

## Italian Rum Cake Leggera

### For the Spongecake:

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

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. When ready to assemble, cut into three layers.

### For the Bavarian Cream Fillings:

7 egg yolks	4 tablespoons rum
3/4 cup sugar	2 teaspoons vanilla
2 teaspoons cornstarch	2 ounces best-quality semisweet chocolate
1 package gelatin	2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 cup milk	1 tablespoon water
1/2 cup cream	1 cup whipped cream

Soak the gelatin in 3 tablespoons of rum and 1 tablespoon water. Melt the chocolate with 1 tablespoon of rum and 2 tablespoons of butter. Bring the 1 cup of milk and the 1/2 cup of cream to the simmer. 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 and cream to the egg yolks, beating constantly. Pour the mixture into a saucepan. Cook over hot water, 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 a bowl.

Place the bowl of custard in a larger bowl filled with ice, stirring constantly until the cream reaches room temperature. Do not let it set. Remove from the ice. Stir in the vanilla. Divide the mixture in half. Add chocolate to half the mixture. Chill to very cool. Beat the heavy cream until medium peaks are formed. Fold half the whipped cream into each mixture. Refrigerate until the custards are at spreading consistency.

**Rum Syrup:**

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar

1 cup water

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup rum

Boil sugar and water for two minutes. Measure out  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup of sugar mixture and let cool. Add the rum.

**Assembly:**

Brush the top layer of the cake with the rum syrup until moist. Place that layer topside down in the springform sides, without the bottom, set on a serving plate. Spread the chocolate cream over that layer. Brush both sides of the middle layer of the cake with syrup and place over the chocolate cream. Spread the vanilla layer of cream over that layer. Brush the bottom layer of the cake with syrup and place bottom side up in the springform. Let the cake set fully in the refrigerator.

**Stabilized Whipped Cream Frosting:**

1 $\frac{1}{2}$  cups heavy cream

1 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons gelatin

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup confectioners' sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon vanilla

2 tablespoons cold water

Mix cold water and gelatin in a small pan and let sit a few minutes. Gently heat until liquid. Begin beating the heavy cream. Add the sugar and vanilla. Beat for a minute or two, then slowly add the liquid gelatin. Beat until stiff peaks are formed.

Remove the sides from the springform and frost the cake. Gently press about  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of slivered almonds onto the side of the cake. Refrigerate until serving.