

Walnut Cake
(Torta di Mandorle)

INGREDIENTS:

Servings: 1 cake (8 people)

Sugar	7 oz
Fresh lemon juice	1 tsp
Honey	1 cup
Softened butter	10 oz
Salt	pinch
Chopped walnuts	7oz
Whole peeled almonds	7 oz
Egg yolks	3
White unbleached flour	9 oz
Cocoa powder	1 tsp
Confectioners' sugar	for garnish

TOOLS:

Heavy saucepan
Wooden spoon
Flour sifter
Large bowl
Springform pan (9 in)
Cardboard template (9 in), optional
Pie tin (9 in)
Plastic wrap
Electric mixer
Rubber spatula

PREPARATION:

Combine half the sugar and lemon juice in a saucepan. Gently cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, for 15 minutes or until it becomes golden brown.

Mix in the honey and half the butter, and increase the heat. Bring the mixture to a gentle boil, and cook for 2 minutes. Turn off the heat.

Add the salt and walnuts, and allow the mixture to cool. Lightly toast the almonds for a few minutes in a dry skillet over medium-high heat. Set them aside.

Using an electric mixer or whisk, *cream the remaining butter*, and gradually add the remaining sugar, mixing it until light and fluffy. Add the egg yolks, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Turn off the mixer, and *use a rubber spatula to stir in the flour* and cocoa powder gradually. Mix until it is well blended.

Grease a springform pan with butter. Divide the dough in half. Place half the dough in the pan, pressing it down gently until it cover the bottom and goes 1 in up the side of the pan. Smooth the nut filling over. Place the remaining dough on a floured work surface. Shape it with your fingers to form a 9 in top crust - add more flour as needed. This can be done using a cardboard template. Place it in a pie tin, cover it with plastic wrap, and let chill for 20 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 350_ F. Place the top crust over the nut filling, pressing it into place with your fingers, and sealing the edges with a fork. Pierce the top with a fork and bake it for 45-50 minutes, until golden brown.

Let the cake cool for 10 minutes in the pan before removing it. Transfer it to a wire rack and allow it to cool. Garnish with toasted almonds, sprinkle with confectioners' sugar, and serve.