

Salt and Serenity

Strawberry Rhubarb Biscoff Icebox Cake

Serves 8-10

If you grew up in the 1970's, you likely remember the classic Nabisco Icebox Cake made by layering chocolate wafer cookies with whipped cream and then setting it into the fridge for a few hours to soften up to a sliceable consistency.

This is Julie van Rosendaal's clever take on that classic. The original recipe appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on April 16, 2022. I have adapted it very slightly by adding strawberries to the mix. [Biscoff cookies](#) replace the chocolate wafers, and a sweet-tart strawberry rhubarb compote gets folded into the whipped cream.

The second adaptation I made to Julie's recipe is the addition of skim milk powder to the whipping cream. The skim milk powder stabilizes the whipped cream so that the beautiful, piped decoration on top of this cake holds its shape for almost 24 hours.

Cake:

- 2 cups fresh or frozen strawberries, if fresh, remove stems and halve
- 2 cups fresh or frozen rhubarb, if fresh, slice into 1-inch pieces
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 2 cups 35% cream (whipping cream)
- 1 tablespoon icing sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract
- 2 packages [Biscoff cookies](#) (or thin gingersnaps or [Speculoos-style cookies](#))

Whipped Cream Topping:

- 2 cups 35% cream (whipping cream)
- 1 tablespoon icing sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons skim milk powder

1. In a large saucepan simmer the strawberries, rhubarb, and granulated sugar for 10-15 minutes, until the rhubarb softens and breaks down. Using a potato masher, or 2 forks, mash the compote gently, to break up any of the bigger lumps remaining. You don't want an entirely smooth compote, so be gentle here. Set compote aside to cool, then refrigerate it until very cold. (You can do this up to a week ahead of time.)
2. In a large bowl, beat 2 cups whipping cream with icing sugar and vanilla until soft peaks form. This can be done in the stand mixer, if you have one, or with an electric hand mixer. You can also do this by hand with a regular whisk if you're looking for an arm workout.
3. Fold cooled strawberry rhubarb mixture into the whipped cream, leaving it swirly if you like.
4. Line an 8x4 inch loaf pan with plastic wrap. Spread a 1/4-inch thick layer of the strawberry rhubarb cream on the bottom of the loaf pan. Start spreading the cookies with the strawberry-rhubarb cream and stack them upright on their sides, in rows like books. ([See the video I made in the blog post](#)).
5. Stack the cookies until your loaf pan is full. If your loaf pan is at least 2 1/2 inches tall, you will be able to accommodate 2 rows of cookies. If your pan is only deep enough for one layer, just stack a few cookies, spread with cream, flat to fill in any empty spaces.

6. End with a layer of cookies on the top, which will wind up as the base once you invert the loaf. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate or freeze for at least 4 hours. The cake will be more stable if frozen. The cake, at this stage, can be frozen for up to a month. After wrapping in plastic wrap, give it a second wrap in aluminum foil.
7. When ready to serve, whip the remaining 2 cups of cream with the icing sugar, vanilla, and skim milk powder. The skim milk powder stabilizes the whipped cream, so that any decoration you pipe on top of the cake will keep its definition.
8. Invert the icebox cake onto a serving plate or cutting board. If the cake is frozen, you may need to let it sit for a few minutes or place a warm cloth on the outside of the pan for a minute to help it release. Remove the plastic wrap and spread about half the whipped cream over the top and sides of the cake. Transfer the remaining whipped cream to a disposable piping bag, fitted with a decorative piping tip. I used a [Wilton #127](#) to make the pretty chevron pattern on my cake in the blog post.
9. If the cake is frozen, let it stand at room temperature for about 20 minutes to make it easier to slice. Slice to serve and if you like, let the pieces stand on the plate for a few minutes to thaw before serving – they will keep their shape but be soft, like cookies and cream.