

LEMON POPPY SEED CAKE

Yields 72 pieces (2 1/2" X 1/2" slice)

1 1/4 cups (2 1/2 sticks) butter, softened, plus extra butter for greasing the pan
2 cups sugar (could decrease to 1 1/2 cups)
6 large eggs, separated
Lemon zest from lemons for juice
1/2 cup fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1/2 cup poppy seeds
2-1/2 cups sifted all-purpose flour
1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1-1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
Confectioner's sugar

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Butter 2 loaf pans 9 x 5 x 3 inches.
2. Zest the lemons before squeezing them for juice.
2. Cream the butter and sugar together in a large bowl with an electric mixer. Add the egg yolks, one at a time, combining after each addition. Stir in the lemon juice, lemon zest, vanilla, and poppy seeds.
3. Combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt and mix into the batter.
4. Beat the egg whites until stiff but not dry, and fold into the batter.
5. Divide the mixture into the 2 greased loaf pans. Bake for 45 - 50 minutes or until a cake tester inserted into the center of the loaf comes out clean.
6. Cool the cake for 15 minutes. Remove from the pan and cool completely on a rack before wrapping. The cake freezes beautifully.
7. Cut each loaf in half (lengthwise). Then slice 1/2 inch.