

Strawberry Lemonade Cake
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Ingredients:

For the cake:

- 15.25 oz yellow or vanilla cake mix
- Ingredients to make cake (see back of box)
- 1 T. lemon zest
- 1 pkg (3 oz) lemon gelatin (such as Jell-O brand)
- 1 cup boiling water

For the filling:

- 1 pkg (3.4 oz) lemon flavored instant pudding
- 1 cup cold milk
- 1 1/2 cup diced fresh strawberries

For the frosting:

- 4 oz light cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1/4 cup confectioner's sugar (icing sugar)
- Drop of red food coloring
- 1 cup heavy cream

{Whole strawberries and mint leaves for garnish}

Directions:

- **Make the cake:** Prepare cake batter according to package ingredients, adding lemon zest to batter ingredients. Bake in 2- 8 or 9" round cake pans according to package instructions. Allow cakes to cool slightly and remove from pans; cool completely. In the meantime, wash the cake pans (you will need them again later.) When cakes are cool, return them to the clean pans. Poke them with a large fork or knife at 1/2" intervals. Place lemon gelatin in a medium bowl and add boiling water; stir for about 2 minutes until completely dissolved. Carefully pour gelatin over cakes, distributing evenly over the cakes. Refrigerate for 3 hours.
- **Make the filling:** Beat pudding mix and milk in a large bowl with a whisk for 2 minutes. Stir in strawberries. Refrigerate until ready to assemble cake. Place a clean large mixing bowl and whisk attachment (for making frosting) in the refrigerator to chill.
- **Make the frosting:** Using the chilled whisk attachment and bowl, beat together the cream cheese, sugar, and food coloring until well combined. While mixture is still mixing, slowly add in cream. Occasionally turn off mixer to scrape bottom of bowl. Beat until mixture is thickened and holds a stiff peak.
- **Assemble the cake:** Remove cakes from pans (you may need to dip bottoms of pans in warm water for 20-30 seconds to get cakes to loosen.) Place one layer on plate. Spread with the pudding filling (you may have some filling leftover). Top with second layer. Frost top and sides of cake with whipped cream frosting. Garnish with strawberries and mint leaves. Refrigerate cake until serving. **HINT: To get a really nice looking layer cake, I like to slice off the domed top part of the cake layers to get flat, even layers. This also gives you a little something to nibble on while you frost the cake...**

