream over the layer. Place the middle layer on top of the cream and brush the top of it with heavy syrup. Spread the remainder of the Bavarian cream over this layer. Turn what was the bottom layer upside down and brush with the syrup. Place that layer, baked side up, over the other layers. When the currants are spreadable but not runny, spread on top of the cake. Refrigerate overnight. Take the cake out of the refrigerator 15 minutes before serving, carefully removing the sides of the pan. Cut very gently with a serrated knife.