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# Delicious coconut cake with strawberry roses

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Coconut Cake Photos Susie Iventosch

This fabulous and delicious coconut cake is easy to make and even easier to eat! We love this moist and flavorful cake with marshmallow buttercream frosting and can't think of a better dessert for Mother's Day this year! With fresh strawberries coming into season, top your cake with beautiful strawberry roses and you'll have a masterpiece to serve to your mom!

This coconut cake project has been a lot of fun and so rewarding. It all started with a delightful email from one of our Lamorinda Weekly readers. Ginny Paulsen (Lafayette) emailed to say how much she enjoyed the "Favorite Chocolate Cake" we published in our Feb. 28 issue. She loved how easy it was to make and wondered if the recipe could translate into a vanilla or coconut version.

That was such a great question, and one I'd never pondered. We've been making this chocolate cake as our "go-to" chocolate cake for almost 20 years, but somehow, the thought of making it any other flavor never occurred to me. However, being a huge coconut lover, it sounded like a genius idea to me!

I told Ginny that I'd be happy to give it a shot, and my family is so happy I did! It turned out to be a remarkably simple switch of just a few ingredients and voila, we had a new family favorite. We use canned coconut milk, coconut extract, and coconut flour in the cake batter to give the cake an intense coconut flavor. You can cover the frosting with flaked coconut, but you really don't have to. Since some people love the flavor of coconut, but cannot stand the texture, this cake is a perfect choice for them.

If you're a coconut and chocolate fan, try adding dark chocolate chips to the cake batter before baking. This will make the chocolate lovers in your life so happy. I love it either way, with or without chocolate chips, but it's always nice to have options and the more chocolate and coconut options in life the better in my book!

We like to frost this cake naked, (meaning only between layers and on top) so you only need one recipe of the frosting, but if you like to cover the entire cake, consider doubling the frosting recipe. You can also split the layers, to have four cake layers and four frosting layers. If you want to do that, simply cut the layers in half horizontally with a long bread knife and frost in between each half layer and on top. And, according to Ginny, this recipe makes 30 regular sized cupcakes - some for now, and some for later!Ingredients

Coconut Cake
3 cups all-purpose flour
2 cups granulated sugar
1/2 cup coconut flour (Bob's Red Mill packages this)
2 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt
1 cup cold water
1 cup canned coconut milk
1 cup canola oil
1/2 tsp. cider vinegar
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 tsp. coconut extract
1 cup bittersweet chocolate chips (optional)
Marshmallow Buttercream Frosting
8 oz. unsalted butter (1 cup), softened to room temp
7 oz. marshmallow cream (like Kraft's Jet Puffed)
3-4 cups powdered sugar
1 tsp. coconut extract
1 tsp. vanilla powder or vanilla extract
1/4 cup milk or coconut milk (you may not use all of this)
Strawberry Roses
7-8 fresh strawberries
DIRECTIONS
Coconut Cake
Preheat oven to 350 F. Line two 8-inch cake pans with parchment paper. Spray the paper and the sides of the pan with cooking spray.
Place all dries for cake in a large mixing bowl and blend well with a wire whisk.
In a large measuring cup, mix oil, water, coconut milk, vanilla, and coconut extract and add to dries, mixing thoroughly with a whisk or wooden spoon. Stir in chocolate chips if you plan to add them.
Divide batter evenly among the two cake pans. Bake for about 40 minutes, or until the cake tester

comes out clean. Cool completely and remove from the pan.

☐ Place one layer on your cake platter and spread half of the frosting on top. Place the second cake layer on top of the first and spread the remaining frosting to cover the top of the cake. Arrange strawberry roses on top of the cake and add a few leaves here and there. If your strawberry leaves are in decent shape, use those, otherwise you can substitute with basil or mint leaves.

☐ Frosting

☐ Place softened butter in a large mixing bowl. Beat until creamy with an electric beater. Add marshmallow cream and beat until well integrated, scraping down the sides of the bowl as you go. Add coconut extract and vanilla powder. Beat well.

☐ Add powdered sugar, one cup at time beating well after each addition until you reach the desired spreading consistency. Add a little bit of milk as needed for consistency. Reserve 1/4 cup powdered sugar for the last addition in case you've added too much milk.

☐ Strawberry Roses

☐ Using a paring knife, cut off the stem of the strawberry. Place the strawberry on its flat surface. Next, make four vertical cuts on the outer edge, leaving about 1/2-inch until the bottom of the berry. Gently push these cut pieces outward from the center of the berry.

☐ Make four more cuts in between and a little bit higher than the original cuts. Continue in this fashion until you reach the top of the berry. Gently push all cut "rose" petals outward to make it look like a rose. See video links in the INFO BOX for a more visual description.

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