



# TEA AND HONEY CAKE

*Our delicious tea and honey layer cake is the perfect treat to crown any party. A celebration of classic British flavours, it makes a fabulous centrepiece. Luscious layers of light tea-infused sponge (made using our generous Braddock White duck eggs) lathered in honey buttercream, tea syrup and strawberry jam. A few finishing touches of Swiss meringue buttercream, honeycomb, fruit, and edible flowers make it extra special. If you would prefer party-sized cupcakes, you'll find a recipe nestled on our website.*

Prep Time 1 hour 30 minutes | Cook Time 1 hour 10 minutes | Serves 12-16

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## For the sponge

300g golden caster sugar  
300g runny honey  
500g unsalted butter, softened  
6 Clarence Court Braddock White duck eggs (350g total weight)  
100ml strong black tea (Earl Grey, Oolong or Darjeeling work well)  
400g self-raising flour, sifted  
4 teaspoons baking powder  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon fine ground black pepper  
100g ground almonds

## For the filling

150g unsalted butter  
250g icing sugar, sifted  
50g runny honey  
1 tablespoon vanilla paste  
240g good quality strawberry jam

## To decorate (optional)

Honeycomb  
Edible flowers  
Fresh fruit  
Freeze-dried fruit, blitzed, for stencilling

## For the tea syrup

175g runny honey  
350ml strong black tea (Earl Grey, Oolong or Darjeeling)

## For the Swiss Meringue buttercream icing

6 Clarence Court hen egg whites (roughly 250g total weight)  
350g caster sugar  
550g unsalted butter, cubed, room temperature  
1 tablespoon vanilla bean paste

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## Method:

Pre-heat the oven to 180°C/160°C(fan), then grease and line the bases of four 20cm, loose-bottom sandwich tins. If you don't have four tins, make two sponges at a time – making sure you halve the recipe for ease and accuracy.

To make the sponges, add the golden caster sugar, honey, and butter to a large mixing bowl or freestanding mixer. Blend together until light and fluffy. Beat in the duck eggs and strong black tea, a little at a time. Then fold in the self-raising flour, baking powder, black pepper, and ground almonds, until the mixture just comes together.

Divide the mixture between the tins and level with a spatula. Bake in the oven for 30 minutes or until a cocktail stick comes out clean, when inserted.

Carefully transfer the sponges to cool completely on a rack.

While the sponges are cooling, make the tea syrup. Add the strong black tea to a small saucepan with the runny honey, bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer. Once the honey has melted and the syrup has simmered for 2 minutes, remove from the heat, pour into a bowl and place to one side. This syrup will be used to brush over the sponges when it's time to stack and ice.

Now onto the Swiss meringue buttercream icing. This icing is all about temperature and moving quickly. Place around 4cm of water in a small saucepan on a low simmer. Add the sugar and egg whites to the metal bowl of a stand mixer. Place the bowl over the pan of water and, using a silicone spatula, mix constantly for 10 minutes, checking regularly with a digital temperature probe until the temperature get to 72c/161f. As soon as it comes up to temperature, remove the bowl from the heat and place directly onto the stand mixer with the whisk attachment. Whisk on high until stiff peaks are formed, around 5-8 minutes. The bowl must also be cool to the touch. Now swap the whisk for the paddle attachment, and on low speed add around 30g of butter at a time until smooth and fluffy (around 10 minutes). Towards the end add the vanilla paste.

Next make the honey buttercream filling. Place the very soft butter in a stand mixer or a large mixing bowl. Beat well for 4 minutes or until pale and fluffy. Add the honey and whisk until the honey is incorporated, before adding the icing sugar and vanilla paste. Beat for a further 2 minutes or until light and fluffy. Cover the bowl and place in a cool area until ready to use.

Once the sponges have cooled and you're ready to build the cake, get yourself a large flat plate or board. Trim the sponges, if needed, to level them and expose one side of the sponge in order to soak up the tea syrup. Use a pastry brush to generously apply the tea syrup over three of the sponges, allowing the syrup to settle before spreading a thin layer of strawberry jam over each.

Dab a little Swiss meringue buttercream onto the board and place the first sponge on top – this will stop the cake from slipping. Spread a thin layer of honey buttercream over the jam coating and place the second sponge on top. Repeat with the remaining sponges until you have reached the fourth sponge. Place a spoonful of Swiss meringue buttercream onto the top sponge and run the palette knife around in a circular motion to spread it all over.



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### Method:

Now dot buttercream over the sides of the cake tiers and run the palette knife around the edge to spread out a thin layer over the sides of the cake. Now the cake can sit in the fridge to firm up for up to a couple of hours. You can then ice the top and sides again to give full coverage. You can keep the cake in the fridge for up to 48 hours, until you're ready to serve.

When you're nearly ready to serve, top with honeycomb, edible flowers, fruit and use some freeze-dried blitzed fruit to create a pattern on the top. We used the Clarence Court's stencil to add a crown motif.



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