

Po-Po's Butter Cake

Serves 12 to 15

This basic, not-too-sweet cake that my grandmother and my mother frequently made is good served with berries and lightly sweetened whipped cream or simply finished with a lemon glaze. The cake is great when served slightly warm.

- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened + more for the cake pan
- 3 cups all-purpose flour + more for dusting
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 large eggs, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup whole milk, room temperature
- 1 cup powdered sugar, sifted (optional)
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice, strained (optional)

Instructions: Move a rack to the middle of the oven and preheat the oven to 350°.

Butter and flour a 9- by 13-inch metal cake pan (see Note); set aside. In a medium bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder and salt; set aside.

In a stand mixer with the paddle attachment, cream the butter and sugar at medium speed until light colored and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Transfer to a bowl.

Use the same stand mixer bowl and the whisk attachment at medium-high speed to beat the eggs until light colored and foamy, about 3 minutes.

Replace the whisk attachment with the paddle. Add the butter mixture to the eggs and

beat on low speed until incorporated, stopping to scrape the bowl as needed. If the mixture happens to separate a little and look curdled, don't worry. The cake will come together once the remaining ingredients are added.

Add the vanilla to the milk. At low speed and mixing just until incorporated, add the flour mixture to the butter-egg mixture in three additions,

alternating with two additions of the milk; stop to scrape as needed.

Pour the batter into the prepared cake pan, smooth the top, and bake until light golden and a skewer inserted into the center comes out clean, 35-45 minutes.

If making the lemon glaze, combine the powdered sugar and lemon juice. When the cake is done, let cool slightly

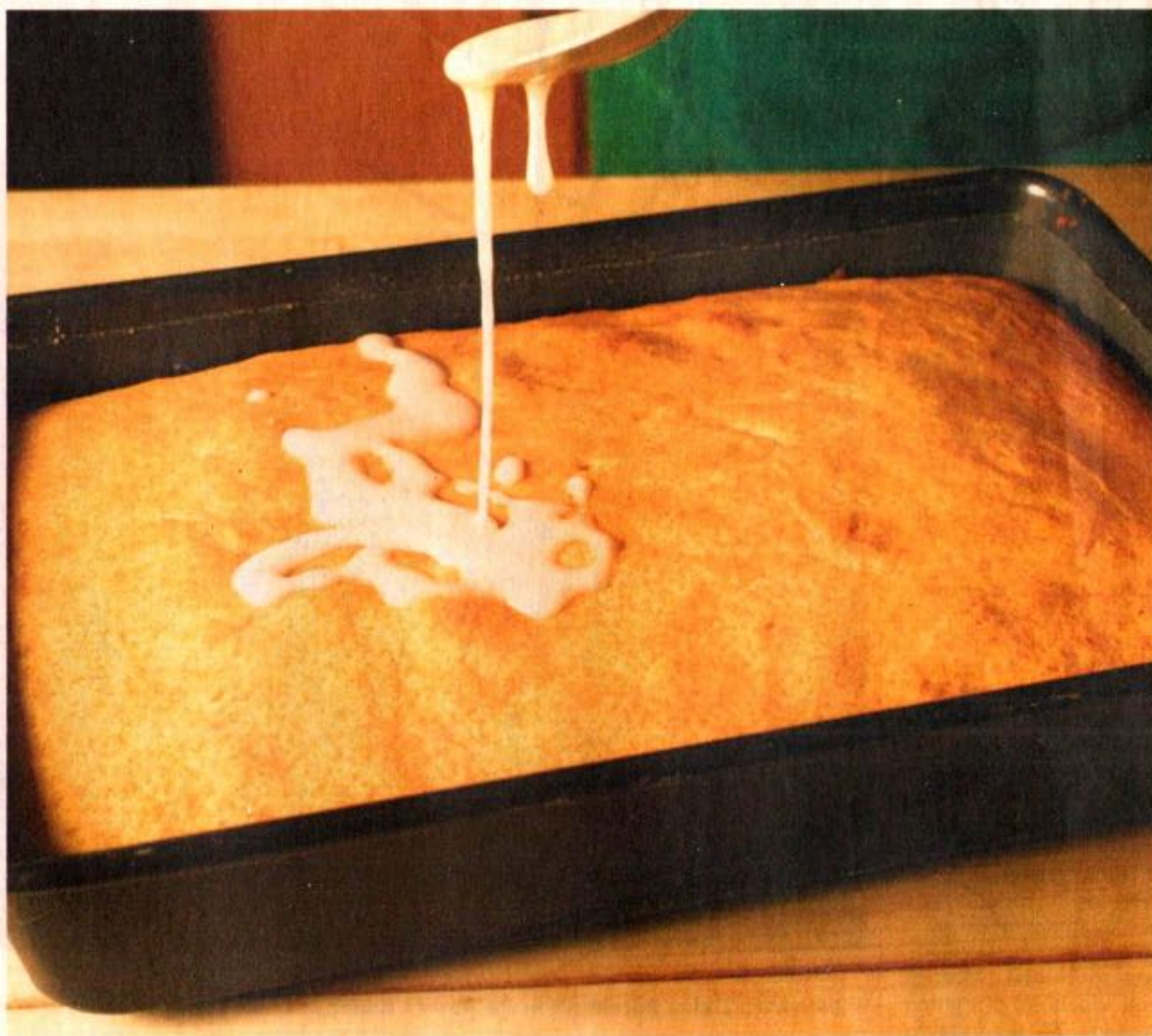
but spread on the glaze while the cake is still warm.

Cut into squares to serve.

Note: If using a very dark metal pan, reduce oven temperature to 325°.

Per serving: 334 calories, 5 g protein, 47 g carbohydrate, 14 g fat (8 g saturated), 92 mg cholesterol, 175 mg sodium, 1 g fiber.

Wine pairing: Sweet wine pairs with this cake as long as the wine is sweeter than the cake and any accompaniments. A semi-sweet white is good with a plain cake, and sweet Muscat will be good with cake, berries and whipped cream. A lemon-glazed cake needs something sweeter, such as a German Auslese Riesling or white dessert wine.



Craig Lee / Special to The Chronicle; styling by Lynne Char Bennett