

ELVIS PRESLEY'S FAVORITE POUND CAKE

SERVES 10 TO 12

Active time: 20 min

Start to finish: 3½ hr (includes cooling)

This is the best pound cake we have ever tasted. Its tender appeal is owed in part to cake flour and cream, and in part to beating the batter an extra 5 minutes.

2 sticks (1 cup) unsalted butter, softened, plus additional for buttering pan

3 cups sifted cake flour (not self-rising; sift before measuring) plus additional for dusting

¾ teaspoon salt

3 cups sugar

**7 large eggs, at room temperature
30 minutes**

2 teaspoons vanilla

1 cup heavy cream

Special equipment: a 10-inch tube pan (4½ inches deep; not with a removable bottom) or a 10-inch bundt pan (3¼ inches deep; 3-qt capacity)

► Put oven rack in middle position, but do not preheat oven.
► Generously butter pan and dust with flour, knocking out excess flour.
► Sift together sifted flour (3 cups) and salt into a bowl. Repeat sifting into another bowl (flour will have been sifted 3 times total).
► Beat together butter (2 sticks) and sugar in a large bowl with an electric mixer at medium-high speed until pale and fluffy, about 5 minutes in a stand mixer fitted with paddle attachment or 6 to 8 minutes with a handheld mixer. Add eggs 1 at a time, beating well after each addition, then beat in vanilla. Reduce speed to low and add half of flour, then all of cream, then remaining flour, mixing well after

each addition. Scrape down side of bowl, then beat at medium-high speed 5 minutes. Batter will become creamier and satiny.

► Spoon batter into pan and rap pan against work surface once or twice to eliminate air bubbles. Place pan in (cold) oven and turn oven temperature to 350°F. Bake until golden and a wooden pick or skewer inserted in middle of cake comes out with a few crumbs adhering, 1 to 1½ hours. Cool cake in pan on a rack 30 minutes. Run a thin knife around inner and outer edges of cake, then invert rack over pan and invert cake onto rack to cool completely.

Cooks' note:

Cake keeps, covered well with plastic wrap or in an airtight container, at room temperature 5 days.

For a HOT PEANUT BUTTER AND BANANA SANDWICH recipe, see page 82.