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### **Sour Cream Coffee Cake**

This is as easy to prepare as it is good to eat. Basically a pound cake batter enriched with sour cream, it's layered with a mixture of cinnamon sugar and nuts – a mixture to which you can add cocoa, currants, raisins, or even a little melted butter. It's really essential to have the butter, eggs, and sour cream at room temperature for easy mixing, or the final texture of the cake will be heavy and grainy rather than light and delicate.

#### ***Sour Cream Cake Batter***

2 cups all-purpose flour, (spoon flour into a dry-measure cup and level off)  
1 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
10 tablespoons (1-1/4 sticks) unsalted butter, softened  
2 large eggs, at room temperature  
2 large egg yolks  
1 (8 ounce/225 gram) container sour cream

One 10-inch/25cm tube or Bundt pan

#### ***Cinnamon Sugar Nut Filling***

1/3 cup granulated or light brown sugar  
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon  
1 cup (about 4 ounces/100 grams) pecan or walnut pieces, coarsely chopped

1. Set a rack in the lower third of the oven and preheat to 325°F (160°C).
2. For the filling, mix the sugar, cinnamon, and nuts in a small bowl and set aside.
3. For the batter, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, and baking soda in the bowl of an electric mixer. Stir well by hand to mix. Add the butter. Beat the mixture on low speed with the paddle until the mixture is a smooth, heavy paste, 1 to 2 minutes.
4. Whisk the eggs, egg yolks, and sour cream together. On medium speed, beat 1/3 of the egg mixture into the flour and butter mixture. Beat for 1 minute.

## Fresh From the Kitchen

### **Sour Cream Coffee Cake, (continued)**

5. Stop and scrape the bowl and beater, beat in another half of the remaining egg mixture and beat for 2 minutes. Repeat with the last of the egg mixture.
6. Remove the bowl from the mixer and using a rubber spatula give the batter a final mixing.
7. Scrape half the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the top. Scatter half the sugar and nut filling on the batter.
8. Scrape the remaining batter over the sugar and nut mixture and smooth the top. Scatter on the remaining sugar and nut mixture.
9. Bake the cake until it is well risen and firm, and a toothpick or a small thin knife inserted midway between the side of the pan and the central tube emerges dry, about 1 hour.
10. Cool the cake in the pan for 5 minutes, then invert a rack over it. Invert and lift off the pan, then cover the cake with another rack or a cake cardboard and turn it right side up again. Cool the cake completely.

**Serving:** This doesn't need any accompaniment since it's so rich and flavorful.

**Storage:** Wrap the cooled cake in plastic wrap and keep it at room temperature. Freeze for longer storage. Defrost the cake and bring it to room temperature before serving.

**Variations:** To vary the filling, divide it in half and add 3 tablespoons currants or raisins to the half that you'll use inside the cake batter—they would burn on top of the cake. You may also add 1/4 cup bittersweet (not unsweetened) chocolate, cut into 1/4-inch (6mm) pieces, or chocolate chips, in addition to or instead of the currants or raisins. You can bake the cake in a 9 x 13 x 2-inch (23 x 33 x 5cm) pan if you prefer to cut it into squares instead of slices. If you do, sprinkle all the filling on top of the cake. It will take only 35 to 40 minutes to bake.