the Lexingtonienne

RED VELVET CAKE

Adapted from Squilley's Bakery recipe

- 2 sticks unsalted butter
- 1 1/2 C sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 C buttermilk
- 1 T red food coloring
- 2 1/2 C all-purpose flour
- 2 T unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted {measure it out and *then* sift it to make it lump-free}
- 1 t baking soda
- 1/2 t salt
- 1 t vanilla extract
- 1 T white vinegar

Preheat oven to 325. Grease and flour two 8-inch round cake pans and line the bottoms with parchment rounds.

Combine buttermilk and food coloring and set aside.

Combine flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, cream together butter and sugar. Add eggs one at a time. Alternate adding the buttermilk and the dry ingredients, doing about 1/3 at a time and mixing well after each addition. (But do not overmix with flour ever. Make sure it's well combined and then stop. Otherwise you will overstimulate the gluten and your cake will be tough.) Beat in vanilla and vinegar until well combined.

Pour the batter into the two pans and bake for about 35 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean or with just a few crumbs on it.

Cool the cakes for about 10 minutes on a rack in the pans. Then gently slide a knife about the perimeter of the pans, invert, and your cakes should slide right out. Remove the parchment paper rounds from the tops of the cakes. Cool completely on a rack before frosting.

CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

Adapted from the Joy of Cooking

- 8 oz cream cheese, cold
- 5 T unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 2 t vanilla
- 2 C powdered sugar, sifted {measure and *then* sift to get any lumps out}

Combine in a food processor and pulse until smooth and creamy. Do not overmix, as overbeating breaks down the cream cheese. If you don't have a food processor, you can do this with a hand mixer. Beat the first three ingredients just until blended, then add the sugar about 1/3 at a time, beating until smooth.

I tripled this recipe for my red velvet cake and had a little left over.