Pumpkin Trifle

Layers of pumpkin cake, fluffy pumpkin cream and whipped cream make a pretty make-ahead dessert. The cake is baked from scratch, and the assembly is simple.



MAKES

12 servings

PREP

30 minutes

BAKE

25-32 minutes for cake

ALSO ALLOW

Cool cake completely; chill assembled trifle 4 hours

PAN

9 x 13-inch cake pan and a 3- to 4-quart trifle bowl

Ingredients

Cake: 1 1/2 cups (180 g) all-purpose flour

Cake: 1 teaspoon baking powder

Cake: 1/2 teaspoon baking soda

Cake: 1/2 teaspoon fine salt

Cake: 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice

Cake: 2 large eggs

Cake: 3/4 cup granulated sugar

Cake: 1/2 cup neutral oil

Cake: 1 cup canned pumpkin puree

Cake: 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Pumpkin cream: 8 ounces full-fat brick cream cheese, softened

Pumpkin cream: 3/4 cup powdered sugar

Pumpkin cream: 1 cup canned pumpkin puree

Pumpkin cream: 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice

Pumpkin cream: 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Whipped cream: 3 cups cold heavy whipping cream

Whipped cream: 1/3 cup powdered sugar

Whipped cream: 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Optional topping: 1/3 cup chopped toasted pecans and a light cinnamon dusting

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Method

1. Heat the oven to 350 F. Grease and line a 9 x 13-inch pan. Whisk cake flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and spice in one bowl. In another, whisk eggs, sugar, oil, pumpkin and vanilla.

2. Fold the dry ingredients into the wet just until combined. Spread in the pan. Bake 25-32 minutes, checking at 22 minutes, until a toothpick comes out clean or with moist crumbs. Cool completely, then cut into 1-inch cubes.

3. Beat the softened cream cheese and 3/4 cup powdered sugar until smooth. Beat in 1 cup pumpkin, spice and vanilla just until blended.

4. In a chilled bowl, whip cold heavy cream with 1/3 cup powdered sugar and vanilla to medium-stiff peaks. Gently fold 2 cups of this whipped cream into the pumpkin mixture. Keep the remaining whipped cream separate.

5. In a clear 3- to 4-quart bowl, layer half the cake cubes, half the pumpkin cream and half the remaining whipped cream. Repeat all three layers. Spread the final whipped cream gently over the top.

6. Cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight. Add chopped toasted pecans and a light cinnamon dusting just before serving, if desired. Spoon down through all the layers to serve.

Jane's Note

Cool the cake fully before building the layers. Add the pecans at the last minute so they stay crisp, or leave them off for guests who avoid nuts.

Make ahead

Bake the cake up to 2 days ahead. Assemble the trifle the day before serving and refrigerate.

Storage

Keep covered in the refrigerator and use within 3 days. The cake layers soften as the trifle stands. Freezing the assembled trifle is not recommended.